

Elite Mages' Academy Novel

Chapter 601 - Lifespan

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Knowing he had narrowly escaped death, Xiao Lin was shaken, but he did not understand what happened. No injuries would be brought back after the examination ended; he trusted that the academy would not hide anything regarding that, but his confusion came from the man in front of him.

There was a strange smell in the room, and it got even thicker when the man walked in. Xiao Lin suddenly remembered something, and he furrowed his eyebrows as he shook his head. “No, this isn’t a hospital ward! This is an experiment room!”

Because Xiao Lin regularly entered Song Junlang’s experiment room, Xiao Lin was no stranger to that smell. The experiments used various strange potions and ingredients that would regularly have strange smells, so they could only be in an experiment room. After all, there was no way a ward would have random potions around.

“I never said this was a ward, nor does the academy have any specialized hospitals.” The man looked at Xiao Lin and slowly said, “This is the seventh experiment room. I’m called Wang Shengming, the one in charge of this place.”

At that time, more people came in, and Xiao Lin looked at them. Those people were not in white clothes, but they were all fully clad in armor, and the swords in their hands were all unsheathed as they looked at him in alarm, as if they were facing a big enemy.

“Are you detaining me?” Xiao Lin half-jokingly asked.

“No way.” Wang Shengming waved his hand, motioning for the others to leave.

When the room was empty, the man thought for a moment before suddenly saying, “You are someone the dean trusts, and I believe in him. I also believe that the student union president would not help someone evil, but the current investigation isn’t good for you.”

“Investigation?” Xiao Lin started to sweat; it was like he had entered a completely foreign world after he woke up.

“Let me get straight to the point; regarding the forbidden technique you used, we haven’t seen any matching data so far, but I think it’s best for you to be honest. It would be better for you as well. Otherwise, we won’t know what potions to use to help you.” Wang Shengming looked at Xiao Lin. His words were shocking.

Forbidden techniques on Planet Norma have been forbidden by all the academies, because forbidden techniques could usually cause immense harm and burdens on the user, and could also cause unexpected results. Wang Dalin had been sent back to Earth by the student union because he used one; there had been no room for negotiation.

Xiao Lin obviously could not have made such a mistake, as he had never learnt any forbidden spells anyway. Facing Wang Shengming's questions, Xiao Lin's first response was anger, as he was certain that there had to be some mistake somewhere, or that someone was framing him. After all, he knew the military did not like him.

However, he quickly composed himself. Wang Shengming's expression was calm. He did not have any expressions of ridicule or triumph, but instead one of helplessness and pity. It was like he was looking at a fallen criminal.

At least the person in charge of the room did not seem to have been arranged by the military. Even though the dean could not manage the daily affairs due to his illness, the temporary dean was still temporary, and the dean was still the dean. Furthermore, in the academy, the student union's power was the greatest, so trying to start something under the nose of the president was incredibly difficult.

So, Xiao Lin quickly discarded that possibility, but if he had not been framed, then why was he being under such an intense guard after waking up from a coma. He was even accused of using a forbidden spell and violating the academy's rules.

After calming down, Xiao Lin suddenly thought of something. Forbidden spells could be explained as unnatural power. To be even more direct, it was something that could allow someone to use several times more power than their basic attributes.

Xiao Lin obviously had a power like that. Miracle might not be one, but Ruin and Myth that he had just used were definitely skills that allowed him to greatly exceed his abilities. Yet, those were all skills that he had used his talent to unlock, so how could they be forbidden spells? Furthermore, it was not the first time he had used Ruin; he never had an issue then.

"Hold on. You mentioned my body?" Xiao Lin finally caught the important point. He seemed to have thought of something, and furrowed his eyebrows.

Wang Shengming did not have a shred of happiness in his expression when he looked at Xiao Lin; he sighed in pity before taking out a laptop. He opened it and typed a few things before showing Xiao Lin. "This is the data we got after examining you yesterday. You can only look at it."

On the monitor was Xiao Lin's personal information. Normally, regular people would not have the right to open it like that, even someone in charge of the experiment room. Since he was able to, it meant that he had already obtained the permission from the student union. Of course, the secret contents, such as his SS-rank talent, had definitely been hidden.

Xiao Lin glanced over it and he immediately straightened up because he realized that each of his basic attributes had gone to 120. He rubbed his eyes, looking at Wang Shengming in disbelief.

After returning from the New World, his basic attributes should have been 80 points, even though his attributes had increased after training, but even with Academic Genius, there was no way for

his attributes to increase by such a crazy degree. It had increased by almost half; that was something practically impossible in just a short month.

Responding to Xiao Lin's surprised look, Wang Shengming emotionlessly said, "Don't be quick to say anything. Continue looking; the important part is below."

Next was Xiao Lin's skills; of course Miracle, Ruin, and Myth were not there, but those were not the important points. What followed some other content, such as his attribute growths, and the final one was his remaining lifespan.

Seeing that, Xiao Lin's expression froze. He was stunned.

On it, his remaining lifespan was listed as: [20 years]

"That's impossible!" Xiao Lin put down the laptop and shook his head.

"The central computer's records cannot be wrong. If you don't believe it, we can immediately arrange a physical examination for you. In truth, we've done a lot of cross examinations in the past few days, but the results were all the same." Wang Shengming took a deep breath, slowly saying, "We've checked your earlier lifespan and monthly examination date. Can you tell us, if you did not use a forbidden spell, where did the other 80 years of your lifespan go?"

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Xiao Lin's expression was frozen. Looking at that 20, he fell into a long silence.

He believed that the numbers could not be fake. After all, he only needed to investigate minimally to verify it, so they definitely did not need to lie to him in that matter.

He only had 20 years of lifespan left!

He remembered clearly that his lifespan had been 100 years before the examination. Even though he had died once during the last semester, he had bought novice Lifewater immediately to compensate.

Once he eliminated the impossible, whatever remained, no matter how improbable, had to be the truth!

Xiao Lin started to remember that during the last fight against the sea god Poseidon, when he had lost all hope, that mysterious and ancient existence hidden within his heart helped him, allowing Xiao Lin to combine his Ruin state with his SS-rank talent, activating Myth and causing his entire body's strength to rise up to a level that rivaled Gold rank.

That energy obviously came at a cost. Even though that voice did not say what the cost was, during that urgent time, Xiao Lin could not have thought about it or hesitated. He initially thought that it would be like using Ruin, and Xiao Lin only needed to recover back his strength after a period of fatigue.

Now he finally understood, the cost of using Myth was his remaining lifespan, and it had taken 80 years!

Xiao Lin bitterly smiled as he sighed; if one looked at it in terms of value, the price was absolutely acceptable. After all, as a Bronze-ranked person, being able to defeat a super boss from Earth's mythology in such a shocking battle was good enough.

Wang Shengming looked at Xiao Lin's changing expressions and did not disturb him, choosing to wait quietly.

After a few minutes, Xiao Lin composed himself and climbed off the bed. His numb legs had already more or less recovered. He looked at Wang Shengming and said, "Thank you for your treatment. I can't tell you why my lifespan decreased. It's not because I don't trust you or that I'm deliberately lying, but you really don't have the authority to know of this matter. Other than the dean, I don't think anyone does."

Xiao Lin's tone was calm but firm.

It was very hard for him to explain Myth or Ruin to anyone else because that would definitely involve him having to reveal the fact that he had an SS-rank talent. The dean had repeatedly warned him that the secret should be known by as few people as possible.

Everyone, no matter if they were from Earth or Planet Norma, coveted SS-rank talents. Yet, the holders were not the luckiest people; a heavy burden came with that inexplicably rare talent. Thinking about Ivanovich who died at the hands of his own people, Xiao Lin understood the dean's reasons.

Xiao Lin was also very confident. For other students, 80 years of their lifespan would definitely ruin them. Even novice Lifewater was worth a thousand points per bottle. It would take up eight thousand redemption points, a number that would bankrupt most new students, to compensate for the years that were lost.

Yet, Xiao Lin never lacked money. Even though the newest batch of Lifewater had yet to come out, he just needed to buy a few bottles at a higher price.

Xiao Lin calculated it well, but Wang Shengming seemed to know what Xiao Lin was thinking as he shook his head and said, "Before this, we've given you some novice Lifewater. Regretfully, your lifespan did not increase at all."

Xiao Lin was frozen.

"I know this is hard to accept, but he really did try various methods, including using middle and high grade Lifewater, but regretfully, while we can verify that the potions were absorbed by you, your lifespan did not recover like we expected.

“That is why I’m asking you what forbidden spell you used. Based on my hypothesis, only those forbidden spells that deal permanent damage to the soul will render Lifewater useless. I think you should have learned about this before, but Lifewater and the resurrection towers can only handle non-spiritual damage. Anything that affects the soul will render them ineffective.”

Xiao Lin obviously understood; the dean being trapped in that special ward is all because the old man had been poisoned in the soul, so no Lifewater could save him. Yet, who could have expected that, not long after, Xiao Lin would be facing a similar problem.

The cost of using Myth was so great!

Xiao Lin suddenly remembered something he had read in a book in the restricted section of the library: ‘power is sacrifice, and only with enough sacrifice can the greatest power be brought forward.’

Only, that result was too much to accept. It meant that Xiao Lin would not even have a second chance to use Myth!

Wang Shengming did not manage to obtain an answer from Xiao Lin in the end, so he left with a face full of disappointment. He also warned Xiao Lin against leaving the area simply. He said it was to observe Xiao Lin, but in truth it was to place Xiao Lin under surveillance. After all, using a forbidden spell was a massive crime in Dawn Academy; so much so that even a department head would be brought away after being found out, let alone a mere monitor.

The scenery outside of Xiao Lin’s window proved that he was still in Dawn Academy, and he was located in the southernmost research center. Regular folk were not allowed inside, and even professors and lecturers needed the clearance to be able to enter. Now that he was locked inside, it was obvious his freedom had been restricted.

However, a little later in the day, Xiao Lin’s room was opened again. When he saw who came, Xiao Lin’s dark expression was finally somewhat lifted.

The ones who came were the president and the captain of the sixth regiment, Yu Mei, both Xiao Lin’s old friends. Of course, they were also considered the dean’s confidants, and would naturally stand with Xiao Lin unconditionally. When they appeared, Xiao Lin’s heart settled a bit as he jumped off the bed, moving his limbs around as he smiled, “I knew you wouldn’t leave me alone! Let’s get outta here!”

Yu Mei laughed, and even the president’s baby-face twitched as he said helplessly, “You really are free. I immediately came over the moment I got the news. We’ve gotten the information on Wang Shengming’s side. Ah, that man is really angry at you.”

Yu Mei laughed, looking like she was not worried if the matter got too big. “I heard you told him he did not have the authority. You did well. I never liked that group of old farts...”

The president immediately coughed dryly to interrupt Yu Mei, not wanting the trend to continue. He said meaningfully, “Professor Wang Shengming was acting in your interests. I won’t ask about how or why you used a forbidden spell, but it’s best you keep a low profile outside. After all, if only we know about this, it won’t be hard to help you conceal it. However, if it were public, it might fall into the hands of others.”

“Is the situation in the New World not good?” Xiao Lin seemed to understand the hidden meaning behind it. The temporary dean had just taken power, and the old dean had been in power for so many years. He had long since spread his influence into every department. Of course, the temporary dean would not stand by and allow himself to be overturned. The inner workings of the struggles and battles was something Xiao Lin could absolutely imagine.

The president did not continue on that topic because Xiao Lin had a lot more to worry about. He sternly said, “I looked for you with Yu Mei this time because we wanted to ask you something; are you going to continue participating in the Inter-academy Tournament?”

“The Inter-academy Tournament?” Xiao Lin paused. He remembered the tournament should have been scheduled for the end of the semester, and he remembered that he was already in the list of participants. Did anything change?

Yu Mei stopped smiling as she said, “We might not have told you earlier because we did not think it was necessary, but every battle in the Inter-academy Tournament is fought with real weapons. Even though everyone has the right to forfeit in the battles, in truth anyone who would dare to participate would not care about dying. After all, with the resurrection tower, it would only be a loss of lifespan. Compared to the prizes they could obtain, the cost of Lifewater isn’t worth mentioning.

“I can tell you a statistic; in all the Inter-academy Tournaments that have been held, the rate of death is around seventy per cent. There’s something else; since the situation in the New World is a bit complicated, after each party had discussed it and after it was approved by the Supreme Council, the tournament will probably be brought forward.”

After a pause, the president emphasized, “I need to remind you, the last competition will definitely be held in the New World. After all, all the participants are at least at Black-iron rank.”

Xiao Lin finally understood what they were here for. Even though dying in the academy would only result in losing 10 years of his lifespan, they would be under the full influence of the New World’s law, so they would lose 20 years of their lifespan if they died there. Yet, he only had 20 years left now, so if he died, he would lose everything.

The president sighed. “What Captain Yu Mei and I mean is, it’s better if you give up on the tournament. The Eternal Fruit is a good prize, but compared to your life, it’s not worth mentioning.”

Xiao Lin fell silent. He never expected that a simple monthly examination would invite so much trouble, even affecting the Inter-academy Tournament.

His greatest problem was that his lifespan could not be replenished. Xiao Lin naturally did not want to die, but he definitely needed to participate in the tournament.

After a long time, Xiao Lin raised his head and asked coldly, “What about Gu Xiaoyue?”

“What?” The president paused.

“Will Gu Xiaoyue participate in the tournament?”

“Yes.” The president furrowed his eyebrows, understanding Xiao Lin’s intentions.

“Oh, then I will participate.” Xiao Lin’s answer was very blunt, as if he just decided on what to eat.

The room fell into silence again. The president and Yu Mei were not shocked at the answer. The two of them exchanged a glance, as if they had already expected the answer. After a moment, Yu Mei held her forehead, bitterly smiling. “Actually, before we looked for you, we looked for Gu Xiaoyue two days ago as well, hoping she would give up on the tournament.”

The president continued. “Gu Xiaoyue’s talent in magic is inconceivable. Even if she is not the only one with that level of potential, only she is willing to go so deeply into practicing support magic. Put in this way; stopping her from participating was an order from the temporary dean.”

“Even the temporary dean interfered?” Xiao Lin was surprised.

Yu Mei did not know whether to laugh or cry. “This is something that concerns the glory of the academy, so it’s naturally something the dean needs to care about. How would he be interfering?”

“Gu Xiaoyue definitely did not agree,” Xiao Lin said.

The president nodded, a little helpless. “When I passed the order to her, she acknowledged it before tearing the paper apart.”

“Hahaha!” Xiao Lin laughed out loud. He could imagine Gu Xiaoyue’s cold expression, probably saying she received the order, but she would not follow it. Any decision that stubborn woman made would not be so easily changed by anyone else. He actually really wanted to see that temporary dean’s expression.

“It seems that even if we want you to help convince Gu Xiaoyue, you won’t agree?” The president naturally knew that Xiao Lin was the only person who was close to Gu Xiaoyue.

“It’s not that I wouldn’t agree, but she would definitely not listen. I am the same.” Xiao Lin could not explain Gu Xiaoyue’s sister’s terminal illness because of Gu Chengyun’s questionable bloodline and status. There were some things he did not want too many people to know about due to its sensitivity.

“She will participate, so you will definitely participate.”

“That’s right.”

“Even though the two of you can no longer resurrect.”

“That’s right.”

Yu Mei shrugged at the president. “I told you he wouldn’t agree.”

Looking at the president who seemed to have a headache, Xiao Lin’s heart was warmed. No matter what, those people really cared about him, and he said, “You actually don’t need to worry too much. Even though I can’t reveal anything, I actually gained many things during this examination.

I'm confident that, even if I can't win this tournament, it won't be a problem protecting myself and Gu Xiaoyue. I won't play around with my own life, and definitely wouldn't with Gu Xiaoyue's."

"It seems like that's our only choice." The student union president could tell from Xiao Lin's expression that he would not be able to stop it. He then moved a step back and said, "The tournament will be held in two months. It's best if you properly recover during this period. As for resources, I'll do my best to get you anything the academy can provide. Other than that, Song Junlang is back, so you can look for him if you're free. He might have some way to recover your lifespan."

Chapter 603 - Song Junlang Returns

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Even though Yu Mei seemed to still harbor very large suspicions toward Song Junlang, it was understandable. In the eyes of most outsiders, Song Junlang was someone who used the fact that he was close to the dean to get an idle job like the Logistics Department Head.

Even fewer people knew that Song Junlang was a year leader many years ago, and had been looked upon well by countless people. It was a pity the new star fell so much. Even if many people felt it was a pity before, after so many years, no one remembered his decorated past.

Song Junlang had been researching in the New World. Xiao Lin did not know if Song Junlang had completed part of his research or had rushed back because he heard of Xiao Lin's matter. No matter what, Xiao Lin had a surprising amount of trust in the unassuming man.

Xiao Lin did encounter some problems checking out of the place. Wang Shengming was obviously unwilling to allow Xiao Lin to leave. He intensely argued with the president. Even if the president's authority was the greatest outside of the dean within the academy, it did not mean that the old lecturers would be afraid of him. Of course, it was because the president's usual kindly baby-face made him appear very friendly.

In the end, the president managed to convince Wang Shengming by promising more budget for Wang Shengming's research. After leaving, the president explained to Xiao Lin, "Even if I could just command him, that might leak to the dean's ears. Of course, I mean the temporary dean. That would not be ideal."

That was the second time the president had mentioned the temporary dean. Even if the president had been well-mannered, he still had a bitter smile on his face, showing that the matter could be more severe than Xiao Lin thought.

"Surely that old fart isn't trying to replace you?!" Xiao Lin was shocked and angered.

"It's not to that degree. Even though the president is appointed by the dean, trying to replace him before his term ends would not be possible without a good enough reason." The one who spoke was Yu Mei. As someone in the old dean's camp with the president, it was natural she was angered, but she was helpless as she said, "That old fart has started to investigate a lot of old matters during this time. All the orders we have issued are all recorded, and now a specialized person is checking

on whether the orders were reasonable or if they were allowed. Of course, it's not just us... Basically, he's trying to look for any holes. Otherwise, how could he have a good reason to replace anyone?"

"Yu Mei, be careful with your words. This is still the academy." The president was unhappy with Yu Mei calling the temporary dean an old fart.

"Tch, you're way too careful with the way you do things! Just like Wang Shengming earlier, he kept on talking about forbidden spells. Wasn't he just trying to gain something from you? Everyone knows of your relationship with Xiao Lin, or he wouldn't have dared to stop you."

The president bitterly smiled as he shook his head.

However, that point was not wrong; the president and Yu Mei were like two polar opposites. Yu Mei was someone who did as she wanted, not caring about the consequences, while the president was someone who would think everything through and move carefully.

Xiao Lin did not have anything to say, and the two of them were at least consistent in one point, which was to not let Xiao Lin know too much about the situation in the New World.

After the two of them left, Xiao Lin went back to the dormitory to change his clothes. Class was still in session, so he could not go look for Gu Xiaoyue. Therefore, Xiao Lin went straight to the Logistics Department.

The entrance was open, signifying there was someone inside. Other than Xiao Lin, only Song Junlang would be free enough to run there normally. Pushing the door and going in, Xiao Lin did not bother being too polite since that place was practically a second home to him. He walked past the familiar path between the strange vegetation, passing the courtyard before he arrived at a small room at the back. After that, he was scared stiff by something two hundred meters away.

At some point, a pond had been dug up in front of the room, and the clear blue water reflected the sunlight. However, that was not the important point. In the pond was a massive creature that looked like a squid. It had a jet black and smooth body, and over ten tentacles were dancing in the air.

Xiao Lin was no stranger to that thing. Back when Poseidon's seal had weakened on Earth, a similar monster had appeared. Back then, Silverlight told him that it was a guardian of Poseidon. After Poseidon's seal was renewed, the guardians completely disappeared. After that, Xiao Lin understood that a few of the academies had worked together to kill off those monsters, and split up the remains to research on.

Song Junlang had unique insights when it came to rare species, which was why under the president and the old dean's recommendations, Song Junlang managed to enter the research center despite opposition from a lot of people. They even started to research ancient beasts with him as the core.

That was all news that Xiao Lin already knew, but the question was, surely Song Junlang's progress was too shocking. In just a few months of research, he managed to replicate that monster?

Even though the squid might be bigger than a regular squid, it still could not compare to a real guardian. When the two eyes on that creature's forehead saw Xiao Lin approaching, it suddenly let out a sharp cry as it waved its massive tentacles in the air, splashing water everywhere.

Song Junlang failed to push it down a few times, and he angrily took out a massive needle that was almost two meters long and pierced it right into the squid's body, injecting an unknown blue liquid inside. After a while, the squid finally quieted down, and sank to the depths to sleep.

Song Junlang then waved at Xiao Lin, motioning for him to go over, mumbling, "You really caused me a lot of trouble. I took a few hours to finally calm this guy down, but your arrival caused it to go crazy again. This beast's perception is pretty sharp. Do you have some familiar feeling to it?"

Song Junlang cast a suspicious gaze, measuring Xiao Lin. Xiao Lin could not resist as his body let out a cold shudder, taking two steps back before warning, "Don't even think about doing anything to me. If you want my blood, or want me to drink its blood, that's absolutely impossible and out of the question!"

"Don't worry. I won't draw your blood with this." Song Junlang threw that shockingly big needle aside.

"Anything else is not allowed as well!"

"I don't even need your blood. What are you afraid of? I just need your DNA."

"Don't even think about getting a single hair from me!" Xiao Lin was very annoyed.

"You really aren't a good friend." Song Junlang mumbled before keeping his things and walking back into the room. After two steps, he suddenly thought of something before turning around and asking, "Hold on, why did you come to my place?"

The corner of Xiao Lin's mouth twitched as he said, "So I really was making too much about it. You didn't come back because you heard about my matters."

Song Junlang laughed, waving his hand. "That's not the case, I came back to settle this guy down. It's still too young, and not used to the New World's environment. I can also help you with your problems on the way."

So it was just on the way...

Xiao Lin cursed in his heart, and did not bother with any more nonsense as he said in a straightforward manner, "The last time, I asked you to check on Gu Xiaoyue and her sister's bloodline. Are there any results?"

Song Junlang was a little surprised, as he thought that Xiao Lin would ask about Xiao Lin's own matters, but Xiao Lin obviously seemed to feel that Gu Xiaoyue was more important. Song Junlang fell silent for a moment before patting off the water from his body, saying, "Follow me inside first."

Song Junlang's guest room was a mess like always. After all, no other guests came other than Xiao Lin. Thankfully, Xiao Lin would occasionally clean up the dust, ensuring it was not too inhospitable.

After entering, Song Junlang carefully closed the door and windows under Xiao Lin's curious gaze. He produced a few magic scrolls and opened them on the walls. All of them glowed in different lights. Layers of light blue, deep green or purple magical protections started to rise, and the entire room was encased in a vibrant and colorful, dream-like world.

"A protective magical array?" Xiao Lin looked at Song Junlang, and asked, "Who are you protecting yourself against?"

"It's just some precautions," Song Junlang said casually.

"The temporary dean?" Xiao Lin answered.

"Quit it. This first-year student is really too nosy!" Song Junlang did not have the composure of the dean, and scolded Xiao Lin outright.

Sitting down, Song Junlang's expression seemed to be much more relaxed, seemingly thanks to the magical protection. However, he sighed with a pained look. "The magical scrolls are all high-tier ones, so they aren't cheap."

"Don't you have a lot of money?" The profits from the bet at Century Casino were definitely not small.

"Do you think scientific research is cheap? If not for the price that was paid before, how could all those spells and equipment that people use now exist?" Song Junlang said.

Xiao Lin did not want to continue skirting around the topic. "Fine, I'll just transfer the money to you. I did ask you for help."

"It's twelve thousand New Dollars in total. After that, there's travel expenses, lots of work fees, and labor costs. I'll give you a discount, so fifteen thousand New Dollars will do. I know you have a lot of money, so this shouldn't be much." Song Junlang did not hesitate to mention the price.

"You've already prepared it." Xiao Lin's mouth twitched, looking at Song Junlang's face who seemed to be waiting for the money. He wanted to throw a brick over at him.

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When Xiao Lin was about to get frustrated, Song Junlang's joking face suddenly disappeared, replaced with a stern expression as his tone turned serious. "Due to the sudden nature of how we met last time, I didn't have the time to tell you... The last time I returned to Earth, I actually met Gu Xiaoyue's sister, Gu Chengyun."

Xiao Lin's complaints suddenly disappeared, and he seemed to stand up with some frustration as he asked, "Wouldn't that expose something? What did you say to her? That girl is very innocent, so don't trick some clueless girl! If Gu Xiaoyue knew, how would I talk to her? She prioritizes her sister!"

"Are you done?"

"Ah, let me think..."

"What is there to think about!" Song Junlang snapped. "Who do you think I am? If I can't verify it myself, how could I find anything out? The blood samples I managed to collect last time were not enough at all. However, don't worry, I believe that Gu Chengyun won't be suspicious, and won't tell her sister. I'm quite experienced in tricking little girls."

"Tricking little girls?" Xiao Lin had a strange expression on his face.

"Ahem, I am talking about disguising myself. It's a compulsory course you'll go through!"

Song Junlang handed over a report that was already on the table, motioning for Xiao Lin to look at it. Xiao Lin curiously opened the report, and Song Junlang's notes were quite nice to look at.

However, the contents inside were just chemical formulas that he did not understand. Xiao Lin had not touched anything like that since he graduated from high school, but since it had something to do with Gu Xiaoyue and her sister, Xiao Lin forced himself to look at it, even if he did not understand.

After a few minutes, Song Junlang suddenly said, "Oh, I almost forgot that you wouldn't understand. We're old friends, you don't have to put up a front. Just flip to the last page."

Xiao Lin almost wanted to slam the book on Song Junlang's face. He flipped to the last page, and there were no more formulas, only a few lines as a conclusion.

DNA analysis: 40% Elf, 40% Human, 20% unknown.

Xiao Lin paused for a moment before raising his head. "That's it?"

"That's it."

Xiao Lin did not know what to say; it had just been a DNA test in the end. With Song Junlang's skills, that was nothing difficult, and he could definitely have used the blood samples he obtained from Gu Xiaoyue to do it. He did not need to look for Gu Chengyun, but in truth Song Junlang only handed the report to Xiao Lin a long time after that.

"It's not much different from the initial analysis. She really does have elvish blood. That's not strange, but what is the 20% that remains?" Xiao Lin pointed at the last words as he suspiciously said, "Did you deliberately hide it?"

Song Junlang sighed. "Because even I couldn't find out. Fine, I admit that I had this report a long time ago, but it's been delayed for so long because of that last 20%."

“Then what’s the result?”

Song Junlang shook his head. “There’s no way for me to give you an accurate answer. If we want to continue investigating it deeper, then we need a more detailed analysis of each pair of chromosomes in Gu Xiaoyue and her sister’s DNA. It’s not something I can do, and would need even more resources. It would definitely alert even more people. Are you sure you want me to do that?”

Xiao Lin sat back down. He quietly asked Song Junlang to investigate it himself because Xiao Lin did not want anyone else to know. However, he actually never cared about what race Gu Xiaoyue was. Xiao Lin just wanted to verify the problem with Gu Xiaoyue’s lifespan.

Song Junlang guessed his next question and said, “Her problem isn’t the same as yours. Your soul was injured, while she has a genetic problem. Even though it’s also troublesome for you to recover, it’s not something that is overly difficult. However, Gu Xiaoyue’s lifespan will be very hard. Unless we rewrite her genes, I can’t really think of a good way, but...”

Xiao Lin did not care that Song Junlang mentioned that his lifespan could be recovered, but he quickly latched on to the ‘but’.

Song Junlang was not stalling, but merely thinking, “But there might be a way to slow down her rapidly aging genes.”

“Rapidly aging?”

“It’s an old problem. When colonization started, the problem with race mixing got more and more severe. I told you last time, the biggest problem with hybrids is that their genes will rapidly deteriorate, but in exchange, a portion of them will usually have even higher gifts academically. You can say that all of them burn brightly before dying in a few short years. It’s respectable and pitiful.”

Xiao Lin was silent. Too many of the men who went to the colonist territories went there in hopes of collecting wives of many races. That was not a problem he could afford to care about; he could only do his best to slow down the loss of Gu Xiaoyue’s life.

“As for how to slow down the aging, she would need to rely on potions, but regretfully, I can’t help there.” Song Junlang opened his arms expressing his helplessness.

“You actually don’t know?” Xiao Lin widened his eyes in shock.

“Please. What do you think I am?”

“Some multipurpose robot.”

Song Junlang’s mouth twitched before he said, “However, the academies had already started the research on it a long time ago. After all, the hybrids involve way too many people. Even if some of them refuse to acknowledge their offspring, there will still be others who would never give up on their children. After all, who wants to see their children die before them?

“I’m not a part of that research, so I can’t help you, but I can recommend that you participate in it. If I’m not mistaken, the one in charge of this research in Dawn Academy is Professor Qin. He

specializes in genetic and potion research. He's an old friend of the old dean. If you're free you can look into it. Getting into his research room will be good for you."

Xiao Lin noted down that person, and would investigate him after going back.

Song Junlang's expression got friendlier as he smiled. "Alright, after Gu Xiaoyue's matters, let's go to the main topic. Let's talk about you. You really are a troublesome brat. How did you manage to stir up so much trouble from just a regular monthly examination? I even heard people talking about you in Dawn City's research center. You're really becoming famous."

Chapter 605 - Will

Chapter 605: Will

"I remember this examination should have been forest survival. Oh, I remember that I got that topic during my last examination in the first year. Do you know what evaluation you got for the examination?" Song Junlang raised the topic, but he seemed to be playing around with it.

Xiao Lin shook his head. He had been unconscious for a week, and he only knew of all that after he woke up. He never really checked the results of his examination, but he curiously asked, "Department Head Song, did you go through this examination as well back then?"

"Haha, of course. This problem was basically a compulsory examination for first- or second-years. I managed to get an S-rank evaluation back then." Song Junlang narrowed his eyes and thought about it.

Xiao Lin did not seem to care initially, but he immediately paid more attention hearing that. Song Junlang rarely mentioned anything about his past, and Xiao Lin had basically treated it as Song Junlang being unwilling to open past wounds. This time, Xiao Lin did not know if Song Junlang was feeling off, but he had brought it up himself.

"How did you do it back then?" Xiao Lin asked.

"We'll not mention defeating the beasts at the start, it doesn't really differ much. The last boss was Poseidon, a very difficult opponent. Back then, I was in charge of keeping him occupied as the monitor. Even though Poseidon was much weaker than actual history, he should at least have been Silver to Gold-ranked..."

Looking at Song Junlang who had shut his mouth while reminiscing about the past, Xiao Lin pushed on. "What happened next?"

"After that." Song Junlang looked at the colorful mass outside the window which was due to the colorful layers of magical protection. He said, after a long time, "After that, I died."

Xiao Lin speechlessly looked at Department Head Song. The story seemed similar to his own, and he had guessed what mostly happened, but he never expected that ending.

“However, I got an S-rank evaluation in the end. I only got to know of the goal of the examination later. It actually wanted to teach all of us that, sometimes, sacrifices are needed. I used my own death to bring everyone a lot of time, stalling Poseidon and allowing the crack in time to restore itself. Poseidon slowly died by himself after losing the source of his power.

Pausing for a moment, Song Junlang smiled. “Of course, I didn’t do it properly. There were a few details that I did not do well. If I had managed to win more time, I would have gotten an SS-rank evaluation, but those who managed to do that were only a miniscule number a few hundred years later.”

Song Junlang’s strange smile seemed to have led Xiao Lin to guess something. He pointed at himself, and he happily and said in a surprised tone, “Are you saying that I’m someone who got an SS-rank evaluation?”

“Huh? No no no. You’ve misunderstood. You don’t have any score from this monthly examination.” Song Junlang shook his head and denied.

Xiao Lin was speechless as his eyebrow twitched.

Song Junlang playfully said, “Your examination is interesting. I heard about it when I was in the New World. Just like I mentioned, the goal of the examination was so that you would understand the meaning of sacrifice and making the most appropriate choice at the right time, even if that choice was death. That’s why the final opponent of that examination was something that first-years could not defeat, and it’s been the same for the examination all these years. However, there was an accident this time, and the undefeatable opponent had died.”

Saying that, Song Junlang opened his arms and seemed to be laughing. “You really gave the student union a very hard problem because the system never expected Poseidon to be defeated, but you did it. So, the last evaluation is not easy to determine, and thanks to you being unconscious, there was no way to understand the situation. So, the final decision was to not give a result for now. Hahaha, it’s really interesting.”

“Are you being entertained by my misfortune?”

“No, I just wonder how you did it. According to the date from the system, the Poseidon you defeated was far stronger than the other classes. Even so, Poseidon still died. What did you do?” Song Junlang’s playful tone carried a hint of seriousness.

Thinking for a bit, Song Junlang added, “You don’t have to say it if it’s not convenient, but please answer a few questions. Was it all your own strength? Did someone else help you?”

“Ah, I’m not sure if it was a person.” Xiao Lin really did not know what that existence in his heart was.

“Was it an explosive power?”

“That’s right.”

“What about the duration. You can give an approximation if you’re not sure.”

“Oh, around three minutes.”

“How much do you think your strength increased during that time? Let’s use your current strength as the benchmark.”

“Around fifty times; it should at least be around that number. If it was at the peak, it might have been higher.” Xiao Lin answered after some hesitation. His Ruin state could more or less give him ten times more strength than usual, so Myth should have been around fifty. If it were the dragon’s blade sword aura under Myth, then the power would be even more horrifying. Even Xiao Lin would not be able to estimate it.

Song Junlang breathed in a cold breath at that point before angrily saying, “My god! Are you crazy?! Fifty times?! Do-do you think you’ve lived too long?!”

Xiao Lin had a face full of innocence.

Song Junlang angrily said, “A human’s body has its limits, and these limits are ingrained within everyone’s DNA. In a Normese manner of speaking, at the level of the soul, there are skills that can increase your power temporarily, but if you exceed the limit, the damage it would cause to you is astronomical!”

“Power is sacrifice. Is it that principle?” Xiao Lin asked.

Song Junlang paused. “You’ve heard of that as well? That’s right, the forbidden spells that the academies have all agreed on were due to that unscientific mode of learning. It’s like pulling out saplings to help them grow, trading the future for short-term benefits; is there any meaning to it? It is just a loss. What could you lose? However, if you died, do you know how many people would be affected? Have you thought of your friends? Did you think of your parents?”

Song Junlang seemed to be angry. This was the first time Song Junlang had talked to Xiao Lin in such an accusing tone since they knew each other.

Xiao Lin did not rebuke it. No wonder Wang Shengming had placed him under surveillance. It was true that, from various perspectives, even if it were a self-created technique, Myth would be considered forbidden. That was the power of several decades of his life; that price was too heavy, but he still said lightly, “I understand. I understand all of it, but Department Head Song, don’t you have anything you absolutely had to do? Something that you had to do, even by using a forbidden spell or sacrificing your life?”

It was Song Junlang’s turn to fall silent. His face was ugly, but it was not due to Xiao Lin’s words or actions. He seemed to narrow his eyebrows to remember something, but he quickly shook his head, warning, “Xiao Lin, even though we joke around a lot normally, that doesn’t matter now, I need to remind you that, no matter how you got that power, you mustn’t use it a second time. Never use it a second time, or you’ll regret it!”

Would Xiao Lin regret it?

He did not know, but Xiao Lin would never regret using it this time.

“No wonder novice Lifewater was useless to you. You suffered damage directly to your soul. You were lucky. Though, since it was your first time, the damage was not serious. It is still in the realm of recovery.” Song Junlang never stopped talking, but his tone was warmer.

“How long would it take?” Xiao Lin asked.

“I’ll do my best, but it will be hard to do it before the Inter-academy Tournament.” Song Junlang guessed what Xiao Lin was about to ask.

“Oh.”

“What does ‘Oh’ mean?” Song Junlang retorted.

“I will still take part in the tournament.”

“I expected that.” Song Junlang was not surprised. He understood Xiao Lin quite a bit. He took out a document from his bag and handed it to Xiao Lin. “Then just fill this in.”

“What is this?” Xiao Lin looked at it a few times before he was frozen solid.

On the white document was the title, ‘Will’.

That was right; it was an actual will!

Song Junlang stared at Xiao Lin. “What’s there to be surprised about? Since you’re adamant about participating, then you should make plans in case the worst happens. You can’t resurrect, and if you actually die, you should arrange everything after your death. You should still have a lot of money in your New World bank account, but I have to remind you, based on the academy’s regulations, if you didn’t arrange it earlier, the money will be given to the public.”

Song Junlang explained the law to Xiao Lin in detail. Even though the current colonists would not use it normally, back during the war with the orcs, there really were a lot of people who died. This was the law that Dawn Academy had passed after that.

Fine, Xiao Lin finally snapped back to reality. From a third-party point of view, the law was very humane because there were detailed arrangements there, such as the fact that his fortune would end up with his mother if he died. If he had a descendant in the New World, there would be other arrangements and so forth.

That really did solve the regrets for dying for most, but Xiao Lin still looked at Song Junlang with a strange expression. Why did he suddenly feel like the will was the most important reason he had come to see Song Junlang for?

However, Xiao Lin quickly made a decision as he signed his name without a doubt. The will was not bad. At least his wealth would guarantee that his parents on Earth would live an easy life if he died.

Chapter 606 - Medicinal Studies

Chapter 606: Medicinal Studies

It was exactly when classes ended when Xiao Lin returned from Song Junlang's place. For some reason news of him waking up had caused a lot of people to be crowding around the resting area of the dormitory, and Xiao Lin stumbled upon them at the right time.

Most of them were from Class Seven, the ones who survived the examination. There were also a few monitors that were closer to Xiao Lin, such as Cheng Ming and Chen Dao.

"Hahaha, since you can still run around, then I'm relieved!" Cheng Ming let out a happy laugh.

"That's right, you're really a cockroach that can't be killed. I heard you really stood out this time!" Chen Dao's expression was one of admiration.

The other monitors all expressed their concern. After all, they had known each other for half a semester. Even strangers had developed a basic sense of trust and friendship. Of course, their concern for Xiao Lin was at that level as well.

After knowing Xiao Lin had completely recovered, Xiao Lin heard a few relieved tones. The level of sincerity led him to suspect if his charisma had grown greatly. Putting aside Cheng Ming and Chen Dao, the other monitors had not interacted with him that much.

It was the honest Cheng Ming that led him to understand it; the man patted Xiao Lin's shoulder, saying, "Don't tax yourself too much in training. You should fully recover so you can get the best results in the Inter-academy Tournament!"

Xiao Lin understood then that it was because the tournament was done in a group format. No matter if the others would admit it or not, Xiao Lin's combat ability was publicly acknowledged, especially after the last monthly examination. He even knew it in his toes that the ones in his class who managed to see his combat ability would definitely have exaggerated it in the forums.

If his important combat ability was lost, it would definitely affect the tournament a lot, especially since everyone who participated would be able to get the prizes from the tournament.

As for the reason for Xiao Lin's coma, the student union had deliberately concealed it. Other than the professors at the research center, no one knew about it. Even though the ones from the classes were curious about the power Xiao Lin had used at that time, the witnesses had deliberately kept quiet. After a few days, the matter had slowly been forgotten. To most people, their own daily studies and training were already a lot to handle.

The week after the examination ended. A lot of them received a notification that a few new courses would start after that week. It was also the secondary classes that a lot of them were anticipating. However, the only ones available to the first-years were currently Medicinal Studies, Mining, Basic Construction, and Basic Manufacturing.

There were actually many secondary classes, such as translation, scrolls, smelting, forging and potioncraft. Of them, the less popular classes would only be opened in the higher years because not everyone would be interested in it. Furthermore, the more popular potions classes needed Medicinal Studies as a foundation, which was why the course was made available to first-years.

Everyone could only pick one class, and those who chose construction and manufacturing would be awarded additional credits due to how taxing the two classes were. Not many were willing to specialize in them, which was why the academy awarded more for them.

Of course, after they graduated, not many of them would be able to use those secondary professions. However, just as the notice from the student union said, one would never be certain if one would ever use it. If one really had to use it one day, they might end up regretting giving it up and paying a heavy price.

A lot of them had actually realized it. In the examination that had just ended, it was the first time that they were not provided with an early report. On top of the fact that they were not allowed to bring in any equipment, a lot of them understood the importance of it, such as the fact that not being allowed to bring potions would require them to refine some natural herbs. Additionally, this examination only had very few students that could do it due to their grades in Basic Biology.

As for what Xiao Lin wanted to choose, he might have needed to think about it before choosing it, but after coming back from Song Junlang's place, he no longer had to hesitate. Xiao Lin quickly chose Medicinal Studies.

No matter if it was the practicality or his own situation, Medicinal Studies and the later potioncraft was his best choice.

Medicinal Studies started officially after the second week. Because of how fresh it was, the class was attended by a lot of them, and even Xiao Lin, who had a very tight training plan, attended it on time. The professor was a very strict middle-aged woman. She did not seem surprised when she entered a classroom that did not seem to understand anything. The first thing she said when she entered was, "I know all of you are very curious about this course, but if you just have curiosity, then I think you should give up on it. I'm not a patient person. I'll first announce the examination requirements for the course.

"The requirements I ask of you are that you need to at least be able to identify at least a thousand herbs after this semester. Only then will I allow you to pass at C-grade. Three thousand types will be B-grade, and over five thousand will be A-grade!

"I know most of you might not care too much about this course. I hope you can understand that Planet Norma has tens of millions of plants, so you might not even be able to know all of them in your entire life, so you should respect it..."

Xiao Lin could not help but raise his hand to speak.

The woman paused because the others had been shocked by her words earlier. She could not help but smile coldly because she thought that he was going to be the first person to give up. She nodded and said, "No need to raise your hand. If you want to give up, you can walk out of the class. I won't pursue the matter today, but from the next class onward, if you want to continue, you have to follow my rules."

"Oh, you didn't finish earlier." Xiao Lin thickened his skin and asked, "You said getting A-grade would require over five thousand types, but what about S-grade."

The corner of the woman's lips twitched, but she said, "Anyone over ten thousand types will get an S-grade. Anyone who obtains that grade will be directly recommended into a specialized potions research room, and will enjoy the newest potions research!"

"Really?" Xiao Lin's eyes immediately brightened.

"I always speak the truth, but I need to remind you, aiming for the stars isn't always a good thing."

"Thank you!" The happy Xiao Lin ignored the woman's later mocking. He had been wondering how he could quickly get into studying potions, but now it seemed like he had a way.

Chapter 607 - Challenge

Chapter 607: Challenge

A week had passed since the Medicinal Studies classes started. Even though Medicinal Studies took up a part of the basic weapons course, the basic course actually needed a lot of time after the class to revise and memorize the contents.

After all, just passing required them to remember a thousand herbs. Even if most of them were the basic herbs that were easy to remember, it was still not an easy thing for most of them.

So, during the second class, almost half of them were gone from the classroom. The student union was more lenient towards secondary classes, allowing each student to have a second choice. In the month after choosing the course, they had the ability to change it, but after a month, they would need to wait until a new semester.

Xiao Lin's task was even heavier. If he wanted to obtain an S-grade, he would need to remember ten thousand herbs. Professor Qin, who Song Junlang had mentioned to him before, had been researched by Xiao Lin through the second-year year leader Chen Yu. Professor Qin was currently the biggest authority on Medicinal Studies in Dawn Academy, and he specialized in the research and production of the newest potions.

However, he was different from the professors who liked to stay at the academy. Professor Qin enjoyed doing his experiments in the New World. According to Chen Yu, Professor Qin was only in the academy for no more than two months in a year. Of course, as a professor, he had his own experiment room.

In name, all the research rooms in the academy were put under the student union, but Professor Qin had a big reputation. Even the president would have a hard time ordering him to do anything.

That was why it was practically impossible for Xiao Lin to rely on Song Junlang or the president to get in. He could only use his own hard work to enter. He had taken the time to understand the research rooms in the academy. Most of them were prepared for graduates or above, and it was very similar to Earth. The professors would assign the tasks, and the research students would prepare the formulas accordingly.

In theory, it was impossible for Xiao Lin to get in, but Xiao Lin had already looked into the evaluation standards of the certificate for medicinal studies. Yes, it was the same as the messy and hateful professional certificates on Earth. In Dawn Academy, various professional occupations also had these evaluations. If one wanted to work in the relevant fields and be treated generously, the certificates were necessary.

The certificate for Medicinal Studies was relatively easy. It tested the participants on the ability to recognize various herbs, and the most basic certificate was a thousand basic herbs. After their first year course, that certificate was obtained automatically.

Because the student union did not have a hard stance on secondary professions, the higher levels of the certificates would require the students to choose for themselves. Recognizing over ten thousand herbs was enough to gain a master-rank certificate.

Even in the graduate classes, the passing grade was only five thousand types. It was enough for them to see how high that woman's standards were. She was practically asking for higher-year levels from the first-years.

However, that meant that, if Xiao Lin could do it, he would have the level of a graduate. It was natural that the lecturer would not mind writing a letter of recommendation. Anyone who could do that would definitely be qualified for a research room.

After that was the question of whether or not it was possible. Remembering over ten thousand herbs in just a year was not limited to just remembering the name and the appearance. Obtaining a master-level certificate required one to remember the traits, growing process, properties, and uses of each herb.

A lot of the people on the forum felt like Xiao Lin was crazy. Of course, quite a few of them thought that Xiao Lin was joking. Even Cheng Ming and the others had looked for Xiao Lin. Because the Inter-academy Tournament was fast approaching, it was not the time to be distracted by Medicinal Studies.

However, their suggestions were not able to change Xiao Lin's stance. In the first two classes, he did earnestly listen in class, but he quickly realized that what was taught in the classes was far from enough. In consideration of the majority, the speed of the lectures was not that fast. Based on that speed, a semester was probably only enough for a passing grade.

So, Xiao Lin used his rights to choose his own classes and gave up on that class, going to the library to borrow a large amount of books. The rest of them felt that Xiao Lin had really given up on that unrealistic stunt, and no one spoke of it anymore.

Only, Gu Xiaoyue would have a strange expression every time she walked past Xiao Lin. It was possible that only that woman really believed that Xiao Lin was aiming for the masters certificate. She had experienced Xiao Lin's memorization skills. Even with her levels of intelligence, she could not compare.

Using Academic Genius's passive learning skills, Xiao Lin's memory was incredibly scary. With the increase in his basic attributes, the effect strengthened as well. His Intelligence affected his memory to some degree. After all, mages needed a good memory for those complicated spells.

Xiao Lin's regular studies and training were not affected by it. He still did not want to give up on the tournament two months later. The time he had was utilized to the maximum by him.

He could only read the books from the library at night and during the weekends, but his efficiency was already more than just ten lines at a glance. He just needed to constantly flip through the books. He merely needed to glance at the herbs before they were integrated into the memory. After reading, he only needed an hour or two to digest and sort out the information before he remembered it all.

At that speed, in the week that passed, Xiao Lin had more or less memorized over three hundred basic herbs, but he still felt that the speed was too slow. With that speed, he would reach his goal within a year. Yet, to Xiao Lin, he did not have a year to waste.

One night during the weekend, Xiao Lin had finished his reading and was preparing to sleep. He had calculated the speed of his memory, and could not help but sigh. After that, he heard the sound of Bell's laughter nearby.

"It seems like you're frustrated with your memory. Do you need my help?" That playful and cute voice was from the academy's artificial intelligence, Bell.

Chapter 608 - Another Deal With Bell

Chapter 608: Another Deal With Bell

Xiao Lin was basically used to Bell, who would always choose to appear like a ghost, and he had stopped thinking about the complicated question of whether that little girl was an artificial intelligence or an artificial lifeform.

Xiao Lin rolled his eyes. Bell was still the same with her naked and pale feet, her white dress and the adorable neighbourly look on her face. Of course, Xiao Lin would no longer be tricked by it.

He yawned in exhaustion. "You say it so casually, but no one can help me with the evaluations. I can only rely on myself."

"You're already really fast." Bell blinked her virtual eyes, pointing at the pile of books. "Even those in their fourth year might not be able to read all of that."

"But I still don't plan on putting all my time into it; this is just a secondary profession for me, so I lack time." Xiao Lin rubbed his temples. After reading books for the entire day, even he would not be able to resist a headache.

"Then what would you think if I had a way to increase your memory by dozens, or maybe even a hundred times with your current attributes?"

Xiao Lin paused for over twenty seconds before carefully asking, "Do you really have a way? My pace is already fast to an unbelievable degree."

Bell pointed, saying indignantly, “Your speed is only fast for those people from Earth. The best mages on Planet Norma have unbelievable knowledge and spells. Do you think they spend all their time reading?”

“Is there a spell to increase my memory?” Xiao Lin’s eyes lit up.

“There is, but those spells aren’t all that useful. It won’t give you that large of an increase. I have a better way.” Bell’s tone was mysterious and alluring.

“Really? Will there be side effects?”

Bell angrily said, “I don’t think you trust me that much. Don’t forget who I am. In this academy, there’s no secret I don’t know!”

‘As if I would believe in you!’

Xiao Lin cursed in his mind, but he said, “Fine, fine, I believe you, of course. Let’s discuss the reward.”

The two of them stared at each other before Xiao Lin said in exasperation, “What do you want from me this time? Don’t tell me you’re doing it for free. I don’t believe you’re Mother Teresa.”

“Who’s Mother Teresa?”

Xiao Lin did not know how to respond.

“Find, let’s skip that question. Just tell me what you want!”

“It’s still the same thing. I need your eye! I need that eye of yours!” Bell’s expression was a little strange.

Xiao Lin jumped before he answered, “You want me to help you use Time Rewind? Why did you say it so scarily. I thought you wanted to dig my eye out.”

“So you agree?” Xiao Lin’s relaxed tone caused Bell to let out a sigh of relief.

“Oh, that’s impossible.” Xiao Lin had a joking expression.

Bell glared at him as she said angrily, “Then just slowly memorize your books here! Don’t think your speed is that good. Let me remind you, Medicinal Studies gets harder as you progress, especially with those herbs that only exist in legends; the difficulty is astounding!”

Bell was about to push open the door and leave, and Xiao Lin rolled his eyes, not stopping her. The girl kept on appearing and disappearing. Xiao Lin had never seen her walk through the door ever since he had gotten to know her.

Bell stopped right at the door, perking her ears up, obviously waiting for Xiao Lin to stop her. Xiao Lin was amused. No matter how powerful Bell was, she still acted like a little girl. He sighed,

wiping the smile off his face before earnestly saying, “You at least need to tell me when you want to go back to. I also need to remind you, no matter what, I won’t help you change history.”

Xiao Lin’s tone was stern. Fine, it was possible he had watched too many science fiction movies and novels about machines rebelling or intelligent machines taking over the world. The girl in front of him had a similar existence. Xiao Lin did not want to start some future where machines took over humans.

Bell pouted, saying, “Don’t worry, I won’t ask you to change history. I know more than you about the butterfly effect. I just...”

“Just what?” Xiao Lin could not hear what she said later, so he pressed on.

“I just want to know how I was born.” Bell’s tone suddenly turned very soft. She walked back and sat on the bed, mumbling, “I said that there was nothing I did not know in the academy, but that’s not true. There’s something I’ve never known, which is my birth. I really want to know how I was born, or whether I have parents. Maybe I really am just an artificial program. I’ve looked at countless pieces of information, but it seems that the people who founded the academy anticipated that, and left no information about it.”

Bell raised her head, looking at Xiao Lin as she asked, “If you don’t even know who your parents are, would you try to investigate it?”

Xiao Lin was speechless. Looking at that pretty girl sitting there, even if he knew Bell did not have a physical body and that she was only forcing herself to look like she was sitting, even if he did not know how sincere Bell’s words were, Xiao Lin had still been convinced.

After a long silence, he slowly nodded. “If we’re just observing history, then it’s fine, I agree. As long as we don’t change history, everything is good.”

Probably because of the heavy atmosphere, Xiao Lin half-jokingly said, “So do we pay up first or give the goods first? Or do we do it at the same time?”

Xiao Lin was referring to their deal. Both him and Bell did not want to be on the losing end of any deal, and they were obviously worried about being tricked.

However, Bell was generous this time. She waved her white little hand, saying, “I’ll tell you how to speed up your memory first.”

“You believe me now?” Xiao Lin smiled.

“Yes, I’ve been observing you, and you seem quite trustworthy.”

“Hold on. You’ve been observing me every night?!” Xiao Lin almost jumped up.

“Idiot! I’m not some pedophilic pervert like you. I’m not interested in watching a dumb man like you!”

Chapter 609 - What Ivan Used Before

Chapter 609: What Ivan Used Before

Xiao Lin had never fully believed Bell's words, but he suddenly thought about something as he furrowed his eyebrows and said, "Are you talking about Ibeiya?"

Bell narrowed his eyebrows at him. "You finally responded."

"There wouldn't be something so trivial in my documents, so does that mean someone is investigating me?" Xiao Lin was suddenly on alert. He knew that the only way Bell would know anything about him was to check into his documents, and that was nothing difficult for her.

Bell did not deny it, she shrugged and said, "There are some things that you don't have the clearance to know."

Even though Xiao Lin's personal information had been classified by the old dean, it did not mean that he had the clearance to look at other information. It was obvious that someone was investigating him in secret, and the information they got from the investigation might be even greater than he knew. Of course, Xiao Lin would never be able to know about it himself and, while the little girl in front of him had a lot of power, she was restricted by the same powers. It was possible that her casual words earlier were a warning.

Xiao Lin wisely chose not to mention it, but with that show of goodwill at the start, the negotiations that followed were much easier. Xiao Lin quickly formed a verbal agreement with Bell. Of course, it could only be a verbal agreement. There were too many things between them, such as the trip to the restricted area of the library. That could not afford to have any physical evidence left behind.

Xiao Lin would use Time Rewind for her at a specified time to investigate her birth. As a reward, Bell would tell him how to increase his memorization.

"In truth, increasing your memory is very easy. On Planet Norma, they believe that everything holds energy. That means that no matter if we can see it or not, or if we can touch it or not, it can all be converted into energy. With that as the foundation, memory can be converted to energy as well. For instance, the books in your room might look like a lot, but if it was converted into energy, it could only be the size of a fingernail. Memorizing all these books would be difficult for anyone, but what if you could just absorb energy the size of a fingernail?"

Bell did not go deep into the theory behind it, and explained things simply. Xiao Lin was deep in thought and quickly understood it. He did not know the science behind it and the overall process. He thought for a moment and asked, "I understand everything you said, and it seems logical, but if absorbing energy to remember things was so simple, then why does the academy not use it? At least, I've never seen anyone do anything like that in any courses."

"Because it's a forbidden spell," Bell blinked her adorable eyes as she said plainly.

Xiao Lin was once again flabbergasted, and only snapped back after a long time, saying angrily, “A forbidden spell? Hold on, if it’s forbidden, then there’s definitely a side effect, so what’s the side effect?”

“Probably something like scrambling your memories, something like a patient of mental illness on Earth,” Bell replied.

Xiao Lin’s lips twitched as he said, “Alright, then we’ll stop here. I’m going to sleep. Good night.”

Bell slyly laughed. “You need to let me finish. I never planned on letting you use it since I’d be in a difficult spot if you had any mental illnesses as well. However, after I looked at the records of your monthly examination, I changed my mind. If anyone in the academy could perfectly cast that spell, it would be you.”

“Does it have something to do with the monthly examination?”

“That power you used when you fought against Poseidon. I don’t know what it was, but if you have that power, you can digest the memories that are converted to energy, and won’t encounter any side effects!”

Xiao Lin’s expression mellowed out as he furrowed his eyebrows. “Myth? Are you telling me I need to absorb the books under Myth?”

“Myth?” Bell muttered it a few times before saying, “What an uncreative name, but that’s right. Just like you said, you need to put yourself into that state before you can perfectly absorb and digest it!”

Xiao Lin fell silent for a moment before saying, “Do you know the price for using this power is my lifespan?”

“I know.” Bell nodded.

“Then do you know I only have twenty years left?”

Bell continued nodding.

“Then do you also know that I’ll be participating in the Inter-academy Tournament soon?”

Bell nodded like a chick eating rice, and asked, “But don’t you only have twenty years left?”

Xiao Lin paused.

Bell continued, “I know about the tournament; the finals are held in the New World. I might not have been there before, but all the information I’ve seen says that you’ll lose twenty years of your life if you die there.”

Xiao Lin understood, and he smiled bitterly, “I understand now. Since I only have twenty years left, I would die forever if I die once anyway, so twenty years is not much different from a year or two, so I shouldn’t care so much. Am I right?”

“Right. dDon’t you say on Earth that there’s no use crying over spilt milk?”

Xiao Lin’s face twitched as he rubbed his forehead. Setting aside whether he was spilt milk or not, he said, “Honestly, I don’t even know how much lifespan using Myth consumes. The last time I used it, I used up a few decades. At a rate like that, I can’t be sure if I won’t die the next time I use it.”

“You have me. You actually don’t need to make such a big deal about it. You’re not the first one to use this method.” Bell narrowed her eyes at him.

“Didn’t you say no one else can safely use this other than me in the academy?”

“That’s right.”

“Fine, then who used this before me from another academy? Lilith?”

“Ivan. Ivanovich. Yes, it was him. Many years ago, he came to Dawn Academy and used that skill to master a lot of the spells unique to our academy in an instant.”

Xiao Lin fell silent for a moment, and he remembered the recording he had seen before. Ivan seemed to be friends with Song Junlang’s father, so that man coming to Dawn Academy before was not something too surprising.

He shut his eyes for a moment, recounting that short but shocking fight. It was a scene he would never forget because anyone who saw it for themselves would not be able to stop themselves from realizing how insignificant they were in the world. Under the pressure of that meteor Ivan summoned, anyone would lose all hope.

“Fine, I understand. Since Ivan used it before, I’ll agree to it!”

Chapter 610 - Participating Academies

Chapter 610: Participating Academies

A week quickly passed. Ever since Xiao Lin agreed to the deal with Bell, there had been no movement. Bell said that she needed time to prepare, and emphasized that everything had to avoid the notice of the student union and the academy, so she needed to make especially many preparations. Xiao Lin had no choice but to listen to her. In truth, unless Bell looked for him herself, Xiao Lin had no way of locating Bell.

Xiao Lin did not throw all his hopes on Bell, as he still maintained his training and attending classes during the day, and would still memorize his lessons at night. Everything seemed to be progressing as normal, and he had made time to visit Song Junlang twice, but most of the time, he could not find Song Junlang. Xiao Lin did not want to stay alone with that sea monster that would go into a rage whenever it saw him, so he naturally stopped going.

At night, Cheng Ming would occasionally ask Xiao Lin to train with him. The list of participants for the tournament had already been decided. Other than the twelve monitors, there was also Gu

Xiaoyue, making it a total of thirteen of them. The tournament's schedule had also been passed on to the participants by the student union.

The tournament was split into three parts: an individual tournament, a support tournament, and a team battle. There were three separate competitions, and for the sake of fairness, they had a point system in place. The individual tournaments would be split into two, and each one would award one point, which was the same for the support tournaments. Each match would feature a different theme. The group tournament was a 5v5 fight, and was worth three points.

That meant that the total score was seven points, and the academy that managed to get four points would win. All the academies would draw lots for their matchups, and before the finals, each round would use the same rules. However, the finals would be done separately. The tournament venue would be in the New World, and would be a 10v10 team battle. The time limit would be set at two hours, and after the time was up, the side who had the most remaining members would win. If there was a draw, then the remaining members would fight individually to determine the winner.

Each participant received a detailed explanation of the rules, and the president had also personally explained it to everyone in the lounge.

At the time, everyone had a strange expression on their face, but no one dared to interfere with the president's words. It was the president who smiled bitterly as he said, "I know what you want to say; these rules are way too complicated."

Xiao Lin nodded and said, "It's true. Seven separate events make it so convoluted. A straight group battle to determine the victor is much more simple and direct."

Cheng Ming nodded in agreement as well, and said in frustration, "I'm not afraid of the tournament, but what about the support classes? We haven't started our secondary profession classes for that long, and we're going to have to head straight into a competition. It's too quick."

The president sighed. "The tournament has a long history, and it's not the first time the rules have changed. Initially, the tournament was just a pure battle, but someone decided that it was not fair, since one person who was extremely strong could cover up for other weaknesses. So, it turned into 1v1 fights. However, after that, some academies felt that war was determined by teams, so they changed it to a team battle, but after more and more colonist academies joined, the smaller countries found it hard to stand up to our might, so they requested the secondary professions for the sake of fairness. The decision on that had never been set, but this year they finally passed it."

After pausing, the president said helplessly, "Because Dawn Academy had some matters and delays this year, we were taken completely by surprise by the change. We never expected it to be in the tournament since every academy's courses were different, but we have no choice now."

The president vaguely glossed over the reasons, so it was obvious that the reasons were not appropriate to divulge to the monitors present, but Xiao Lin could more or less guess them.

Dawn Academy was transitioning between deans, and there were constant fights in the dark, which was why they were looser when it came to dealing with outward matters. However, Dawn Academy was still one of the founding Academies, and was part of the Supreme Council. According to reason, their position meant that they had tremendous sway. If Dawn Academy did not agree to it, and the secondary profession tournaments were still added, then it was a little weird.

Xiao Lin felt that it was strange, and could not help but ask, “Which academies are participating?”

The other monitors also looked over curiously. Ever since they started classes, even though most of them had heard about other academies such as the American Judge Academy, the British Royal Academy, and the Russian Voyna Akademiya, not many of them knew how many academies there were.

The president slapped his forehead, smiling as he said, “I almost forgot about that. There are a total of twelve academies, and of those, Dawn Academy, Judge Academy, Sainte Académie, Royal Academy and Vovna Akedemiya are all founding academies. The other academies joined later on. They are Japan, Germany, Egypt, Argentina, The Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, and Portugal. We naturally have an advantage as a founding academy, so the five academies automatically advance to the second round, and the other academies will compete with each other to determine the last three before we start the elimination tournament.”

After a brief silence, everyone’s expressions turned strange.

Cheng Ming said a little unhappily, “There’s Japan?”

Class Eight’s Sheng Guo was a little surprised. “There seem to be more European academies.”

“Portugal, Spain, The Netherlands; they all seem to be strong European countries during the middle ages. Does it have something to do with the New World?” Chen Dao lamented.

“Why does America get to advance directly as well? Doesn’t their history start much later than ours?”

“There are very few South American and African countries, with only two in total.”

“It’s not that strange. At the peak of colonization, those regions were all colonized by others on Earth. They could not even take care of themselves on Earth, so how could they run to a new world?”

...

Everyone discussed quite a lot, but Xiao Lin’s expression was not great because he had once heard from Song Junlang that, in the Supreme Council, most of the matters related to running the academies were all discussed and decided upon together. If they forcibly approved something without Dawn Academy, that meant that the countries did not even bother notifying Dawn Academy.

Chapter 611 - Eating Books

Chapter 611: Eating Books

The tournament schedule was determined after discussions with everyone. Even if the majority usually used various ways to suppress the minority, since it was already at this stage, Dawn Academy had no way of changing anything, but the president consoled everyone in the end.

Thankfully, it was a seven-point tournament, so even if it was not the best for Dawn Academy, the other academies did not dare to be too impudent, and because of that, secondary professions were just limited to two points. As long as they could take down the remaining five points, they would still be able to win.

The president said that everyone should not be nervous, and they should just train and learn according to their plans. Furthermore, he would arrange for those from higher years that had participated in the tournaments before to guide everyone.

That was why Cheng Ming invited everyone to train in teams during their free time. Even if everyone's skills were at an acceptable level, what was worth mentioning was that Chen Dao was the second person to enter Bronze rank after Xiao Lin successfully got to that rank. The young man had shocking potential, even if his Intelligence was still not at Gu Xiaoyue's attributes. Cheng Dao's other attributes were much higher even than hers, and his total ability exceeded Gu Xiaoyue's.

However, most of the time everyone only participated in their own monthly examinations. There was only one time that they participated together, so their teamwork needed work, which was why group training was necessary.

Xiao Lin had planned on attending, but Bell suddenly appeared again, forcing him to helplessly reject Cheng Ming's invitation. Even though he could imagine someone like Han Manman would be insulting him behind his back, he had good reasons for doing so.

Bell found him deep into the night. Xiao Lin felt like he could be wrong, but the white-clothed girl seemed to be much skinnier than usual. It made for an amusing thought, since the girl was not, strictly speaking, a regular lifeform, so it was unlikely for her to have undergone such a change.

Bell did not explain, and Xiao Lin naturally did not ask anything unrelated. Their relationship was just at the level of being collaborators.

"We need to do this in the restricted area of the library, because you will be a being of pure energy there, which makes memory absorption easier."

Right after saying that, Bell brought Xiao Lin into that illusory and virtual academy again. It was the same room and the same building, but the sky outside was extremely dark. Other than Bell and himself, there was no one else.

Physical lifeforms were not allowed to exist there, and even Xiao Lin could not stay there for long. So, he did not ask too much. Since they had chosen to work together, he decided to trust the girl.

He followed Bell to the library, but they did not go to the room with the crystals this time. They went to a different lounge. There was no one else in the lounge, and it felt quite eerie. Bell had already prepared everything. She had gathered all the books related to potions that Xiao Lin had requested there. Even if it was the restricted area of the library, all the regular books were still there. There were no physical objects around, and even those books were actually special existences made of energy, so it was no surprise that Bell said this was the best place.

Xiao Lin flipped through the books, and it felt that they were different to the touch. They seemed to be liquid objects, and did not have a true physical touch. However, the contents of the books were

exactly the same as the real ones. Looking up, he asked, “What do I do? Surely I can’t just eat the books?”

“Yes.”

Xiao Lin paused for half a moment before he looked at Bell, who was nodding earnestly. He said, “What do you mean by yes? Do you really want me to eat them?”

Bell tilted her head, asking strangely, “Do you need some kind of sauce? Ah, you’re quite troublesome. Fine, I’ll look for something for you.”

After muttering to herself, Bell turned around and left. After a moment, Xiao Lin noticed the girl bringing along another pile of books, placing them in front of Xiao Lin and saying, “These are your sauces, mix them together and they should taste better.”

Xiao Lin browsed through them; those were all books of other specializations such as alchemy and enchanting. Xiao Lin was not in a rush to learn them, and felt like Bell was joking. He shook his head, and pushed away the books before thinking about how to eat them.

Since everything was made of pure energy, eating books could actually be understood as absorbing energy. Bell had already described the general steps. The theory could be ignored, and the general method was quite simple. He just needed to eat them under his Myth state.

However, Xiao Lin was taking quite a risk in doing so. Based on what Bell said, he needed to control his own flow of energy. He definitely could not activate Myth for longer than a minute. Otherwise, he might not be able to hold onto the remaining twenty years of his lifespan.

Of course, this was a good chance for Xiao Lin to experience Myth for a second time. Even though the mysterious existence told him to not use it a second time, he could not simply ignore such an amazing ability. After experiencing such an intense feeling, it was hard to shake off the urge.

Of course, Xiao Lin would not joke around with his own life, but he was very confident in Song Junlang. If Song Junlang could invent a special lifewater to increase his own lifespan, then Xiao Lin would have enough resources to continue using Myth. Before that, he needed to familiarize himself with the state as fast as possible. In that sense, this was a chance for him to experience it again.

After a few minutes, Xiao Lin activated his SS-rank talent. Because he was worried that Myth would be too intense for him, Xiao Lin first activated Miracle and Ruin.

In that strange space, with his body being composed of energy, even Miracle and Ruin were experiences Xiao Lin had never felt before. Losing his physical body had caused Xiao Lin to lose the feeling of power, but comparatively, Xiao Lin could feel a strange increase in his mental powers that he had never felt before.

“Myth!”

After two weeks, Xiao Lin activated that state again. The air suddenly ripped with an intense and frantic sound of friction, and an intense blue light suddenly emitted from Xiao Lin’s body as his hair and pupils had turned as blue as the sea.

Bell's uninterested face suddenly changed a little. She measured Xiao Lin from top to bottom with a shocked and curious expression on her face.

Chapter 612 - Absorbing Energy

Chapter 612: Absorbing Energy

"It's quite unbelievable, you actually have this power." Bell muttered in shock.

Xiao Lin did feel strange. Logically, when he activated Myth, he was at a Gold-ranked level, but in the academy, there was no shortage of fourth-year graduates who reached that level, so he found it hard to understand Bell's shock.

Xiao Lin did not dwell on it, as time was very valuable after activating Myth. After that was the strangest part. He needed to start eating books.

Xiao Lin picked up a book and placed it next to his mouth, but started to hesitate. Fine, he had to admit that he found it hard to accept, and could not help but find some doubt in his heart. Would he really digest this after eating it?

However, since it was already at this stage, there was no room for doubt. Xiao Lin could only close his eyes, and bite down on the book like he was eating poison.

There was no feeling or taste of paper like he expected, and the pages started to dissolve the moment they entered his mouth. It was like eating a soft snack. He did not even need to swallow it as it went straight from his throat to his intestines. However, that was just the start. Based on Bell's words, swallowing it was just the start of eating it. The digestion was the most important.

The pages that entered his stomach were already converted into the purest energy, and because Xiao Lin himself was made of energy in this state, the two of them started to meld together, causing a strange numbing feeling, but it was not too bad.

As if at the same time, many memories started to appear in Xiao Lin's head. They were all various pieces of information related to medicinal herbs, but the information was not very complete. Of course, it was because he had just swallowed only the first mouthful.

It really worked!

Xiao Lin was shocked, but he did not delay as he completely wolfed down the book in his hand in three bites. The whole book dissolved into a starlike energy in his mouth, and he took up the second book and started to eat again.

Xiao Lin felt that numbing and hot feeling in his intestines expand a few dozen times, and then there was a large influx of information that flowed into his mind. In a flash, Xiao Lin felt a wave of dizziness. He quickly leaned against the wall to support himself as he panted.

He recovered after a few seconds, but his mind was still a little dizzy. However, he did not dare to delay. He prepared to grab a few more books to continue when a white little hand pressed on his

arm. Xiao Lin curiously looked at Bell who had stopped him, saying, “I can’t maintain this state for too long.”

“This is just for you to get used to it.” Bell shook her head. “Based on the speed you’re eating, even if I gave you a whole hour, you still wouldn’t be able to finish everything.”

Xiao Lin looked at the books that were around him that numbered close to a thousand. It was true, with his talent, he could only use Myth for three minutes, but considering his remaining lifespan, he only had enough for a minute.

“Don’t you feel like your stomach is in pain?” Bell asked.

“Oh, a little, but it’s fine.” Xiao Lin touched the front of his chest. The numbing and dry feeling inside him was uncomfortable, but it was not unbearable.

Bell rolled her eyes, pointing at the books she brought later on, “That’s why I said that these are all sauces. Even though these books are all made of energy, in this space, each book has different characteristics, and their energy compositions also have some differences. It’s just like eating food, but if you feel like you don’t mind eating ten thousand of the same thing in the row, then it’s up to you.”

Xiao Lin thought about it before he shuddered. Fine, he understood that Bell’s words were not a joke, and he would probably get an upset stomach. He asked, “Then how do I increase my speed? Oh, I only have a few dozen seconds left.”

“There’s no hurry!”

Bell snapped her fingers, and all the books in the lounge floated up in the air before surrounding the two of them. They started to spin around them. The rotation was not too fast, and in a few seconds, they turned into a ring of star-like energy. That was the basic foundation of this world; that everything was made of pure energy. As the owner of the world, Bell naturally had the power to return all physical objects to their original state.

“Don’t forget to add these few books.” Xiao Lin had understood the use of the ‘sauces’, and he threw a few of the books that were not related to medicine into the ring of energy.

After another ten seconds, the speed of the rotation started to slow, as if a soup with various ingredients inside had finished cooking. The densely packed energy looked like a mass of stars.

Xiao Lin was about to ask how he was supposed to eat it when Bell snapped her finger again, controlling the energy to fly toward Xiao Lin. In a flash, the dark lounge turned unbelievably bright, and Xiao Lin was like a human magnet, frantically absorbing all the energy.

He never managed to finish his words because Xiao Lin did not even have time to think at that moment. The energy quickly turned into knowledge when they entered his body, and streams of information flowed in his mind. In his mind, every inch seemed to be filled with the information that had been converted into energy.

A dizziness that was hundreds of times more intense than earlier slammed into him, and this time, Xiao Lin did not even have the energy to lean against the wall as he collapsed on the floor in an

instant. His forehead and back were full of cold sweat as he shuddered. However, thanks to Myth, his consciousness was still clear, but also because of that, he felt even more pain.

He wiped the sweat on his forehead away with his arm, and realized all of it was a faint blue color. He suddenly understood that it was not sweat, but the energy that composed his body.

No wonder Bell said that it was very dangerous. If it was a normal person, they would probably be swallowed up by the wave of information. If they lost enough energy from their body, it would be like them losing all of their memories and skills, and they would be disabled.

Xiao Lin was a little afraid thinking about it because, even though he maintained his Myth state to use an immense explosiveness to restrict the energy in his body, it was still not perfect. At most, he managed to greatly decrease the speed.

However, he had no other way at that moment. Xiao Lin clenched his teeth as he sat on the floor, using his last bits of consciousness to start the digestion process.

Chapter 613 - Digestion

Chapter 613: Digestion

Digestion meant completely arranging and containing all the information that had been absorbed. Even though there seemed to be a lot of books earlier, when they were all converted into energy, it was actually very little. From the perspective of energy, it was barely even a speck of dust.

However, Xiao Lin himself could not contain too much. Water overflowed when the container got too full; that was the gist of it. That was why when she saw that Xiao Lin was starting the digestion process, Bell could not help but reveal a look of concern. Even with Ivanovich's success as an example, she still did not have absolute faith that the success could be replicated.

However, at that moment Xiao Lin's state meant that he could not focus on the outside world. He was in a very special state; if words needed to describe it, it was as if he was submerged in an ocean of knowledge.

Those books seemed to have information of most of Planet Norma's plants within. If it were a normal person, reading and understanding all of it might not be possible, even using their whole lives.

No, even with a cheat method like eating the books, it was still difficult, but Xiao Lin was in the explosive state of Myth, and his mental strength had greatly increased. It brought forth a great increase in his thinking speed.

The speed of a regular person's thinking was restricted by the speed their synapses could receive information, and the limit was about a hundred meters every second. Being able to reach that speed was already at the level of a genius. To a certain degree, the faster one's thought processes were, the smarter a person was. The faster they could think, the more they could think about.

Normese humans might be better than regular humans on Earth in various ways, but the difference in intelligence was not that high. It was probably a common trait between lifeforms, and not very related to planets or space.

However, with such a limit, wanting to absorb all those books in such a short time was incredibly difficult. Bell knew of that, which was why she emphasized that it needed to be done under Myth. However, she actually did not know what the limits Xiao Lin could reach was, so her expression was incredibly nervous as time ticked on.

After about a dozen seconds, something strange happened to Xiao Lin again. His body started to emit a shocking glow, and the faint blue light that came out of his body due to Myth retracted before exploding into an even more intense light.

It was like a star, and it was not limited to the lounge. The entire special space had been covered in Xiao Lin's blue light. It had filled every corner, and under the intense light, Xiao Lin's body turned into a transparent blue. His skin started to fade, and even the blood and organs in his body could be clearly seen.

His organs and his brain and even the blood were also tainted by the blue glow before his own body turned into a source of light. It seemed like Xiao Lin's entire being had turned into a big mass of energy.

That scene had caused Bell's jaw to drop. Her virtual form could ignore the intensity of the light, so she could clearly see more through it.

...

After an unknown period of time, even though the special space had its own concept of time, it did not flow at the same speed as real life.

When Xiao Lin opened his eyes in exhaustion, he found himself lying on the floor. At some point, his Myth state had been forcefully dispelled. He was actually a little scared since he did not know when he lost his consciousness. However, since he was still lying there, it meant that he did not exceed the time limit, which meant his lifespan had not been wiped clean.

Bell stood next to him, looking at him with a strange look, as if she had seen a ghost. This was the first time Xiao Lin had ever seen that expression on Bell.

Xiao Lin felt like something was wrong, and asked, "What happened? I remember I was deep in the information in my mind, and I lost consciousness at some point. Just tell me straight up, I'm mentally prepared for it."

"Hello? Can you speak?" Bell seemed completely in a daze and did not respond.

"Bell? Bell!

"The dean sent someone here!"

"Ah!" Bell finally revealed a shocked expression, finally snapping back to reality. She frantically looked around, and realized that there was no one there other than Xiao Lin and herself before she

patted her chest and let out a sigh of relief. She glared at Xiao Lin as she said angrily, “You tricked me!”

Xiao Lin’s lips twitched as he said, “Please! Look in the mirror, you look like you lost your soul. If I didn’t say that, how long could we have been waiting here?”

Bell’s face reddened a little before she measured Xiao Lin with a weird expression.

“Hey hey hey! Your expression is scary! Tell me what you want to do!” Xiao Lin could not help but retreat a few steps.

“I have to admit, I’m now really curious about you.” Bell sighed with either regret or celebration.

“I’m sorry. I’m not a pedophile.” Xiao Lin’s face was also very strange.

Bell was not angered as she rolled her eyes and said, “To be honest, I never thought you were anything before this. Even though your skills are decent, even though that old man... Oh, I mean the old dean, favored you, I’ve seen too many youngsters like you. However, today I understand that you’re different. You’re unique.”

“Hold on, why didn’t you think much of me?” Xiao Lin’s lips twitched even more intensely.

Bell shook her head silently.

“What about now? Where did your curiosity come from?” Xiao Lin could only change the topic.

“Do you know what happened just now?” Bell asked.

Xiao Lin naturally shook his head. He himself wanted to know what happened.

Bell threw a crystal ball at Xiao Lin, saying, “This is a memory crystal of what happened just now. Oh, don’t worry. I won’t let anyone else see this thing.”

Xiao Lin already knew how to use the memory crystals, so he immediately opened it. After that, the scene in front of him caused his eyes to constantly widen in disbelief. Looking at what happened, Xiao Lin did not know what to say.

Chapter 614 - The True God?

Chapter 614: The True God?

Everything in the projection was light, a light that filled the sky and every corner. It was blue and shockingly intense, and yet beautiful at the same time.

Of course, that was not the main point; the main point was that Xiao Lin did not see where he was initially. After rubbing his eyes, he found the clues the second time, and his face grew even more interested.

After a long time, he pointed at the projection speechlessly and looking at Bell, said, “That’s me?”

“That’s right.

“If it wasn’t you, it couldn’t possibly be me.” Bell rolled her eyes.

“But this...” Xiao Lin was a bit stunned, as he did not know what words to use to describe that strange scene. After a moment he said strangely, “I turned into the sun? And I was a blue sun?!”

In the projection, it was already impossible to discern any trace of Xiao Lin. The guy who was constantly glowing in a blue light could only vaguely be made out, but the source of the light appeared in a sphere. Just like Xiao Lin described, he was like a blue human sun, emitting unlimited light and heat.

“Have you heard of God?” Bell’s tone turned lighter.

“The God? Or do you mean something like Poseidon? I just met him during the examination,” Xiao Lin said casually.

“Do you know why Poseidon is called a god?” Bell raised her head, her eyes containing a trace of something. This time she sighed, answering herself, “I know that in Dawn Academy, no, in the eyes of most people in the academies, a god just means someone that’s a lot stronger.”

Xiao Lin shrugged, neither denying it nor agreeing with it. To some level, he agreed with that saying. For instance, Poseidon from the legends still seemed to be very strong, but that was just when it came to Xiao Lin’s perspective. Xiao Lin believed that if the ones who fought Poseidon were the Gold-ranked graduates, or even someone at Legend rank, Poseidon would only be able to run.

Bell saw through his thoughts as she continued, “On Planet Norma, there are people who can increase their strength to being Legend-ranked. As for how strong that is, let me describe it this way. If they used their full strength, the world would end. However, even those people can only be called false gods.”

Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows. “Are they all second to God?”

Bell said, “That’s right, and not only that. They can’t call themselves true gods. Even though the Normese can’t give this a scientific explanation, they mostly answer this based on their own experiences. However, a small number of people from Earth have earnestly researched this.”

“Then what are the results?”

“Initially, it was the academy from England. The initial research was more centered around the philosophy of idealism and materialism. After all, they even discovered Planet Norma, so what about the existence of God? The Europeans are much more passionate about that question than us.” Bell left the lounge as she talked, and Xiao Lin followed.

“Initially, there were many conflicting opinions. Everyone had countless questions, such as if God existed, then what did God look like? What was the standard for a God? Could the gods of different worlds be compared? Would God from Earth still be the God of Planet Norma...”

With her clear voice ringing, Bell had already walked past the corridors in the library, and slowly walked past the bookshelves that were full of books, and they soon arrived at the restricted area from the last time. However, this time, after opening the door, Bell ignored the memory crystals around them and headed straight to the deepest area.

After that, Xiao Lin realized that there was another little door in the deepest part of the area. On the handle of the door were various complicated magical arrays. He looked at Bell who had been talking to herself, and finally asked, "What's inside?"

"Inside is evidence that God exists. The real God is different from the God we speak about. No matter if it's Earth or Planet Norma; the true God is much different from what we think." Bell's expression was once again lighter as she blinked. "This is something Dawn Academy managed to record a long time ago. It's a God that is already nearing death. After that, the recording was sealed forever. I never planned on bringing you here, but..."

After a moment, Bell said in frustration, "Basically, I think that you should look at it."

Bell's vague words invoked Xiao Lin's curiosity. Looking into the unknown would always be man's greatest wish, and with the strange words that Poseidon had said to him, Xiao Lin really wanted to look into it.

He touched the door. The surface of the door was smooth as jade, and it had a faint heat to it. It was obvious that the highest levels of defenses had been added to the door. Just as he was about to ask how it was opened, the defensive arrays suddenly emitted an intense glow. Xiao Lin's face paled, as he knew the defensive array had been activated.

However, Xiao Lin did not even have the chance to speak because he was suddenly sucked in by the light from the array, vanishing on the spot.

Bell still had a strange expression and was a little shocked, but she seemed like her thoughts were confirmed as she mumbled to herself, "My guess was right. This defensive array absolutely restricts regular people, but Xiao Lin actually managed to pass through."

Xiao Lin had no way of listening to Bell's explanation. When he woke up again, he was in an empty space. When memory crystals were activated, they would pull the user into a virtual space before reconstructing the scene.

That was why Xiao Lin quickly calmed down. After making sure he did not have any injuries, he relaxed. He understood that he just needed to watch the recording until the end.

Bell said that this was a recording of a true God, so Xiao Lin started to anticipate it.

The virtual space was an unlimited darkness, and there was no light or sound. The wait lasted for over ten minutes before the darkness was suddenly filled by an unending source of light.

Xiao Lin shut his eyes, and when he reopened them, the darkness had disappeared. In his vision was just a large planet, a planet that was emitting a deep red glow, quietly floating in space.

Since it was a virtual recording, Xiao Lin did not feel the temperature or energy from it, but just looking at it shook Xiao Lin to his core.

It was like he was looking at a star from a close distance.

Chapter 615 - God? Planet?

Chapter 615: God? Planet?

The recording was not very long, and after a dozen or so minutes, Xiao Lin's vision started to blur and he was quickly standing in front of that door again.

"Are you done?" Bell's expression had not changed.

Xiao Lin hesitated for a moment before asking in a strange tone, "Surely you aren't telling me that that was a God?"

Bell did not deny it, but instead asked, "Then what do you think you saw?"

Xiao Lin said, "The sun? Or to be precise, that thing was clearly a star?"

Bell did not answer directly, and instead brought Xiao Lin away. After all, Xiao Lin could not actually stay in that space for too long. After returning to his dormitory, Bell let out a sigh before saying, "Do you know what the fastest speed is?"

"The speed of light."

"That's right. The fastest speed is light. The limit of a human's thoughts is only around a hundred meters a second, so even in the simplest mathematical questions, a human's calculations can't compare to that of a calculator. A calculator can make a billion calculations in a second, but the human's synapses have already determined their limits." Bell seemed to not be answering the question.

However, Xiao Lin rubbed his chin, saying with some thought, "The speed of thought? I read a similar article before. The speed of one's thinking determines their intelligence. Based on that theory, the limit of thought would naturally be the speed of light, but humans still can't reach that level, and we, of course, are limited in our ability."

"Then I can tell you clearly that, even on Planet Norma, even those at Legend rank, no one has the ability of the speed of light. Light is the vaguest concept. It's possible that there are those that can use it, but absolutely no one can control it!" Bell's expression was stern as she added, "There is a saying on Planet Norma. Time is God's domain. This saying isn't there for no reason."

"If physical beings can't reach the limits of thought, then only God can do it, which means it's the greatest difference between God and man." Xiao Lin muttered in realization before he suddenly exclaimed, "Hold on, are you saying that the ball of light was a true God, thinking at the speed of light? My lord, are you trying to tell me that, in order for a true God to allow itself to possess the speed of light, it made itself into a pure state of energy, which is also a state of light!"

Bell looked at him with praise. "That's right. In truth, the answer is not that surprising. I've read many religious works from Earth. No matter if it's from the East or the West, every similar

recording claims that God's state is light. It's just that humans never thought of its meaning. God maintaining a state of light isn't because it's a higher state of being or that it looks nice, it's just because they have to do that to maintain a thought process at the speed of light."

Pausing for a moment, Bell raised her little hand and illustrated in the air. "Thinking at the speed of light; the special thing about it is that the distance between any point becomes the same. In order for every thought to be done at the same speed, each interaction, transfer, and combination has to be at the same speed. That is the most efficient way and, based on that theory, the form that accomplishes that in the best way mathematically would be a sphere."

Bell dropped her hand, because Xiao Lin's half-understanding expression meant that he did not understand her mathematical model at all. She rolled her eyes, saying, "This theory was completed a very long time ago. The debate back then was very intense. After all, if God really was an orb of light, the conclusion would be very strange. The devout believers in Europe could not believe it at all. It was only when a true God was discovered that all the debate stopped, and everything was sealed away."

Xiao Lin did not ask about the reason for the sealing, as that would definitely contain even more secrets that he should not know at that moment. Xiao Lin was even more concerned about himself. After listening to Bell, he pulled back the old topic, "Then do you think that the form I was in before was close to a God?"

Bell's expression turned strange again. "From the definition of a God, a form of pure energy that moves at the speed of light is necessary. When you absorbed the knowledge in those books, I felt that it was very similar. Fine, I admit that I was shocked by what happened."

"Did Ivanovich not use the same method back then?" Xiao Lin asked in confusion.

Bell shook her head sternly. "However, Ivanovich did not turn into a form of pure energy when he absorbed it. In truth, based on all the documents in Dawn Academy I know of, I've never seen a similar record. Xiao Lin, you're different!"

He was different...

Xiao Lin sighed imperceptibly. From the day he entered Dawn Academy, it was not the first time he had heard that. The dean had said that to him, and so had Song Junlang. Not long ago, that mysterious being in his body had said that as well, and now Bell was suddenly saying it.

From the earliest shock to the confusion now, Xiao Lin was already numb to those words. In another manner of speaking, it was as if it was his destiny. In truth, Xiao Lin was beginning to hate the feeling, especially after the last monthly examination. That mysterious existence had clearly said that Xiao Lin's uniqueness had been forcefully given to him.

"You don't seem happy." Bell seemed to find Xiao Lin's reaction strange.

Xiao Lin wiped away his disappointed expression and shook his head to stop the conversation. To him, even if he was some offspring of an ancient and distant God, he was still himself. There was only Xiao Lin in this world, and he did not want to care about what had happened in the past. He only cared about what he needed to do.

“Then, have I really grasped everything in those books? I remember you saying that it’s basically everything to do with medicinal studies.”

Xiao Lin shifted the topic again. Bell knew he did not want to dwell on it and smiled as she said, “Of course. Don’t underestimate yourself. Under Myth, your absorption abilities are really good. However, there’s some correction needed; it’s the medicinal studies that Dawn Academy knows. In truth, there are still many things on Planet Norma that even the academy doesn’t completely know.”

“That’s enough, but this method feels like I cheated. Can’t I just learn everything in the academy this way?” Xiao Lin felt like the possibilities were endless.

Bell rolled her eyes at him. “If you think your life is too long, you can try.”

Chapter 616 - Start Of Training

Chapter 616: Start Of Training

“There is a limit to how much information a human’s brain can store. Even if you’re still very far away from that limit, there are still side effects to absorbing large amounts of information in one go. After all, you’re not actually a god, and can’t maintain that state of pure energy forever. In truth, even if you’ve already absorbed everything from those books, I recommend that you only use the knowledge when you need it, and not use it excessively in a short amount of time,” Bell said strictly.

Xiao Lin touched his head. He tried to recall the higher level medicines that were taught in class, and the relevant information immediately came up in his mind. It seemed to be a response to his intentions, but when he tried to remember more, his mind immediately shook, and a soft pain exploded forward.

Looking at Xiao Lin’s pained expression, Bell opened up her arms and said, “It seems like you understand. All that information is currently deep within your memory. It’s just like a classified document, and you can retrieve it at any time, but if you retrieve too much in a moment, your brain will be damaged, so there is some danger to it.”

Xiao Lin jumped in fright, suddenly raising his eyebrow. His tone was unkind. “Hold on, didn’t you tell me that there wouldn’t be any danger if it was done by me?”

“Huh? Did I say that? Why don’t I remember it? Big Brother, don’t lie to me!” Bell blinked her cute and innocent eyes at Xiao Lin, her expression one of complete innocence.

Xiao Lin’s lips twitched as he shook his head helplessly. He knew that there was no point in pressing her on the matter. No matter what, all that information was already stored in his brain, and it would be a great help when he needed it.

As for whether or not the choice was worth it, it was hard to say. Xiao Lin checked his lifespan, and he still had ten years left. Even though he had reduced his usage of Myth this time, it had still

taken away ten years. However, just like what Bell said, there was no difference between ten and twenty years.

So, Xiao Lin no longer needed to attend medicinal studies. With the tournament not far away, he threw more of his time into his training. As for the mockery and laughter a lot of people privately directed at him, he did not care. After all, in most of their eyes, the guy who confidently asked about an S-rank evaluation at the start of class quickly stopped attending the class. It was obviously a retreat after failing to grasp the difficulty of everything.

Taking into account the urgency of the tournament, the academy had made the appropriate adjustments for the current new students, such as the cancellation of the monthly examinations. They did not want the participants to encounter any accidents during the examination. However, Xiao Lin could feel that it was probably targeting him, since his lifespan did not allow him to even die another time.

Other than that, some of the unnecessary courses had been cut out of their regular schedule. The additional time was allocated to training, and their training companions were the fourth-year graduates, because the tournament was split into fourth- and first-year components. Of course, most of the time, the fourth-years were just sparring partners.

For some reason, the tournaments put more of an emphasis on the first-years. After all, new students represented future potential, such as Lilith, who had stood out in the last tournament. Due to that woman, Judge Academy strengthened itself. If no one found a way to stop Lilith in the next few years, she would be the genius of Judge Academy in the future.

...

Because of Bell's interference, when Xiao Lin belatedly appeared on the training field, it was already the third day of training. There were obviously a few silent words about Xiao Lin's lack of attendance, but no one voiced it out loud. When he saw who the training instructor was, Xiao Lin laughed.

Their trainer was Captain Yu Mei. It was hard to blame the others for not voicing any opinions. Everyone knew that the woman was on Xiao Lin's side, but Yu Mei did not give Xiao Lin any special treatment. She merely nodded at Xiao Lin reporting in, and the training started after that.

"Other than increasing your various combat powers, this training will also determine the order that you will fight in. Based on regulations, the individual and secondary profession portions cannot feature repeat members, but the team portion is not affected," Yu Mei said.

"Then I'll just participate in the individual fights. My spells are suitable for individual combat," Class Four's Han Manman interrupted.

Yu Mei glared at her before coldly saying, "I will be arranging the participation list based on your results during this period. It's not up to you what you take part in. Other than that, the participants will not be constant throughout every match, as I will swap you out based on your condition."

"The substitutes will also gain a lot less rewards." After pausing, Yu Mei added that to warn anyone against deliberately underperforming to avoid the tournament, but still obtain the prizes.

However, Yu Mei had been staring at Han Manman as she said that. It caused Han Manman to feel obviously awkward, but she puffed up her chest and laughed. “The results will be the same anyway, so I’ll definitely be participating.”

“I really don’t know where her confidence comes from.” Chen Dao, who had always been at odds with her, mumbled at a volume that everyone could hear.

“You are stronger than me in skill, but it might not be the case in one-on-one combat. You would probably only be able to beat Gu Xiaoyue,” Han Manman mocked.

“Try now if you dare!”

“Fine!”

“Enough!”

“Han Manman, shut up!”

“Chen Dao, you should speak less too!”

Even though it seemed like a fight was about to break out, Yu Mei did not seem to want to make a move. It was as if she was used to it, the others like Cheng Ming immediately went up to stop it.

The monitors were not usually completely united, and would usually have conflicts between themselves. Suddenly gathering to fight together in a team would definitely draw some conflict.

There were some upper-year students and lecturers observing them, and all of them sighed and shook their heads at the scene, as if they were worried about the tournament this time.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Suddenly, the heavy sound of a blade hitting against wood could be heard. It stood out in the noisy training hall, so everyone’s gazes shifted there.

Xiao Lin was holding a training sword and waving his sword to practice. During that period of time, since he had used up more time on medicinal studies, he had gone rusty after a few days away from swordsmanship training, so Xiao Lin had planned on getting his body back to its previous state.

Chapter 617 - Practice Fights

Chapter 617: Practice Fights

It might have been because the training hall had turned too quiet, but Xiao Lin stopped his actions after a moment, looking at everyone else strangely before continuing his training.

The others exchanged looks with each other, and Yu Mei’s lips curled up into a smile before she loudly shouted at the rest of them, “Do you see that? What I need to see is real results from your

training! I don't care about these petty squabbles! I also need to remind you that the student union president has given me power. Even though you've all been registered to participate, before the official tournament, I have the right to switch out any of you! Ah, in truth, a few of you will never be able to fight anyway, so we'll at least be able to save on the expenses for a few of you!"

Yu Mei had always been a straightforward person, and her words were never intentionally meant to scare anyone. If she dared to actually scare someone, it meant that she really had the right.

The captain was already a very big official in the eyes of the monitors. After the lecture, even Han Manman shut her mouth because the student union had exposed the final rewards for the tournament a few days ago. Just a part of it had already attracted everyone's attention, making them salivate. No one wanted to be kicked out at this point. Not only would they lose any and all rewards, it would be very humiliating as well.

After the training went past the chaotic first few days, it started to get more orderly. Based on the basic rules that the student union had set, since Dawn Academy had been messed with by the other academies in terms of the rules, they were planning on basically giving up on the secondary professions. Based on Yu Mei's intentions, the ones who performed the worst would be thrown to the secondary professions, since they did not plan on winning it anyway.

As for the individual fights and the group events, those still needed to be monitored closely, which was why Yu Mei had gathered them to train.

"Based on past experiences, the individual events will usually send out one martial participant and one magical one. From the past battles, mages usually have an advantage against close-ranged fighters. Based on our data, the win rate is as high as seventy per cent." A fourth-year senior named Bai Ning had spoken. She had a head of short hair, and was thin but seemed to have a body that was full of energy. She seemed very capable.

Yu Mei had looked to her for help, and she had participated in the tournament for new students four years ago. It was a pity that Dawn Academy had been eliminated by Judge Academy in the Top 8 that year. However, she had won her individual event, and Bai Ning had kept her skills up in those few years; she was already at Gold rank in skill. She would be the instructor in individual battles for Xiao Lin and the others.

Yu Mei was someone extremely experienced, but Yu Mei's specialties lay in war strategies and commanding large-scale battles. She was not suited to solo fights like these tournaments.

Cheng Ming raised his hand and voiced his questions. "Senior Bai, I'm a bit curious. I'm not doubting their abilities, but in individual combat, if both sides are elites, and if the close combatant knows sword aura, shouldn't the melee fighter have an advantage?"

"There's no need to be so polite. I'm still a student just like all of you. I was just invited to help out here. Oh, what is your name?" Bai Ning laughed casually, causing most of them to feel closer to the senior.

"I'm called Cheng Ming, the monitor of Class One." Cheng Ming smiled.

"It's true that close combatants usually have the advantage when skills are equal; I think the practical combat course you have this semester would have taught you about it. However, that's

just under the conditions of large-scale combat. In a battle between elites, if both of them are in the same situation, mages have a very obvious advantage.” Bai Ning pursed her lips, as if she was mulling over her words. However, she was not a specialized teacher in the end, and after thinking about it, she smiled and said, “How about this? Come try it out with me. Don’t worry, I’ll be careful.”

“Alright, then I’ll give it a shot!”

Cheng Ming was just about to agree, but someone answered even quicker than he did. After that, he looked over at Xiao Lin in confusion.

Xiao Lin helplessly said, “Are you dumb?! She’s at the Gold rank. Even if she suppresses her strength to the lowest, you wouldn’t be able to beat her. You’re not some masochist, so why are you sticking your head out?” The others naturally knew that logic since they did not step out, and Cheng Ming was probably the only one honest enough to stupidly stand out.

“It’s just a sparring session.” Cheng Ming regretfully rubbed his head, but since Xiao Lin had stepped up, he did not press on.

“Senior Bai Ning, please teach me well.” Xiao Lin politely greeted her as he stood in the middle of the hall.

Bai Ning did not know how to react after seeing everything clearly, but she still nodded and praised, “Your swordsmanship was quite good just now. I’ve seen a lot of fourth-years who don’t have their basic movements down so smoothly.”

“Thank you for your praise.”

Since Xiao Lin stood at the ready, Bai Ning did not waste any time speaking. As a senior from the fourth year, she handicapped herself by not using any weapons. Of course, Xiao Lin only had a training sword that had no killing power. In truth, he was looking forward to it. Even though he had encountered a lot of battles in the New World, there were very few chances for pure 1v1 battles, especially with an opponent at such a level.

Since the senior would definitely not make the first move, Xiao Lin went straight for it, thrusting the tip of his sword forward. He was already rushing forward, and pointed his sword upward. That was the most basic technique in swordsmanship.

However, Bai Ning’s smile had frozen in place as her pupils constricted. With her sharp observation skills, she could naturally tell that, while it was still the same basic swordsmanship move, Xiao Lin’s movements were faster, and the angle of the sword was very fierce. He did not plan on letting her cast a spell.

Since it was just a sparring match, Xiao Lin naturally did not use his full strength. He did not even use his Miracle state, and only used his Phantom Steps. However, even without increasing his attributes, his Phantom Steps already raised his speed to shocking levels. He was only about a hundred meters away from Bai Ning, and he closed the gap in just a few seconds.

Bai Ning's reactions were not slow either. Her deft hands quickly moved in the air, and a faint gold magic array was quickly formed. Xiao Lin's blade was fast, and after the clear sound of impact, the training sword bounced a few centimeters away from Bai Ning's body.

Chapter 618 - Practice Fight With Bai Ning

Chapter 618: Practice Fight With Bai Ning

Bai Ning's expression quickly turned serious. It was just a basic technique, but she could tell that Xiao Lin's basics were much better than the others. However, she did not panic at all, and had casted the defensive spell in a flash before her hands quickly moved again, not pausing for a moment as she opened her mouth to start chanting a spell.

Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows curiously. Bai Ning's chanting speed was very fast, but it was not fast to the level of being extraordinary. The key lay in the fact that the woman's chants only had a few independent magical words. That in itself had shrunk the chants needed to less than a third.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

A string of fireballs shot out, but those fireballs were only about half the size of normal ones. Even though the power level had dropped, there were a lot of them, and Xiao Lin's speed was immediately suppressed.

The fireballs were not very powerful, and Xiao Lin slashed out a wave of sword aura, cutting down the spells that were flying at him. However, Xiao Lin understood that Bai Ning did not plan on claiming victory with those fireballs. In just that short moment, a new chant started. Xiao Lin did not even bother raising his head as he jumped into the air, avoiding the new spells that were flying toward him.

Xiao Lin was still a step too slow. No, it was more accurate to say that Bai Ning's spellcasting was too fast to imagine. Xiao Lin's foot, which was already half a meter in the air, still got hit by a bundle of yellow light, and then he suddenly felt his body turning heavier.

A slowing spell!

Xiao Lin immediately determined what the spell was. It was a Bronze-ranked slowing spell. It used the power of earth to burden the enemy, achieving the effect of slowing a target down. Even though that single-target spell had very narrow uses, and was very hard to land, it was not a problem in the hands of an elite mage.

Closely following the slowing spell was another string of debuff spells. Xiao Lin used his sword aura and basic swordsmanship to block a portion of it, which was enough to cause Bai Ning to look at him with a shocked expression as she reevaluated him. However, Xiao Lin was still hit by the remaining spells, and continuously being hit, Xiao Lin's pace had slowed down to the speed of a turtle. He calculated it in his mind, and he might not even be able to salvage it with Miracle. Only by using Ruin could he increase his speed to something close to Bai Ning's.

However, it was still a sparring match, and Xiao Lin did not plan on using Ruin or Miracle. After losing his greatest advantage in his speed, he was in a very bad state.

Xiao Lin started to understand why mages held the advantage in individual duels, but he did not plan on giving up just like that. Since he did not have any speed, he decided to just stop in his tracks, raising up his training sword as a dense sword aura started to gather.

“Slashing?” Bai Ning immediately realized Xiao Lin’s intentions. However, she was even more confused, and did not know how to feel because Xiao Lin had kept on using the most basic of swordsmanship skills, including Slashing. Bai Ning had not seen those skills in formal combat for quite a few years.

“Junior, it’s not smart to use sword techniques that require you to gather your energy against mages because, if you give me enough time, the damage I can inflict is much greater than yours.” Bai Ning’s voice had a teasing tone to it, and she started to move her hand to use an even more complicated magical chant with accompanying hand movements. Her body started to gather a striking blue light.

“A Silver-ranked spell Super Concentrated Beam?” Yu Mei raised her eyebrow before taking out a magical scroll, covering the other students in a light.

Concentrated Beam used one’s own magical power as an energy source. The spell’s greatest advantage was that it did not need any elemental power, and could be used ad nauseum as long as one had enough magical power. However, its greatest flaw was the long time it took to gather, but Xiao Lin’s Slashing gave her enough time.

Looking at Xiao Lin, Yu Mei’s expression changed again before she suddenly said in a low voice, “Careful, Bai Ning...”

A rumbling could be heard.

Before Yu Mei could finish her words, the sword aura released by Slashing clashed with the concentrated beam. Slashing needed less than three seconds to gather the maximum amount of energy, even though it was rare to have a chance to gather it to the limits in actual battle. Even at its limit, the sword technique was still at the lowest level, so its power could only increase to Bronze rank.

However, Xiao Lin had used it alongside the power with elemental sword aura. The power of his elemental sword aura was far greater than any other sword aura of the same rank.

There were not many people who used elemental sword aura in the academy, so Bai Ning was not very prepared for it. She never expected Xiao Lin’s Slashing to be able to block her Super Concentrated Beam. The clash of the two energies caused the entire training hall to shake. The sudden light that exploded out caused everyone to shut their eyes.

That sudden loss of sight did not cause Bai Ning to stop her attacks. Even though she was very perplexed, her years of experience still allowed her to react immediately. Following that, she chanted out a flaming sword that had explosive powers. It was a spell that had a physical attack to it.

Even after losing her vision, Bai Ning quickly used her extremely strong perception to lock onto Xiao Lin. The moment she threw out her flaming sword, Bai Ning felt like something was off. When she wanted to react, her disadvantage as a mage showed itself. She had a very strong perception, but her reaction timing was very bad.

A clear sound broke through the air, and the light that exploded out had already dispersed. After all, it was only a Silver-ranked spell.

When they opened their eyes, they looked at the two of them in the arena. Xiao Lin and Bai Ning had already stopped their respective attacks, even though the rest did not know what happened. The victor was already determined.

Xiao Lin looked at his broken armor. The sparks of fire that remained indicated the remnants of the attack. Xiao Lin unwillingly sighed. “Senior Bai Ning, it’s my loss.”

Bai Ning opened her mouth. She looked back at the floor next to her, the training sword was half stuck on the ground. It was only a short distance away from her.

“Why did you choose to throw your own sword at me? Why didn’t you use your sword aura to attack? Your sword aura shouldn’t be that weak.” Bai Ning asked.

“Because you definitely prepared spells to defend against energy. In such a short time, I would have had no better way to break through your defense, so I could only use my sword to attack. You should know as well, a physical attack is the best way to break through an energy shield,” Xiao Lin answered.

Bai Ning smiled faintly, and nodded. “A good assessment. It’s obvious that you should have won.”

Chapter 619 - Sparring

Chapter 619: Sparring

Bai Ning spoke plainly as she smiled. “You didn’t use your full strength.”

“You didn’t either.” Xiao Lin shrugged. He felt a bit of regret since the sword he threw did not hit Bai Ning and because his perception had been interfered with by Bai Ning at the last moment. He was helpless against the difference in their Intelligence attributes, but if he had Miracle or even Ruin active, it might not be the case.

However, in the same way, Bai Ning did not use her full power either. It was obvious that she had held back a great deal in her last spell. Otherwise, Xiao Lin might not even have been able to attack under the intense power.

“Alright, let’s stop here!” Yu Mei stood out at the right time. She stared at the two of them, blaming them a little for taking it too far. She looked around the training hall, as it was in a mess, but thanks to Yu Mei using the defensive magical scroll, no one else was injured.

“I think he can participate in the individual events.” Bai Ning walked over and told Yu Mei.

Yu Mei laughed. “It seems like you hold him in high regard.

Bai Ning looked at Xiao Lin, who was not far away, before nodding. “It has nothing to do with his skills. His combat experience is definitely not at a first-year’s usual level. We all know that the first-year tournament is more about who has the most experience.”

“He does indeed have a lot of experience.” Yu Mei had a strange expression. She knew what Xiao Lin had experienced during this time. In terms of actual combat experience, Xiao Lin definitely had more than anyone else.

“Xiao Lin can just be one of the ones taking part in the individual tournament. dDo you have any suggestions for the other candidate?” Yu Mei made the decision immediately. As the one in charge of the training, she naturally had the authority.

“Oh, I think I won’t participate in the individual tournament.” Xiao Lin coughed dryly after eavesdropping on the conversation, not able to stop himself from objecting.

“What?” Yu Mei widened her eyes.

“I want to take part in the secondary profession segment.” Xiao Lin knew that the others were looking at him with a strange expression, but he still thickened his skull and spoke. Since the secondary profession candidates could not overlap with the individual ones, he could only pick one. If he was just participating in the tournament for the experience, Xiao Lin would naturally be happy to fight in the individual tournaments.

Being able to fight against the strongest students from other academies was something Xiao Lin anticipated. However, if they needed to win, then this was actually the better choice.

This time, the other academies had worked together to mess with Dawn Academy, which meant that the other academies had a lot of confidence in their secondary professions. Dawn Academy was the only one that was not prepared. Yu Mei and the president planned on giving up on those points, but that meant that they definitely needed to win at least one of the individual fights as well as the team battle, which involved countless variables.

Xiao Lin knew that Gu Xiaoyue cared more about the rewards of the tournament than he did. That medicine could potentially cure Gu Xiaoyue’s sister, and Xiao Lin had a deep impression of Gu Chengyun as well. He also did not wish for that innocent and happy girl to be confined to a wheelchair for her whole life.

The result of that deliberation was Xiao Lin’s participation in the secondary profession segment, so the best choice was for him to win that point.

Thanks to Bell’s help, the medicinal studies knowledge that Xiao Lin grasped at that moment, at least compared to those from the same year, was practically incomparable. He was actually even more confident in his ability to succeed in that than the individual events.

Bai Ning wanted to advise against it, but Yu Mei stopped her. Yu Mei understood Xiao Lin more than Bai Ning, and knew that the guy was not joking, so she understood that it would be hard to change Xiao Lin’s decision.

“Since that’s the case, then you should just be a sparring partner during this training period.” Yu Mei decisively changed her words.

“Sparring partner?” Everyone exchanged a look.

Only Xiao Lin smiled bitterly. Yu Mei calculated things very well. He was actually very suited to be a sparring partner since his skills were far above everyone else. Most importantly, he was proficient in magic and swordsmanship, which made him a very good opponent.

The others were filled with anticipation because that meant that they had earned a chance to officially fight Xiao Lin. That man who had been a monitor since the start was definitely the person that stood out the most among the first years. However, at some point, everyone started to view Xiao Lin as the strongest person in the year.

It was possibly since that combined monthly examination, or it might have been when he was the first to reach Black Iron and Bronze rank. As time went on for longer, that sentiment was more and more prominent.

The regular students did not really care about that. When the second semester started, the gap between them and the monitors was stretched even further. However, to the monitors, not everyone was as generous as Cheng Ming. Even if they understood that Xiao Lin might be very powerful, it was hard for them to completely acknowledge it.

“Why does everyone think that he’s stronger than us?”

“We’ve been putting our lives on the line and frantically training too.”

“Maybe we’ve already surpassed him?”

Being eager to win was a natural human trait. They usually did not have many chances to spar against Xiao Lin, especially since Xiao Lin regularly disappeared. Even if they voiced out that request, there was a big chance of them being rejected, so they finally had their chance.

Feeling various looks around him, Xiao Lin sighed again. He understood that he would probably be very busy in the following days.

...

The training hall for the monitors had been specially arranged, but there were no secrets that were foolproof. It might have been due to the upper-year students unintentionally leaking it, or maybe a monitor talked about it, but after training for a week, news of the results of the duels between the various monitors surfaced on the first-year forums, and even the general rankings were announced.

Even though their training hall was specially arranged, the training halls themselves were open to the public. More and more people started to spectate the training, and various pictures would appear on the forums every day.

Xiao Lin took his role as a sparring partner seriously, and was even a bit merciless. When he was sparring, he did not hold back like he did against Bai Ning. He even used Miracle and Ruin. If he really lost while using those skills, then Xiao Lin felt that he might as well quit the academy.

Gu Xiaoyue was the only one that did not need to participate. As a support role, Yu Mei had given her specialized tutoring, which spared Xiao Lin some awkwardness.

In the initial few days of sparring, Xiao Lin practically stomped everyone with his victory. The only ones who could stand up against him were Cheng Ming and Chen Dao, but when Xiao Lin used Momentary Blink, the two of them still fell in seconds.

Xiao Lin's attributes were already at Bronze rank, and with Ruin, even facing talent-holders like himself, the difference was just being able to hold on for an additional few seconds.

Chapter 620 - Fight with Han Manman

Chapter 620: Fight with Han Manman

Under the name of sparring, many of them tried to challenge Xiao Lin, but were quickly beaten down in a few moves. Initially, most of them were unsatisfied. Since it was just a sparring match, they did not use their full strength, and some of them did not even use their talents.

However, with how easily they were defeated, especially with their results being exposed on the forums every day, some monitors could not help but feel humiliated. Even though the results of the spars were meaningless, and would not affect their positions as monitors, it was still hard to avoid discussion behind them.

"I can't believe your monitor is so insignificant."

"We can't blame him. There's always someone stronger out there."

"Say, wouldn't it be better if Xiao Lin was our monitor?"

"It seems that Class Seven's students were really lucky."

...

The training did not last for just a day or two, which was why the defeated monitors challenged Xiao Lin again after a few days. As an important part of preparing for the duels, Xiao Lin could not reject them as a sparring partner. He privately complained to Yu Mei, asking why she did not arrange for some higher-year students, or even just used the virtual combat system, saying that would be better.

Yu Mei meaningfully said, "That training would be meaningless. You need to understand that the participants from the other academies won't just be your opponents now. They might even be your foes in the years to come. As a first-year, you're still not mature, but your opponents are the same as well. There's no meaning to arranging a fight with an opponent with years of experience. All of you need to understand everything, be it flaws or advantages, and be able to react to it."

Yu Mei's words sounded very serious, but Xiao Lin felt like she just did not want him to be idle. However, Xiao Lin had to admit that fighting with these monitors, regardless of victory or defeat, still gave him a lot of experience.

Combat experience was something that one always needed more of. Xiao Lin had spent more time in the New World than the others, and that was the reason for his greater combat experience, but that was still only by a little. Xiao Lin was very clear that he still had a long way to go, and he needed to constantly accumulate it.

The new training session started again, and this time, the monitors did not hesitate to use their talents, probably understanding the gap between themselves and Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin also finally found some interest. Normally, be it in class or training, the others would not easily use their talents. It was actually an unspoken rule for talent holders, since it was better that as few people knew about their strongest trump cards as possible.

Xiao Lin currently only knew of Cheng Ming's Swordheart talent, and the other talents were just speculation and gossip on the forums at most, which was why he started to be very curious as to what their talents were, and how they compared to an SS-rank talent.

When the new training session started, someone suggested that they would start to seal off the training, and would no longer allow unrelated spectators. That was simple enough; all they needed to do was increase the clearance level of the training hall.

That obviously came at the protest of the regular students, but it had all been ignored. That way, other than Yu Mei and Bai Ning as spectators, there were only a few others from the student union.

They also expressed great interest. Talent holders would always stand at the top of the colonists, and there did not seem to be a limit to the amount of different talents that have been recorded. No one could say that they had seen the power of every talent, and it was even possible that a new talent would appear among the new students.

The first to challenge Xiao Lin was Class Four's Han Manman. As the last monitor to be formalized, Han Manman's standing was not high. In truth, her skill was very average among them, but possibly due to Bai Ning saying that mages had a very large advantage, or maybe because of her jealousy, and even possibly because she lost too badly to Xiao Lin two days ago, she was the first to step up during that training session.

There were no pointless words as Han Manman started her attacks straightaway. She used wind type spells. Even if she was not much among the monitors, she was still at Black Iron rank, and had quickly summoned two Black Iron ranked tornados.

Xiao Lin's reaction was even quicker. Just as she ended her chant, Xiao Lin immediately activated Miracle and used Phantom Steps, drastically increasing his speed and allowing him to disappear from sight.

"Even though Senior Bai Ning said that mages have a natural advantage, their levels are too different. Xiao Lin is suppressing her with just speed alone." The other monitors that looked on voiced their evaluations.

“Xiao Lin’s speed is shocking!” Cheng Ming remarked. He did not feel any jealousy, and said it purely out of praise.

“Han Manman can only turn back into a defensive position, but I remember that woman only learned offensive spells. Ah, that woman isn’t just arrogant, she’s also a sadist.”

Listening to the whispers around, Han Manman’s cold smile widened. She did not shoot out the tornadoes that she had chanted, and instead held them between her hands. Due to their difference in skill, her perception found it hard to lock Xiao Lin down. Next, she suddenly closed her eyes, and opened them after a second with a strange look in her eyes.

She finally threw the two tornadoes in the air. The two tornadoes clashed together at a high speed among the howling winds, creating an even greater wind and rotational force.

Xiao Lin’s body appeared again. The crowd gasped as a few wounds appeared on his arms. Wiping away the blood, Xiao Lin paused for a moment, but not a bit of frustration could be seen at the unexpected development. He laughed.

“Very good, you should have done this from the start. Otherwise, this match would have been too meaningless,” Xiao Lin praised Han Manman.

Han Manman looked like she had been humiliated because her strongest attack had only inflicted those minor wounds on Xiao Lin. However, her plan had more or less succeeded. Even if it was two Black Iron-rank spells, the two tornadoes could be combined to achieve even greater power. That technique was something she trained for a very long time to master, so she said in frustration, “Don’t get too cocky! You can’t avoid my spell!”

Chapter 621 - Fight With Chen Dao

Chapter 621: Fight With Chen Dao

“That’s the Eye of Wind.” Bai Ning and Yu Mei conversed in a low voice by the side. To them, being able to grasp the talents of those monitors would help them with the arrangements for the team events. However, they knew that it was not convenient to ask them about it straight up, so they could only gain a deeper understanding by watching the battles.

Yu Mei’s voice was low as well when she said in thought, “It should more or less be that. Otherwise, with Han Manman’s perception, she would not have been able to catch Xiao Lin. That brat is dual cultivating, so his Intelligence attribute isn’t that low.”

Bai Ning said, with either regret or pity, “Eye of Wind can allow you to use your perception to lock onto someone without regard to the difference in Intelligence. The talent might not be ranked highly, but it’s very practical. It’s a pity though; she shouldn’t be specializing in offensive spells. The talent is a lot less useful when using it with offensive spells.”

“Even if she went the path of a support, would we use her in the team battles? Don’t forget about the insane existence that is Gu Xiaoyue.” Yu Mei smiled, not denying anything as she added, “The five-man team battles will only need one support at the most.”

The two of them had unwittingly crossed Gu Xiaoyue out as they talked because in terms of their victory, they definitely needed the three points from the team battles. Yu Mei did not tell the others, but the fighting and sparring over the past few days had been to choose the members of the team battles.

Xiao Lin immediately understood that his speed was useless in front of his opponent's talent. Even though he could use Ruin again, he did not want to use his weakness against his opponent's advantage before ascertaining if Han Manman's talent had any other uses.

Xiao Lin just decided to stand in place. He gathered all his attributes onto Strength with Miracle before waving his training sword, frantically shooting out waves of sword aura.

Against an unmoving target, the accuracy of spells would definitely be at their highest, but that also meant that Han Manman's talent would lose its meaning. After that, even though Han Manman used all her power, her level of spells could not survive that onslaught of pressure. On top of that, her spell casting speed could not compare to the rate Xiao Lin released his sword aura.

That difference became even larger after a few minutes. In the end, Han Manman fell at the strength of Xiao Lin's unending sword aura. What frustrated her was the fact that Xiao Lin did not even use his elemental sword aura, and merely used his sword aura that had been strengthened under Miracle to gain such an oppressive advantage.

Looking at the woman who was full of wounds being dragged away to be healed, Xiao Lin felt a bit of regret. Of course, it was not because he had beaten her so badly, but rather because he had wasted too much time.

Xiao Lin had been keeping count, and this time, he had used about four and a half minutes to beat Han Manman. Of course, if Han Manman knew that he could still distract himself by keeping track of the time when they fought, she probably would spit out blood. However, two days ago, Xiao Lin had defeated Han Manman in less than a minute. The only difference was that Han Manman had not used her talent then, and she did now.

"No wonder talents make up the core of every academy's strength!" Xiao Lin remarked in his heart before looking at the others with a challenging expression. "Where's the next one? Come, let's continue. Don't worry, I won't go all out."

Han Manman had caused Xiao Lin to understand even more how much their talents affected battles. During the tournaments, the participants that the other academies sent out would also be talent holders, so accumulating more battle experience against talents holders now was very important.

"I'll give it a shot! Don't hold back. There's no meaning if you don't use your full strength." The second one who stepped up was Class Twelve's monitor Chen Dao. The battle determination in his eyes was not lower than Xiao Lin's at all.

"I guessed that you would step up. It seems you're not happy with your loss two days ago."

"Hey, today's different, and don't use your swordsmanship. It would be meaningless. Come at me with your magic!"

“As you wish. Come, you’re definitely better than Han Manman.”

Xiao Lin would not look down on Chen Dao. As the one whose Intelligence attribute was only lower than Gu Xiaoyue’s, the man’s spells were very powerful, and was at least a level higher than Han Manman’s, so those words were not meant to mock him.

Chen Dao was usually very open, but he kept his mouth shut regarding his talent. Really, other than Cheng Ming, the others had never exposed anything about their talents in a public setting, so Xiao Lin was very curious about Chen Dao’s talent.

The second sparring match was starting, and it was Xiao Lin against Chen Dao!

Even though he did not know what Chen Dao’s talent was, Xiao Lin was no stranger to his spells. The man mainly used fire spells, so Xiao Lin first summoned up a water shield as defense.

Chen Dao seemingly launched his first attack at the same time — Pyroblast!

The gigantic ball of fire made the water shield in front of Xiao Lin feel useless. Since he promised not to use sword aura, Xiao Lin deliberately decided not to block it with sword aura. He shifted all his attributes to Intelligence under Miracle, and he did not dodge, even though it was not that hard with his speed.

Pyroblast was a spell that hit a low radius, but caused a lot of damage. Xiao Lin had yet to master such a high-level spell, but after the second semester had started, Xiao Lin had actually learned a lot of low-level spells during his free time. What he expanded on was the principles that he had learned from mastering elemental sword aura, which was compression and condensation.

Even though Xiao Lin did not spend that much time on mastering his spells, thanks to his passive talent’s immensely strong ability to enhance his understanding and learning, it meant that he had a very easy time mastering the low-level spells that did not require that many chants.

Most importantly, Xiao Lin’s compression technique only had a high success rate on those simple spells that did not have complicated compositions. Higher level spells had a more complicated alignment and composition of the elements, so compression was many times harder.

Flame Ball!

Facing Chen Dao’s fierce Pyroblast, Xiao Lin only shot out a Flame Ball, which was a Black Iron-rank spell that was a whole level lower. When the deep red-colored Flame Ball shot out of Xiao Lin’s hand, Chen Dao had a heavy expression on his face. He quickly erected a cloak of flame around himself for protection.

After a few seconds, the Pyroblast was shattered by the Flame Ball, and balls of fire that had been compressed into the size of a finger shot forward. That modified spell did not use the compression technique, and even though it fired quickly, the power was not great.

Chen Dao’s flame cloak proved very useful, and blocked those balls of fire.

Chapter 622 - Chen Dao's Talent

Chapter 622: Chen Dao's Talent

"That was an interesting judgement, and he switches very quickly between attack and defense. To be frank, in terms of being a mage, Chen Dao did it better." Bai Ning continued with her assessment.

"Could you tell what technique Xiao Lin used?" Yu Mei asked.

"Compression and condensation." Bai Ning knew what she was looking at in an instant. She remarked, "I've heard about him a long time ago. I never expected that he would be able to raise his meditation and perception to such a high level while dual cultivating."

"It's probably very hard to compress spells. Have you studied it before?" Yu Mei said with some amusement.

Bai Ning shook her head. "It's a class taught by Professor Qin. I took part in his course last year, and I understand the principles behind it, but it's extremely hard to learn. Furthermore, the time it takes to learn it and the benefits you gain aren't equal. Even though Xiao Lin is decent at compressing spells, he can only do so with Black Iron-ranked ones."

"So Bronze-ranked ones will be even harder?" Yu Mei's understanding of magic, especially spell compression, was not great.

"Yes, the difficulty is about equal to learning a Silver-ranked or even Gold-ranked spell, which is why I said it's not worth it. With that time, it's much better to learn other spells." Bai Ning sighed.

"From your professional perspective, do you think Xiao Lin will lose?" Yu Mei asked.

"It's hard to say. Chen Dao's talent is hard to judge," Bai Ning said with some hesitation.

Yu Mei was mildly curious as she shifted her focus back to Chen Dao before going deep in thought. Bai Ning might only be a fourth-year student, but she was exceptional in various areas. If even Bai Ning could not make a judgement, then Chen Dao's talent was probably not so simple.

Xiao Lin was also speculating on Chen Dao's talent. The earlier battle against Han Manman had led to him understanding that he needed to be more careful when fighting against talent holders. Using one's talent at the right time could potentially change any situation.

Xiao Lin controlled the mental energy he was using, and threw out various compressed Black Iron-ranked spells, such as Wind Blade, Flame Ball, and Icicle. The spells were basically raised to a Bronze rank in level after compression, and they benefited from using up less energy, which would allow him to constantly be on the attack.

Chen Dao's spells were all at quite a high rank. He had the Bronze-ranked Pyroblast, Sea of Flames, and even the Silver-ranked Magma Stream. The man had used it all, and Magma Stream was particularly threatening. That Silver-ranked spell could allow the user to unleash magma that was

close to a thousand degrees. Its destructive power was immense, and the monitors whispered among themselves after he used it. It was obvious that they never knew Chen Dao had mastered that spell.

It was that Silver-ranked spell that caused Xiao Lin to finally use Momentary Ruin in order to hold it back, but the training hall had turned completely hot, and the floor was filled with red lava. Thankfully, Yu Mei set up defensive measures in time, and the training hall was made with materials that could withstand Gold-ranked spells, so safety was not an issue.

“Xiao Lin is in trouble.”

“Why do you say that? Chen Dao might have shockingly mastered a Silver-ranked spell, but Xiao Lin managed to clock it.”

“Are you dumb? Look at the floor. It’s filled with flames and lava. How much space is left for them to stand on?”

“I remember that the individual fights are held in an arena?”

“That’s right.”

“I see. If it was a real battle, then Chen Dao might not be able to beat Xiao Lin, but since it’s a tournament, the available space is limited. Xiao Lin really is in trouble. Chen Dao is fighting very smartly.”

...

The discussion among the monitors was heard by Xiao Lin, but even if he did not, he still understood the situation very well. Xiao Lin was conflicted for a moment before he smiled as he looked at Chen Dao. “I didn’t think you’d be trying to use something like this to win.”

“How could that be? I would never use such a petty trick!” Chen Dao widened his eyes as he retorted, causing the monitors who speculated on it to feel awkward.

“In truth, this is the best way. Victory is the only result.” Xiao Lin was a little annoyed. Chen Dao was the youngest among them, having just turned into an adult, and he was quite naive at times.

“I don’t think restricting the area like this is enough to make you lose.” Chen Dao rolled his eyes somewhat mysteriously before he said in an excited tone, “In truth, I’ve been wanting to properly fight you for a long time to see how far apart we are. It’s a pity that it’s so hard to see you, and I finally have a good chance today, so how could I leave any regrets behind?”

“It seems you still have trump cards that you aren’t using.” Xiao Lin raised his eyebrow slightly. He had thought that Chen Dao’s talent was some passive talent, which made it easy to explain how Chen Dao had mastered a Silver-ranked spell so easily, but it seemed like it was not the case.

“Indeed, the active ability of my talent has actually never been revealed to anyone. I’ve never used it, even in any of the prior monthly examinations.”

Xiao Lin's smile receded. He had researched talents before, and lower-ranked talents normally only had one ability, either active or passive. The higher-ranked talents would not only increase one's innate skills; they also had various other abilities. For instance, Xiao Lin's Academic Genius talent had the passive ability of increasing the effectiveness of his learning, and its active skill could replicate the abilities of others.

Even Yu Mei and Bai Ning's gazes turned into one of shock, and Gu Xiaoyue, who had been disinterested the whole time, looked over with an expression that was deep in thought. Everyone knew that talents with two abilities were at least A-rank, or even S rank!

Xiao Lin and Chen Dao's battlefield was only a two hundred-meter wide area, and over eighty percent of the area was covered by lava and fire. Even though the training hall's temperature regulation system had pushed down the temperature, it was still very hot.

Chen Dao's expression turned brighter as the clothes on his body started to burn. The flames got more and more intense until his entire body was swallowed within, forming a gigantic flaming person.

"Flame God Talent! The S-rank Flame God talent!" The one who exclaimed was Yu Mei. Her tone was quite excited.

"My God! I've read about this talent from the records, and it was from over sixty years ago!" Bai Ning widened her eyes in disbelief.

Chapter 623 - Fire God

Chapter 623: Fire God

"Should we stop this?" Bai Ning said with uncertainty.

"No need." Yu Mei shook her head, and she added with a cheeky expression, "We can't stop anything anyway."

Saying that, Yu Mei still walked forward and threw out a few scrolls, enveloping the other monitors in a colorful shield. After a few seconds, she seemed to feel like it was not enough, and threw out a few more.

Looking at Chen Dao, who was burning and, of course, could not be seen through the flames anymore, Xiao Lin could clearly feel the surrounding temperature rising. The training hall's temperature suppressing arrays could no longer push the temperature down.

Ruin!

Xiao Lin did not hesitate to activate Ruin, throwing aside Temporary Ruin as he condensed a few icicles and shot them out. However, the icicles melted before they even got close to his opponent. They were even spells that he had compressed!

“Chen Dao, your active talent seems quite dangerous. I don’t think you can completely control it yet. It’s no wonder you’ve never used it. I suggest you don’t use it too much.” Xiao Lin suddenly furrowed his eyebrows.

The flaming figure’s mouth seemed to move, as if it was trying to say something, but in the end it only spat out a few flames. Just as Xiao Lin guessed, Chen Dao could still not completely control that state.

Roar!

The flaming figure let out a roar as it started to rush at Xiao Lin, walking past the sea of flames and lava like it was just flat ground, and a few gigantic balls of fire seemed to shoot at Xiao Lin at the same time.

The balls of fire were dark red, which meant that the flames had been compressed to some degree. Chen Dao had never learned to do that before, which meant that he could naturally compress the elements in that state. Not only that, Xiao Lin acutely noticed that Chen Dao launched those balls of flames in just a breath’s time.

Shocking power, and an unbelievable casting speed.

Xiao Lin was constantly trying to estimate Chen Dao’s power under his activated talent, and spared no power to knock down those orbs of fire. It was nothing too difficult under his Ruin state.

However, Chen Dao immediately raised the level of his spells. He merely raised his arms as the lava on the floor started to shoot up quickly, forming pillars of flames. At the same moment, it seemed to instantly surround Xiao Lin. Chen Dao’s attack had yet to end. As he casted those few spells, he had already closed the distance with Xiao Lin, but he did not stop moving, and instead, launched himself straight forward.

With the earth-shaking sounds of explosions, the entire training hall shook for a dozen seconds. In the thick smoke, Chen Dao pulled away, but it was just a momentary pause as he started to attack again. This time, it was Pyroblast, but the difference was that the enhanced Pyroblast was stored in his hand before he formed a fist, increasing his speed as he launched himself forward.

Another string of explosions reverberated around the training hall, assaulting everyone’s ears. Everyone stared in disbelief as they looked at Chen Dao’s fervent attacks.

The arena had already been completely covered in flames as Chen Dao’s figure disappeared into the flames, leaving only a string of burning after-images. Chen Dao was not Xiao Lin. sSince the start of classes, he had focused himself on flame magics, and never chose any courses related to close combat but, at that moment, he looked like a melee combatant.

The shaking of the ground got more and more intense, and Cheng Ming and the others seemed to feel like Chen Dao might bring down the whole training hall if he continued.

“It is said that the Fire God talent is all-powerful. It can naturally cast instantly, boost its magical power and is proficient in both martial and magical arts. It seems like the rumors were not exaggerated,” Bai Ning said with a wry smile, and could not hide that hint of admiration in her tone.

“Chen Dao still hasn’t mastered the talent,” Yu Mei sighed as she said something similar to Xiao Lin.

In less than a minute, Chen Dao had launched an uncountable amount of spells, and an unknown number of punches. All those spells had been used by Chen Dao before, but the power was much greater under that state. It was comparable to Xiao Lin’s compressed spells, and after the dense smoke dissipated, everyone else saw that the flames on Chen Dao’s body had already receded.

Chen Dao was panting erratically, and he seemed very frail, seeming like he was about to collapse at any point. His face was very pale, but he still forced himself to stand at the edges of the sea of flames as he stared at the smoke.

“Hey, is Xiao Lin still alive?” In the quiet training hall, someone finally asked.

“He’s probably dead...”

“I don’t think I saw him fighting back.”

“With attacks of that frequency, and with only training gear as protection, who among us could last for a minute?”

...

As they discussed in hushed voices, Xiao Lin’s figure suddenly appeared in the smoke. A faint white protective shield was the first thing that was shown, and the shield glowed for a moment before dimming.

Chen Dao’s expression got even uglier as he rubbed his head in frustration, muttering, “You monster! I couldn’t defeat you even with that attack!”

“I was almost defeated!” Xiao Lin let out a sigh as he continued, “It was harder than I thought. If you managed to last another minute, then...”

Xiao Lin shook his head and did not continue. However, even if Chen Dao could have lasted longer, he still had more options. He might not be able to use Myth, but Xiao Lin could at least use his Replicate ability.

Chen Dao had only managed to last for a minute. Xiao Lin did not even need to attack at all. He just needed to maintain Absolute Defense under his Ruin state. Incomplete Absolute Defense could block any attack that did not exceed his abilities. Even though Chen Dao’s spells were quite high-ranked, they did not exceed Xiao Lin’s Ruin state.

Xiao Lin had to admit that he did not have many choices against the flaming Chen Dao. Of course, it was also because he had restricted himself against using swordsmanship before the fight, but it was enough to show how strong Chen Dao’s talent was.

“I think you should use the rest of your time to train on getting used to that state. Anything else should become secondary for you.”

Chapter 624 - Black Potion

Chapter 624: Black Potion

Chen Dao nodded. Even though he was a bit unhappy, he still readily admitted his defeat, saying, “I understand. In truth, I never had enough strength to use it, and today was the first time I tried. The duration really is too short, but I have to thank you. I’ll be looking for you next time as well!”

Xiao Lin nodded with a bitter smile, casting an annoyed glance at Yu Mei, who was not far away. Yu Mei had let out a laugh in response to his glance.

Bai Ning did not understand, so she slowly voiced her assessment, “Xiao Lin’s overall skill is definitely better than everyone else’s level, but it’s obvious that he hasn’t used his full strength. It’s really hard to imagine that a first-year student is so strong. Chen Dao is not bad either. I’m a bit jealous of his S-rank Fire God talent. As long as he manages to survive, he will at least make Epic rank in the future, but I’m a little doubtful.”

Yu Mei smiled as she looked at Bai Ning before throwing down another shield. Looking at it in detail, it was a sound formation of restriction.

Bai Ning said thoughtfully, “Being able to neutralize Chen Dao in his Fire God state, it’s hard to imagine if they are in the same rank. Does Xiao Lin have a talent? I do not remember seeing anything like that in his documents. If that was the case, wouldn’t that mean that his talent would be... Oh.”

Bai Ning stopped her words as if she realized something, and then she saw that she was surrounded by a sound cancellation array. She looked at Yu Mei awkwardly, not knowing what to say, but Yu Mei waved at her plainly.

The two of them had already adopted their usual expressions when they went back to the other monitors. Yu Mei clapped as she summoned them over before declaring, “Alright, you don’t have to stare at Xiao Lin. Everyone should go spar and train. I know that you all accumulated a lot of combat experience in your monthly examinations, but you still lack experience in fighting talent holders, and more than ninety percent of your opponents in the tournament will be talent holders.

“I will leave all of you to perform individual training this week, and from next week onward, we will start with team training. Today’s training will be taken care of by Bai Ning. Xiao Lin will be leaving with me first. The rest of you can continue!” After delivering a series of commands and leaving no room for discussion, Yu Mei brought Xiao Lin away.

Even though the others might not be able to tell, Yu Mei could accurately see that Xiao Lin was practically at his physical limit. He had used Ruin and Absolute Defense, which were both very taxing. He even blocked Chen Dao’s Fire God state. Unless Xiao Lin used Myth, there was not much else he could do, so Yu Mei did not ask Xiao Lin to continue practicing.

...

“Is that actually your main goal? You say it’s sparring, but you actually just wanted to see the level of their talents!” When no one else was around, Xiao Lin could not help but voice out his observations.

“It’s half of it. The other half is to determine the name list for the team events,” Yu Mei admitted.

“You’re leaving now, so does that mean you’ve already decided on the list?” Xiao Lin asked.

Yu Mei stopped in her tracks before smiling strangely. “Hey, I know what you’re thinking. You want me to exclude Gu Xiaoyue.”

Xiao Lin nodded in admittance.

“That’s going to be Impossible.” Yu Mei rejected it clearly. “You should know how important she is. Among all of you, only she is a true support caster. The difference in our chances of winning is astronomical without her.”

“Is the tournament so important? Do you know how much Gu Xiaoyue has left in her lifespan? She can’t take the risk of losing!” Xiao Lin could not help but raise his voice. He knew Gu Xiaoyue’s decision clearly, and knew he could not change it. So, he had hoped to gain some sort of promise from Yu Mei.

Yu Mei looked at Xiao Lin sternly, and slowly said, “First of all, I know about Gu Xiaoyue’s lifespan. Secondly, she volunteered herself to go, and I don’t think anyone forced her. Thirdly, don’t forget, I’m the seventh regiment’s captain first and foremost. I don’t have any right to abandon the tournament, which is very important for Dawn Academy — not for you or Gu Xiaoyue’s sake!”

Yu Mei’s meaning was simple. Even if Gu Xiaoyue really died because of this, Dawn Academy would just give her some posthumous award, and give her only remaining relative various compensations. However, that would only occur if she died. Before she died, Dawn Academy would definitely not do anything that shocking. When they entered the academy, everyone definitely knew that death and sacrifice was required, and Yu Mei would not change anything because of that.

Xiao Lin understood that Yu Mei’s words might have been cruel, but they were true, and was definitely not something he could change. Furthermore, this was all done under the consent of Gu Xiaoyue herself.

The matter was definitely sad, and obviously Xiao Lin’s own lifespan meant he could not afford to die as well. However, he was confident in Song Junlang. Compared to Gu Xiaoyue’s genetic issues, his own problem was far simpler.

Song Junlang might be odd at times, but he definitely took Xiao Lin’s lifespan seriously. The third day after the training started, Xiao Lin received a call from Department Head Song to go over.

Song Junlang’s Logistics Department was practically a research room at that point. There were various bottles filled with colorful liquids, and in the middle of the table was a lone test tube that contained a sticky and bubbling black liquid.

Xiao Lin could more or less guess what was happening from the look Song Junlang was giving the liquid, so he asked, “Is this the potion that will remove the side effect of my using Myth? Can I just drink it?”

Xiao Lin’s words had been too direct, and Song Junlang said curiously in amusement, “What, aren’t you afraid of being tricked by me this time?”

Xiao Lin asked, “Then are you tricking me?”

Song Junlang muttered, “Oh, well that’s not completely false.”

Xiao Lin’s lips twitched. That man admitted it so easily...

Song Junlang did not seem to care about Xiao Lin’s expression, continuing to explain, “Actually, you should thank that guy outside. This potion was made with him as the base material.”

“The guy outside? Oh, you’re referring to the guardian of the sea? It was strange that I didn’t see him just now.” Xiao Lin remembered the guardian that Song Junlang had grown from its genetic material, which was that gigantic squid.

“Because that guy is all in here.” Song Junlang pointed at the black potion.

Xiao Lin’s mouth twitched again.

Chapter 625 - Dreamlike

Chapter 625: Dreamlike

Song Junlang continued to explain, his face a bit stern, “There are ancient genes in the bodies of the guardians. To be clear, they are the sea god Poseidon’s genes. Of course, the proportions are very low, but I can only retrieve these genes from the guardians at the moment.

“Based on your explanation, that Myth skill of yours is definitely not an ordinary ability. I’ve researched your blood, and I found some strange components in it. Because I’ve been researching the guardians all this time, I coincidentally noticed some similar aspects, so you’re actually quite lucky...

“This potion can replenish you through your genes, and can eliminate, or at least suppress the negative impacts on your lifespan. However, truthfully, the potion itself is still flawed.”

Listening to Song Junlang’s tone, Xiao Lin did not feel too strange. Since when did this man’s potions not have flaws?

However, this time, Song Junlang’s face was even more worried as he said, “I’m not sure if I should let you drink this potion. Of course, you can choose what to do yourself. I need to remind you that if anyone else drank this potion, there wouldn’t be too many effects. They would have an upset stomach at most. However, you’re different. Your body is too unique, and can resonate with the sea god’s genes.”

“Resonate?”

“I can’t predict the results, but the good news is that this resonance will only happen with a large amount of genes, so occasionally using it should not present too many problems. However, long term usage will definitely cause unpredictable effects, so my warning is the same as before. Don’t use Myth too much!”

Even though Song Junlang tried his best to look very serious, Xiao Lin ignored his verbal warnings. There was nothing he could do because if Xiao Lin thought about the various strange potions that Song Junlang had made him drink before, then the black potion was not that scary.

The black potion needed to be drunk with Lifewater, and the Logistics Department had a few bottles around. As if it was his own home, Xiao Lin walked over to the shelves and retrieved them naturally, pouring them into the black potion and mixing them together. The addition of the red-colored lifewater turned the potion even more sticky and malodorous.

Xiao Lin could not help but feel helpless since he was already prepared to drink the potion, even if it was possibly poison. No matter what potion Song Junlang made, it seemed like they all shared one thing in common, which was that the smell would often be worse than what a regular person could handle.

Clenching his teeth, Xiao Lin pinched his nose and downed the potion, swallowing it quickly. After a few seconds of silence, he started to feel an intense heat coming from his stomach, and the temperature in his body began to rapidly rise.

The beaker in Xiao Lin’s hand had already dropped to the floor as he leaned against the table to steady his swaying body. Large beads of sweat started to fall from his forehead and it quickly drenched both his face and his back. His breath started to get erratic and he looked like he had just gone through an intense battle and used up all his strength.

“Is this a normal reaction?” Xiao Lin clenched his teeth and asked.

Song Junlang had been taking notes when he raised his head at Xiao Lin’s question. Thinking about it, he said, “Don’t worry. There’s no problem. This means that the gene repairing potion has seeped into your body. Yes, that should be it.”

“Should be?” Xiao Lin raised his tone.

“You’re the first test subject after all. There have never been any prior examples, so even I can’t give you an accurate answer. Ignoring that, how do you feel right now?” Song Junlang was more concerned about his notes.

Xiao Lin was speechless.

Even though he was already used to this, it did not stop Xiao Lin from having the urge to shout at Song Junlang. However, he opened his mouth, but his voice was stuck in his throat, unable to come out. That was right, he had lost his ability to speak. The pain had exceeded that of any other potion, and it was like someone was changing his bones. The pain could be felt deep in every bone of his, but Xiao Lin’s consciousness remained awake, unable to even faint.

Xiao Lin's mind felt like mush at that moment, and countless bits of information were constantly rushing in and quickly going out.

In his mind, the guardian appeared, which was that disgusting and highly dangerous squid. Xiao Lin even felt like he was being tightly wrapped around by the squid, and the feeling made him almost puke on the spot. Thankfully, the feeling only lasted for a few seconds before it faded. After that, it was the sea god Poseidon, but it was different from the Poseidon he met in the monthly examination.

It was possibly due to his muddled consciousness, but what flashed in his mind was an extremely young Poseidon. He could not see the man's general features, and only saw a muddled silhouette. Strangely, enough, however, his mind clearly understood that it was Poseidon.

Xiao Lin could not think of anything, and the image quickly disappeared. After that, it was countless figures that looked like Poseidon. The size was very similar, but he still could not tell the details.

After that, all the figures disappeared, and what appeared was a brightly burning star. Following that was a galaxy full of stars, and then the vast universe...

The dreamlike memories slowly started to recede like the tide. At that moment, the sky was already dark, and the panting Xiao Lin had long been brought to lie down on the sofa by Song Junlang. There was no expression on his face, and he just stared at the ceiling, either in thought or just in a daze.

He was in silence for almost fifteen minutes before Xiao Lin let out a cry and started to violently vomit. The vomit was mildly black, and Xiao Lin did not know what it was. It was only after a few minutes did he stop. Xiao Lin listlessly accepted the water that Song Junlang gave him, and gulped it down.

Song Junlang was not in a hurry to ask any questions, and merely sat quietly next to the sofa. After that, there was a long silence. It was only when Xiao Lin returned the glass did Xiao Lin's expression recover to his normal look.

Xiao Lin let out a long sigh and still said powerlessly and with a voice full of uncertainty, "I-I feel like I had a nightmare. However, it's strange. I know I did not fall asleep, and could even clearly feel anything around me."

"Can you tell me what you saw?" Song Junlang's tone was calm. There was no tone of surprise, as if everything had been within expectations.

"I don't know."

What followed was another long period of silence.

Chapter 626 - Arrangement Of The Friendly Tournament

Chapter 626: Arrangement Of The Friendly Tournament

Xiao Lin worked hard to think about it, but regretfully, he could not remember anything. It could only mean that there had been too much information pouring into his brain in a short time. On top of that, his pain caused him to be unable to think. After a long time, he shook his head and said, “I think I saw Poseidon, and after that it seemed like I saw the universe... I’m sorry, I really can’t remember. No, I actually can’t tell what it was. A fantasy? Or was it a dream?”

“Memories.” Song Junlang stood up and put down his notebook, walking to the window as he looked at the sky outside while he pondered the information.

Xiao Lin did not interrupt, and waited.

After a few minutes, Song Junlang continued, “My hypothesis was right. The sea god’s guardians, the Atlantean era... No, it should be lifeforms even older than that ancient civilization. Their genes themselves are unique. The academies, including myself, could not make any progress no matter how much we researched. Back then, I suspected that our research methods were wrong, that there were some conditions that we could not achieve.”

Xiao Lin’s lips twitched, not bothering to curse at the fact that he had been taken advantage of again. Song Junlang did not make that potion for him out of kindness, but had an ulterior motive. However, he was also curious. It was possible that his interactions with Silverlight had let him understand more than he could before, so he was not too surprised.

“So you want to use me to understand the secrets of the ancient genes?”

“I did say you were special.” Song Junlang acknowledged it.

“However, it seems to have failed. I don’t really have much information to tell you.” Xiao Lin blinked.

Song Junlang shrugged and smiled. “There’s no way around it. The main goal is still to help you get past the side effects of using Myth. The research into the information hidden in the ancient genes was just an added benefit. It would be great if we could discover something, but nothing can be done if we can’t.”

Xiao Lin rolled his eyes, a look of disbelief on his face. He stood up and opened the computer there, pulling out his personal information. On the section containing his lifespan, he noticed that his remaining lifespan had increased to fifty years.

“Why didn’t it increase fully? I remember you added more than ten bottles of novice lifewater?” Xiao Lin asked curiously.

“Be satisfied!” Song Junlang stared at him and said, “It’s already the best result. Based on my simulations, it would have been great if you could get just twenty years. It’s strange, though. The effect is much better than I thought, but I used your blood and genes from last semester to simulate it. Did you go through any changes?”

Song Junlang started to throw a curious and fervent look at Xiao Lin. Xiao Lin retreated a few steps before saying angrily, “Don’t even think about it! I won’t give you any more samples of my blood!”

Pausing, Xiao Lin added, “Let’s not talk about that for now. Do you still have that black potion? Give me a few more bottles.”

“Don’t even think about it!”

“Alright, stop joking.”

“I really am not joking this time.”

The two of them looked at each other, and Song Junlang smiled bitterly. “Do you think I gave you some sort of cabbage? Do you know how hard it was to obtain his ancient genes?”

“Didn’t you grow that squid?”

“That’s right! That squid used up every single body part that Dawn Academy obtained from Earth. Unless you can find another guardian for me, or if you can just get me a sample of Poseidon, I won’t be able to make that potion for you. Do you understand?”

“A sample of Poseidon?” Xiao Lin had a strange expression.

No matter what, fifty years of remaining lifespan was much better than ten. More importantly, he gained additional usages of Myth, even if the remaining lifespan he had might only be enough for a minute or too. However, considering the power of Myth, a minute or two was enough to do so much.

It was only a month away from the tournament, and in order to preserve the condition of the monitors, there was no monthly examination that month, which allowed everyone to see how much importance the academy placed on the tournament.

The monitors had also finally started their team training. Of the seven points within the tournament, the team portion made up for three of them. It was very important, so no academies would dare to give up on that portion easily. Going into the tournament, the team events were definitely the most important, especially in the eyes of the older colonists. The team events were the best reflection of the overall power of an academy.

“In the following month, the training will be focused on the team event,” Yu Mei said during their training. “After the earlier individual training, I know a lot of your egos have been inflated. However, team events are different from individual events. Personal skill might affect your odds of winning, but teamwork can often eliminate that advantage.”

“Team battles are more complicated than individual ones. If I just stand here and talk, I don’t think you guys will be able to realize it. So, at the end of this month, which is this Saturday, I will organize a friendly match, and your opponents will be the Russian Voyna Akademiya!”

After a short silence, everyone exploded.

That news had not been leaked at all before this, and even Xiao Lin, with all his connections, had not caught wind of any of it. Normally, the end of the month should be the day of the monthly examination, and now cancelling the monthly examination in place of the friendly match seemed to be something that had already been planned.

Yu Mei was quite happy with their shock, and she motioned for everyone to quiet down before she said, “Since it’s just a friendly, we discussed with the Russians and agreed that we will not use the formal tournament format. We will only go through two rounds of individual fights and a team fight. This time we will be the hosts, and the Russians will be arriving later today. After the training, anyone who’s interested can go and introduce yourselves.”

“What about the list of participants?” Cheng Ming asked.

Since there were only individual and team events, then there would only be seven participants. That meant that at least half of them would not be fielded. As first-year students, other than Xiao Lin, it would be their first time interacting with the other academies, so it was hard to hold back from the excitement. Even if it was a friendly match, everyone was eager to perform.

“The participants have already been decided.” Yu Mei exchanged a look with Bai Ning, and after that, Bai Ning spoke in a sweet voice.

“The individual event participants will be Xiao Lin and Chen Dao. The team event participants will be Chen Dao, Gu Xiaoyue, Sheng Guo, An Luo, and Sun Xiao.”

Chapter 627 - List Of Participants

Chapter 627: List Of Participants

“That is the list of participants. Are there any objections?” Yu Mei took over after Bai Ning finished.

All thirteen of them exchanged glances for a moment before noise erupted. Even though the friendly match meant that at least half of them would not be able to participate, even though there were no prizes on the line, being chosen still meant that they were being acknowledged. If they were not acknowledged there, who knew if they would just be benchwarmers when the official tournament started.

The individual list was still fine, since Chen Dao and Xiao Lin’s skills were practically universally acknowledged. Cheng Ming’s qualifications were the most contentious, but the honest man would definitely not voice any dissatisfaction.

The team tournament was another issue. Including Han Manman, all of them had unhappy looks, and all of them were asking why they were not chosen.

“Enough! You want to know the reason?” Yu Mei suddenly shouted angrily.

The crowd quieted down, waiting for an answer.

“The reason is simple, I am your instructor! If you aren’t happy, you can leave now, but if you want me to change the list, dream on! I’ve told all of you before, the list of participants isn’t fixed yet, and before the tournament, I can remove any of you!” Yu Mei’s temper flared and the training hall immediately fell silent.

There were a total of six participants in the friendly match, but that did not mean that the remainder of them could just go back and wash up. They still needed to continue with their training, and also needed to watch the friendly match on Saturday.

Xiao Lin was actually quite surprised as well. If it was just to build chemistry for the team portion, then he should be part of the team event, and Cheng Ming should be part of the individual event.

Xiao Lin quickly found an opportunity to ask Yu Mei a question alone. Only Gu Xiaoyue and himself could calmly face that captain among the monitors.

“I didn’t let you and Chen Dao participate in the team event because I didn’t want the others to get too easy of a win. I was actually just looking for you. Even if it was the individual event, I wouldn’t allow you to use any ability that could harm yourself. Do you understand what I mean?” Yu Mei warned sternly.

Was that not just prohibiting him from using Myth?

Xiao Lin pursed his lips. He had not planned on using that dangerous ability in an unimportant friendly match anyway. However, he curiously smiled and said, “So you mean that the team would win too easily if Chen Dao and I participated. If that’s the case, isn’t the Russian academy too weak?”

“Do you really think they’ll face us with their full power? No academy would send out their full force in a friendly. I actually wanted to ask for the Judge Academy, but it’s a pity that the Americans haven’t been too close to us recently.” Yu Mei admitted that the list would not be the final list of participants, but she had obviously been too lazy to explain it to the others.

“If the Russians use their actual power to fight against ours, what do you think the odds would be?” Xiao Lin pressed on.

Yu Mei stared at the nosy brat before thinking for less than ten seconds and shaking her head. “Do we need to say it? If you use that power, then we might be able to fight them on equal terms, but if you don’t, your chances of victory are less than ten percent.”

That shocked Xiao Lin. Yu Mei obviously meant Myth. Even using Myth, they would only be able to fight the full power of the Russian academy at an even footing.

Looking at Xiao Lin’s doubt, Yu Mei earnestly sighed. “I’m not exaggerating. Dawn Academy’s situation has gotten worse and worse in the recent years. At least this batch of yours could possibly rank at around tenth place in terms of skill. Behind us is Egypt, Argentina, and Turkey, the usual bottom feeders.”

Xiao Lin was a little speechless. “How is this ranking calculated?”

“The number of talent holders and the quality. Setting aside the other academies, according to our reports, the Russian Voyna Akademiya has at least three S-ranked talent holders in their newest batch of students. However, we don’t think that any of them will be making an appearance this time.”

Xiao Lin took in a cold breath. An S-rank talent holder might not compare to an SS-rank, but S-rank talent holders still hold a huge advantage against any other talent holders. He also needed to consider if he could actually hold off three of them by himself after he activated Myth. If he could not, even if it were a team battle, they would be in dire straits.

Yu Mei’s calculations were accurate. Based on skill, and even including Xiao Lin, Dawn Academy’s chances against the Russian academy were too low.

“This year is actually very strange. In the past few decades, S-rank talent holders were rare existences, and only a few would appear in a dozen years. Even A-rank talent holders already stood at the peak. However, something seems to have happened this year, and practically every academy saw a huge influx of talent holders, and it’s incomparable to the past both in quality and quantity.”

“Is there a spring of talent holders?”

“That’s right. It’s a huge influx that came with no omens and no explanation. No one knows if it’s a coincidence or a certain phenomenon.” Yu Mei did not seem to want to dwell on the topic, and quickly changed it. “The academy will probably hold a small welcome party for the students from the Russian academy. After all, we are their allies. When the time comes, some of the department heads from the student union will be there. It’s a very boring social event, so if you don’t want to attend, you don’t have to. I’ll just tell the president.”

Probably feeling that Xiao Lin was not someone adept at social settings, Yu Mei had brought it up beforehand. Xiao Lin had wanted to agree, but he thought of something and said, “No need, I’ll be attending tonight. Yes, I should be exchanging pointers with them.”

“What?”

Even though Yu Mei was curious as to Xiao Lin’s intentions, the woman did not press on. Having Xiao Lin participate was just a small matter. That night, Xiao Lin appeared at the academy’s banquet hall. It was the first time Xiao Lin was there, and according to Yu Mei, it was specifically used to welcome those from other academies.

Xiao Lin had learned about their foreign relations, and even though the five big academies had a mutual alliance in principle, they still had various conflicts. Dawn Academy could be considered closer to Voyna Akademiya, which would explain why they got such great treatment, even when it was only for a friendly match.

Chapter 628 - Banquet

Chapter 628: Banquet

The relationships between the academies was not set in stone. Even though the Supreme Council's rulings meant that fighting amongst themselves was not allowed, there were still an increasing amount of conflicts in other ways. The conflicts originated from two sources. One was from the fight over benefits in the New World, such as resources or territories. The other was from their history back on Earth.

Even though most of the academies adopted the principles of ignoring Earth politics, it was impossible for there to not be of any influence. For instance, Judge Academy was closer to the European academies, and the European academies were also a tight-knit bunch. Meanwhile, the Russian academy did not have the best relationship with the European academies, let alone America.

Due to recent events in history, Dawn Academy had been neglected by many of the academies initially, but due to Dawn Academy's position as a founder, they could not do so publicly. However, making little issues in the background was something common. Because of that, Dawn Academy placed a lot of importance on their relationship with Voyna Akademiya.

The Russian academy had come over by passing through Earth, and the ones who came along were their assistant student union president and three department heads, as well as various administration staff. For a little friendly match, that lineup was already very spectacular.

On Dawn Academy's side, it was the whole student union, including the president and the various department heads. There was no one from the colonist territories, but Dawn Academy emphasized that academy issues would be handled by the student union, so it was not strange.

The president was quite surprised by Xiao Lin's appearance, but he did not really have the time to talk to Xiao Lin in such a setting, so the president merely nodded at Xiao Lin in acknowledgement.

The banquet was not as luxurious as he thought, and the ones in attendance all dressed fairly casually. The buffet was obviously very luxurious, but it was actually mostly food that they could normally eat. The difference was some things that had been specially added, such as alcohol, but it had probably been added for the Russians.

There were over twenty people from Voyna Akedemiya, and they seemed quite happy with the arrangements for the night. The ones in the student union seemed to be old friends as well, and they quickly started conversing after some formalities. Some of them used Russian, and some of them spoke in Mandarin or English.

Xiao Lin walked around the hall, and was constantly looking around. Compared to the other monitors that were eating and drinking, he seemed a bit different, so he was quickly noticed.

"It seems like you're looking for someone?" A girl with golden, curly hair walked over with a smile and a glass of wine in hand. She spoke in fluent Mandarin. Xiao Lin had noticed her earlier because, among the group of Russians, the girl had been drinking alone from the start. Even though a few of the student union members had tried to walk over to talk to her, she had smiled and rejected them.

“No, I was just walking around.” Xiao Lin shrugged and denied before he took two steps back. That girl had a thick fragrance to her, and it was not any perfume, but her natural scent.

The girl quickly noticed Xiao Lin’s subtle movement, and laughed in exaggeration. That laugh attracted the gazes of some people, and some of those from Dawn Academy had looks of envy on their faces. The Russians merely laughed strangely before turning their attention away.

“You’re pretty much like any other Asian boy I’ve ever met. Are you a virgin?” The woman also had the openness of a Russian.

Xiao Lin did not want to waste time talking about such topics, especially after he realized they had attracted even more attention. He had wanted to leave immediately, since he preferred to keep a low profile. However, he had a change of heart as he pulled away slightly before asking, “Are you a student from Voyna Akademiya?”

“Do you think I look like one?” The girl closed in again, even brushing herself against Xiao Lin’s arm.

That action did not make Xiao Lin happy. Of course, he would not think that the girl had fallen in love with him at first sight or anything like that, because it appeared the girl obviously enjoyed playing games like that.

“Yes, it seems like you don’t look like who I was looking for. I had the wrong person. Goodbye!” Xiao Lin bluntly said before he turned around and left.

That answer was quite unexpected, and it left the girl dumbfounded. After pausing for two or three seconds, she immediately reached out and pulled at Xiao Lin, smiling. “I was just joking, I am Diana, from Russia.”

This time, the woman no longer had that teasing smile on her face, and instead seemed more dignified and ladylike. The contrast between then and now was so big that Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows. He could feel how much strength was in that woman’s pull earlier, but the strength was only maintained for less than half a second, meaning that her control over her strength was already at a very high level.

“Dawn Academy, Xiao Lin.”

“A pleasure to meet you.”

The two of them shook their hands briefly, and Diana said, “You don’t seem used to banquets like this. If you want to get to know any of my companions, I don’t mind introducing you. Of course, if you were planning on getting to know me, then you’ve achieved your goal.”

In just a few sentences, the teasing smile once again appeared on the girl’s face; her personality really was like that. However, it was obvious that her observational skills were very sharp. Xiao Lin obviously did not attend the banquet for dinner or just some vodka.

“Recently I’ve been reading about some colonist history, and I was actually quite interested in your academy’s history. It’s a pity that our library doesn’t keep many books on the other academies. If

you know anyone who's good at history, I'd be happy to meet them," Xiao Lin recited a speech that he had already prepared.

"A student who researches history? That's quite rare. Even though I'm not very good at history, you can tell me if you don't mind. What do you want to know about?" Diana said.

Xiao Lin did not hold out a lot of hope after finding out that she was a student. What he wanted to know was not something a regular student would know. After all, the ones who were attending the friendly match were all first-years, and Xiao Lin had hoped to find someone from their student union.

Just to be polite, Xiao Lin still continued, "I read about recent history, about how Earth has been affected by the colonist academies. For instance, I'm quite interested in the historical records of the Tunguska event from Russia."

Chapter 629 - Diana

Chapter 629: Diana

"Tunguska event?"

Xiao Lin did not know if he was mistaken, but when he said the phrase, he suddenly felt as if the atmosphere in the entire banquet hall had changed. There seemed to be a lot of gazes directed at him, but when he looked around in confusion, the few Russian men in the hall seemed to just be drinking vodka and chatting, and there did not seem to be any change.

Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows, not saying anything. The woman named Diana seemed to have a very ordinary expression as she praised in an exaggerated manner, "It seems like you're a studious person. No one among us takes part in history lessons. You should know that our academy only believes in absolute strength, not knowledge, so those books in the library are all filled with dust and cobwebs."

"Since you know the books are filled with dust, you must be someone who regularly goes to the library?" Xiao Lin asked.

Diana did not express any displeasure, and happily smiled. "It seems like we're quite alike. I know a thing or two about the Tunguska explosion, but regretfully, most of the information regarding the explosion is considered a high-level secret, even on the grounds of Voyna Akademiya."

Xiao Lin felt some regret, but it was still within his expectations. If the details regarding the explosion were like he thought, then the Russian academy would naturally not have it open to the public.

Diana smiled as she said, "But, my clearances have coincidentally allowed me to look at some of the secrets. Even though I can't see the important parts, I still know more than regular folk. If you're interested, let's go outside for a chat. It's too hot here."

Looking at that woman whose cheeks were reddened by the alcohol, he felt like the woman's eyes were exuding charm. Xiao Lin started to hesitate, but after mulling over it, his desire to explore the topic took over as he slowly nodded in agreement.

After the two of them left, a few gazes shot over as the conversations that were a mix of Mandarin and Russian started to lower down in volume.

"Do your students from Dawn Academy take a big interest in the Tunguska explosion?"

"The student union has no right to interfere in the hobbies of students."

"There are different kinds of hobbies, but some things shouldn't be touched by new students."

"We'll naturally control this ourselves, so you don't have to worry about it."

"I hope that's the case."

...

Since it was night time, the temperature outside the hall had greatly lowered. Xiao Lin did not mind since he was in his casual attire, but the Russian woman next to him only had a thin dress on. She shivered under the clear and cold moonlight. From the perspective of Chinese beauty standards, that woman was not extremely beautiful, but be it her aura or her actions, they all exuded a sense of charm that could not be ignored.

Xiao Lin was about to offer his jacket when he stopped, unhappily saying, "Is there a need for this? If you can participate in the friendly match, you should at least be Black Iron-rank, or even Bronze. How could you be afraid of just a little wind chill? I just want to understand the history of your academy. If it's going to be difficult for you, then I won't disturb you anymore."

Diana crossed her arms as she helplessly asked, "Let me ask you a personal question. You're single, right?" Her tone was very certain.

As a virgin over twenty years of age, Xiao Lin felt a sense of awkwardness. He did not deny it or agree.

Diana treated it as him acknowledging it, so she shrugged and mumbled, "So, it is the case."

Xiao Lin was speechless at the woman's jumping logic.

"Ha, cute little virgin. It seems like I hit a sore spot. Let's change the topic then. Since you participated in the banquet, you should be a tournament participant. I'm very curious, so tell me, why did you participate?" Diana's tone was more normal. Her observational skills were very sharp, and when she noticed Xiao Lin was not happy, she immediately stopped her teasing, causing him to not truly be angry at her.

Xiao Lin knew she was deliberately changing the topic, but he still answered, "For the rewards. Isn't that obvious? I hear the final prize is an Eternal Fruit. It's able to make someone's ability increase by a great amount. Who wouldn't be interested?"

“Men just like to fight and kill. How dull.” Diana shook her head.

“Why did you participate then?”

“Me? No no, I didn’t participate voluntarily. I was forced, so I hope those guys aren’t hoping that I will use my full power!” Diana clenched her teeth as she spoke, but after her earlier performance, Xiao Lin could not be certain if that woman was acting or actually being sincere.

However, Xiao Lin’s sense of alertness suddenly increased. He found that his interest had been piqued by her words, and he almost forgot his main reason for coming over. He also noticed from Diana’s words that the woman in front of him was definitely no ordinary person.

Since the woman had been forced to participate, it meant that she was definitely a talent holder, and a very strong one at that!

“It doesn’t seem like you understand Tunguska that much. If the matter is a secret even at the Russian academy, how could you have the clearance to read it as a first-year student?” Xiao Lin immediately pulled the topic back.

“That’s right. You’d at least need to be the dean to read that kind of stuff, so how could I know about it?” Diana’s face had a teasing smile on.

“So, you were lying to me. Then, I...”

“No, I didn’t lie to you. I do know more than a regular person about Tunguska. Even those old folks in the academy might not know as much as I do.” Diana fluttered her eyes before saying, “I forgot to introduce myself. I come from the town of Tula, a rich and beautiful little town in Russia.”

Xiao Lin looked at her, not understanding.

Diana slapped her forehead, adding, “You should properly learn your geography. The town of Tula is at the center of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug, and the Tunguska Event took place there.”

Xiao Lin widened his eyes, realizing what the woman was saying.

Diana smiled and said, “What’s different from the others is that my understanding of Tunguska isn’t from any books of legends, but from my own experience! Actually, to some degree, the fact that I can enter the academy is due in large part to the explosion all those years ago.”

Chapter 630 - First Encounter

Chapter 630: First Encounter

Diana’s words were definitely very shocking, but Xiao Lin did not believe it immediately. He rubbed his temples, asking, “I don’t think you look anything like you’re over a century old!”

Diana acted angry. “You know it’s impolite to speculate on a woman’s age!”

Xiao Lin shrugged. He did not think that the woman would really be angry as he continued, “I’m just saying it as it is. The Tunguska explosion should have happened at the start of the twentieth century. It must have been over a hundred years ago! Are you sure you were born then?”

Diana blinked before saying amusedly, “Of course I wasn’t born yet, but my grandmother was one of the witnesses. She received a special invitation to the academy because of that. My mother was accepted into the academy due to my grandmother, and I received the same. So, I had not lied at all, that incident shaped my current family!”

So, she was a third generation colonist!

The earliest academies all had at least over two hundred years of history, and the initial colonists obviously slowly started to have their own progenies. However, because everyone’s life spans had slowly started to increase after coming to the New World, both marriage and childbirth had been pushed back. Furthermore, since many of them had dreams of pursuing polyamorous relationships in the New World, a lot of them would not end starting families with someone from Earth, so colonists did not tend to procreate with each other that often.

Keeping count, Diana should be the first one that Xiao Lin knew about.

Xiao Lin’s curiosity was piqued again. Of course, he was mostly interested in what Diana had said about the Tunguska explosion. Since she brought it up herself, it meant she had no intentions of hiding it.

After a brief introduction, Xiao Lin found out that Diana’s grandmother was one of the eyewitnesses to the event back then. After the explosion, the Russian academy immediately sent in their people to handle the aftermath. Thanks to the special nature of the event, they could not let too many people know of it.

Xiao Lin had some understanding of the event thanks to the memory crystal, but he had no way of knowing what actually happened back then. However, Diana never went into detail regarding the cause of the explosion.

Back then, Voyna Akademiya gathered all the eyewitnesses, and they were faced with two choices. Due to the secrecy of the matter, they could either kill everyone there or wipe their memories. However, memory wiping had its flaws, and there was no way of guaranteeing that they would not suddenly recall the event.

Those from the academy leaned more on the first choice, but later on, an accident caused them to dispel that notion. Among the eyewitnesses, they noticed some changes, and the change was extremely quick and hard to explain.

“Changes?” Xiao Lin could not help but interrupt at that point, as he asked suspiciously, “Hold on, are you telling me something from a novel? After encountering a mysterious radiation, they started to undergo strange changes. Why does that feel like an apocalyptic novel?”

Diana rolled her eyes at him. “Are you mocking my Mandarin? Fine, let me change it. Among the eyewitnesses, a portion of them seemed to go through an awakening.”

Looking at Xiao Lin's confused expression, Diana added, "To put it in an even simpler way, a portion of them seemed to be developing talents. That's right, my grandmother and the others turned into talent holders! To this day, it's the only record of people developing talents! After that, just as I said, talent holders mean a lot to the academy, so my grandmother was specially accepted."

"Unbelievable!" Xiao Lin was also very shocked. Just like Diana said, talent holder's were called God's Chosen in the New World, which meant that talents were traits that one had to be born with, so he never expected that there would be those that developed them later on.

"So your mother, and yourself, are all talent holders?"

"That's right."

"Your luck is really good. You're a natural born talent holder, and come from a family of talent holders as well." Xiao Lin knew very well that a family like that would definitely have a lot of power in the Russian academy, so that woman would definitely not have a simple background, and her skill would not be low either.

"So, regarding Tunguska, what do you want to know from me?" Diana intentionally avoided the topic of her own family as she asked with a smile.

"I want to go to the site of Tunguska, and even though it's not hard to get a visa for this kind of thing, I know what Tunguska means to Voyna Akademiya, so without your guidance, I don't think I can find the true ruins with my status." Xiao Lin finally mentioned his main goal for the night.

"You want to go to the ruins of Tunguska? Are you someone who is well-versed in history?"

"You can treat it as my personal interest."

"If it's just for the purposes of sightseeing, there's no big issue." Diana seemed a little hesitant.

"Leave me your contact info so we can talk about it in the future." Xiao Lin quickly gave her his own number. Of course, it was his phone number from Earth. Trying to communicate between academies was something very difficult.

Diana followed Xiao Lin's gaze and looked back in realization. Behind her, a few Russian men were walking toward them, so Xiao Lin obviously did not want anyone to know about it. She had wanted to reject him, but her eyes suddenly looked up in thought. As she pursed her lips with a fake smile, she then gave him her own number.

The two Russian men talked to Diana with puzzled expressions. Since it was in Russian, Xiao Lin did not understand, but the looks they directed at him were not very friendly, so Xiao Lin did not interject. Regardless, he had already exchanged contact numbers with Diana. Of course, he was not sure if she would help him, but it was still a good start, considering Voyna Akademiya was completely foreign to him.

Xiao Lin was just about to leave when a coarse-looking man grabbed onto him, probably after having too much vodka. His tone was slurred and drunken. "Hey! Little guy, what's your name?"

He was speaking in English, and it was on the simple side, so Xiao Lin could understand. However, Xiao Lin was not happy with his tone, so Xiao Lin pretended not to hear it as he walked out of the banquet hall. He had been planning on leaving, since he was unlikely to get any news that he wanted by staying.

“@#!##” The man talked in an even more rapid tone, probably in Russian. Even though Xiao Lin did not understand the meaning, he guessed that the man was asking him to stay put.

Xiao Lin would obviously not listen to a drunken man, so he quickened his pace.

The next instant, Xiao Lin felt a fierce battle intent closing in. He immediately activated Ruin, and unleashed a very strong punch behind him. Since it was sudden, he did not hold back with the punch, and he unleashed his sword aura with that attack.

Chapter 631 - Alexander

Chapter 631: Alexander

Xiao Lin was shocked and furious. They were at Dawn Academy, their own territory, but he was being ambushed by this foreigner. It was nothing short of blatant contempt.

However, at that moment, he did not have time to protest as the sword aura he unleashed was intercepted in mid-air. The next second, Xiao Lin felt a screeching wind, and even under Ruin, Xiao Lin only had a blink of an eye to react.

That blink only allowed him to distance himself by a little bit before he saw a darkened figure lunge at him. Amidst the loud noise, Xiao Lin felt like his body had been hit by a large steel boulder, and he was knocked away, completely unable to control himself.

What enormous strength! What terrifying explosiveness!

Even with his Ruin state, he had no way to block this guy's strength!

The massive impact caused Xiao Lin to feel suffocated for an instant. He had obviously not brought any weapons to the banquet, and his fists were not the best way to use the power of sword aura, causing him to be at an absolute disadvantage. At that moment, Xiao Lin's combat ability almost caused him to activate Myth.

“Enough!”

“Stop it!”

“Alexander! Stop causing trouble!”

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A ruckus could be heard within the hall, and they managed to stop the battle before Xiao Lin activated Myth. Both the Russian academy and Dawn Academy's people rushed over, and the first thing they checked on was the man who suddenly attacked and Xiao Lin's condition.

"How are you feeling?" The president was quite anxious as Xiao Lin did not have any armor on, and his shirt had already been ripped apart. With all the blood, it looked quite severe.

"It's fine; it's just a flesh wound." Xiao Lin was actually not in bad shape. The fight was short, and he had used his Ruin state, so there was no way he could be defeated in a single strike.

The president let out a sigh of relief after making sure Xiao Lin was fine. The Russians were also done with their checks, and both of their representatives talked to each other. Since the two of them were fine, the matter could be settled amicably.

"I'm sorry, Alexander isn't good with alcohol, and he loses his temper everytime he gets drunk. We'll make sure to compensate you!" The Russians were the ones who spoke up first.

If the Russians accepted the blame first, then Dawn Academy would not be able to easily press them for more. However, the president hesitated for a moment before looking at Xiao Lin. He then turned around, looking at the Russian man before saying, "I'll let Xiao Lin decide on this."

Xiao Lin was just by the side, but his attention was not on their negotiations. His gaze was on the man who was leaning against a pillar. It was the man who had ambushed him just now, Alexander. The man reeked of alcohol, and had his eyebrows furrowed. They were not lying; Alexander really did look like he was extremely drunk. The man's face was red, and even his expression seemed to be in a daze.

"He is very strong," Xiao Lin suddenly said.

The Russian man paused for a moment before saying proudly, "In terms of strength, not a single new student in any of the academies will be able to compete with Alexander!"

Xiao Lin smiled softly. "It was just a brief scuffle, and even after being ambushed I just suffered a few scratches."

The other party's words were stopped.

Seemingly wanting to continue, Alexander suddenly spoke up, still drunk, even after that bout earlier. He made a thumbs-up gesture at Xiao Lin, saying, "You're not bad. Will you be participating in the friendly matches?"

"Yes, I'll be in the individual tournament." Xiao Lin nodded.

"The individual tournament." Alexander seemed very disappointed. After that, he drunkenly looked at their leader, saying, "Vice President, I've decided that I want to participate in the individual matches!"

"The name list is already set! You're only here to watch this time. You've been ordered to not take part!" The vice president immediately berated the man in a low voice after a moment of astonishment. He spoke in Russian, but someone quickly translated it for Xiao Lin.

“I don’t care!”

“There’s no way!”

“Then I’ll just stay here!”

As they argued, Alexander actually lay down on the floor right there. Even a faint snoring could be heard. The Russians looked very frustrated, but the others were obviously not willing to give in.

The president seemed to have a thought before flashing his trademark smile, saying, “Youngsters naturally like to fight, and since Alexander requested it, why don’t we satisfy him?”

“The president requested that he be prohibited from fighting before we came,” the vice president said expressionlessly.

“Why don’t we just have them fight in an informal match. It won’t be in a tournament format, and won’t count in the friendly match tally. That way, you’ll have a good reason for when you go back, and I’ll give your president a letter to explain things. We’ll bear any of the consequences. So, how about it?” The president seemed to have already been prepared for everything.

The vice president hesitated for a moment, but after looking at Alexander, who was obstinately not standing up, he probably felt that it would damage the Russian academy’s reputation too much to decline, so he finally clenched his teeth and agreed reluctantly.

The brief conflict ended there, and the banquet ended prematurely. Diana shot Xiao Lin a playful look from within the crowd, and mouthed the words, “I’m looking forward to this battle!”

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Even though Xiao Lin looked fine, the president still brought him to the treatment room to go through some specialized treatment, just in case. As they waited, Xiao Lin could not help but ask, “How much do you know about Alexander?”

The president said, “He’s the strongest student among Russia’s first-years this year.”

“An S-rank talent holder?”

“That’s right. His talent is called War God. The passive effect is that it constantly adds to his Strength attribute as he ages. The older he is, the more horrifying his Strength will be. The active effect allows him to be possessed by the War God for a brief period. It can cancel out any magic effects, and he will get even more Strength.”

“Simple but effective. What a good talent!” Xiao Lin said, evaluating despite his surprise. The talent was not too complicated, as it merely added to his strength. It was simple and practical. From their short exchange earlier, Xiao Lin felt how much the man’s strength had risen.

However, Xiao Lin felt like something was off as he suspiciously said, “Doesn’t every talent holder keep their talents a tight secret? How do we know of a Russian’s talent?”

The president smiled and said, “Do you think that an alcoholic looks like someone who is good at keeping secrets? I heard that Alexander was tricked into revealing it while he was drunk in one of their gatherings.”

Chapter 632 - Fight with Alexander

Chapter 632: Fight with Alexander

In the next few days, Dawn Academy had specially provided the Russian academy with training halls for use. The conflict during the banquet did not cause any problems, and everyone still greeted each other politely when they met. Xiao Lin heard from Song Junlang that the Russian academy had handsomely compensated Dawn Academy for the incident. The Russians did not want the friendship to be affected by the incident.

The name list for the friendly match had been changed during that time. Xiao Lin had been excluded from the individual portion because he needed to have his match against Alexander. The fight would not be counted into the friendly match, which was a request from the Russian side. They hoped that the fight would affect as little as possible.

The president hoped that Xiao Lin would agree as well. Using his own words, it would be a great chance for Xiao Lin since there were not many chances to fight against an S-rank talent holder. Chen Dao might have the power as well, but Chen Dao’s usage of his talent paled in comparison to Alexander.

Xiao Lin understood that he needed more experience in battle, so he naturally agreed.

To the anticipation of many, Saturday quickly arrived and the friendly matches started. Since it was a closed-off training session, other than the Russians, only the student union was present from Dawn Academy’s side. Regular students were all prohibited from entering.

Since Xiao Lin had been excluded from the list, Cheng Ming replaced him. Of course, the group portion had been adjusted as well, but Xiao Lin himself had no way of looking at how the individual events went because his fight with Alexander was being held at the same time as the friendly match. The fight had been arranged in another training hall, and only the two of them were present, which meant that no one else would know about the results of the battle.

When he met Alexander again, he was not the drunkard he was from a few days ago. Since it was a training match, the two of them only had the simplest training tools and equipment. Alexander’s weapon was a pair of gloves, and Xiao Lin was using a training sword.

Alexander was very bulky, and his muscles looked very shocking. He seemed much more carefree without the influence of alcohol, and he licked his lips as he measured Xiao Lin. “I heard that you specialize in both magic and martial arts, but since this is just a spar and not a tournament, I hope you won’t use any spells. Is that okay?”

“Reason?”

“Warriors only use absolute strength. I’ve always craved a worthy opponent, but regretfully, there’s no one like that in our academy anymore. Even among the graduates, no one can beat me in terms of strength. It’s so boring.” Alexander sighed in disappointment.

His lonely expression caused Xiao Lin some surprise. The guy was just a first-year student, but he was already challenging seniors. No wonder the guy was so eager to fight Xiao Lin after seeing his strength a few days ago.

The urge to fight swelled in Xiao Lin as well, so he nodded. “No problem, I’m also curious as to how strong the so-called first place from Voyna Akademiya is!”

“Then you have my thanks.” Alexander politely expressed his gratitude.

After that, the smiles disappeared from both their faces as their expressions turned serious. Both of them entered their battle states as they observed their opponents, but neither of them made a move. Alexander seemed to have heard about Xiao Lin, since he was being very respectful toward his opponent, which was why he was patiently looking for any weaknesses, but he quickly furrowed his eyebrows in confusion.

Xiao Lin seemed way too weak. Xiao Lin’s size was almost half of Alexander’s. The difference in strength was way too great.

“So, that’s the case. I guess you’re the explosive type? No matter; if it’s a skill or your talent, you can raise your abilities greatly for a short time, and obtain strength that is greater than others, and the rate it increases is also greater.” Alexander quickly made a judgement, but he shook his head in disappointment. “This type of battle method might be able to save your energy, but if that’s the case, you can’t defeat me.”

Alexander finally launched his attack first. They were no skills or preamble; he just lunged straight forward. He had seen Xiao Lin’s speed before, and Xiao Lin now understood that Alexander had been holding back when he was drunk.

How quick!

Today, Alexander’s speed was much faster. His strong body did not hinder his speed and explosiveness at all. He was just like a tank going at full throttle as he thundered ahead.

Xiao Lin did not hurry to activate Ruin, and instead used Miracle first. Alexander’s speed was fast, but Xiao Lin was prepared. He immediately used Phantom Steps to dodge away. Just as he thought, even though his opponent was fast and explosive, the guy’s dexterity was not high.

Alexander let out a grin, not stopping at all as he swung his fist forward. His heavy fist exploded in a fan-shape in front of him, catching Xiao Lin who was dodging sideways.

Using absolute strength to destroy any skill-based dodges was how Alexander chose to respond. Right after the punch, he changed directions. His feet planted on the ground as he flew off the floor. After a short decrease in speed, he shot forward at full speed again.

The sword in Xiao Lin's hand waved in a fan-shape as well, blocking the incoming force, but the impact still caused his body to fly backward a bit. The brief moment Xiao Lin lost control of his body allowed Alexander to close in the distance.

That was the pressure of absolute strength. It did not give Xiao Lin any time to react. Alexander wanted to end the fight in the shortest amount of time. That was the only way he fought.

However, this time, a sea of flames greeted him. Flames shot out of Xiao Lin's blade and the temperature soared. Even though he agreed to not use magic, it did not mean he could not use elemental sword aura.

"Elemental sword aura? What a troublesome thing." Alexander furrowed his eyebrows, but still did not move to dodge. In truth, it was hard for him to shift his body to dodge anything while he was at full speed anyway.

Xiao Lin used this flame sword aura to stop his foe, but in just a few seconds, the sea of flames parted. Alexander's immense energy covered his entire body as he barged through the flames.

Clank!

Alexander's fist finally met Xiao Lin's blade. sparks flew at that moment, and the impact under his full speed caused the floor to shatter.

Xiao Lin still did not use Ruin, so there was a lot of pressure from him. His opponent's fist aura was right in front of him, and moved like blades in front of his face. If he retreated at all, the fist's aura would destroy him.

Chapter 633 - Alexander's Fist

Chapter 633: Alexander's Fist

"What's wrong? This isn't your full strength at all! Are you underestimating me?" Even with the advantage, Alexander did not seem happy.

Bang!

After another collision, Alexander pulled away. The battle just now only lasted over ten seconds, but Xiao Lin already looked to be in a difficult situation. His training armor was a complete mess. It could not handle the fist aura at all. However, Xiao Lin's breath was completely steady, which meant that he might be taxed, but he still had much more left in the tank.

"Hey! Are you underestimating me?" Alexander narrowed his eyes at Xiao Lin.

"No, I just want to see how long I can hold you back in this state." Xiao Lin earnestly shook his head and denied it. He would obviously not underestimate an S-rank talent holder, but his Ruin state could not be used for too long. He wanted to see how much he could do under Miracle.

Alexander might have seen through it. The man snorted, “How boring. But, I won’t be holding back anymore. It’s a spar, but if I really injure you, then just admit that you’re unlucky!”

Not waiting for Xiao Lin’s answer, Alexander attacked again. It was the same as earlier. There were not any flashy moves; it was just a straightforward charge and swinging of his fists.

Xiao Lin understood that there was no way he could stand up to his opponent in terms of pure strength. He might be in Miracle now, but even with Ruin, he might not hold the absolute advantage. That was why he immediately decided to throw his attributes into Agility, and the training sword in his hand started to move in a confusing manner.

Xiao Lin’s swordsmanship was already at the elementary level after training so much. Both his power and dexterity had greatly increased in that regard. On top of his Phantom Steps, as well as his enhancements under Miracle, his dodging ability was already far above a Bronze rank.

Xiao Lin constantly dodged around in the training hall, his feet not stopping for a moment. Dodging was actually a very deep subject. Skill themselves only provided the most basic of footwork, and the most important thing was actually experience and mastery.

During the half a year’s time, after all the battles Xiao Lin had gone through, no matter in the monthly examinations or in the New World, on top of his Academic Genius talent increasing his understanding, he far exceeded any first-year student. No, he even far exceeded any first-year student from all the academies.

Alexander’s face had been furious, as he thought that Xiao Lin had been underestimating him, but his expression quickly turned heavy. Alexander’s fighting style was very straight and direct, and focused on using his strength to overcome any skill discrepancies. In the face of absolute power, any skills or techniques would be suppressed.

Yet now, he suddenly realized that Xiao Lin’s skills far exceeded anyone he had ever faced before. Xiao Lin’s speed might not be the fastest, but the guy knew how to dodge at the best moments.

After the initial clash of blade and fist, Xiao Lin continued to avoid another clash. Xiao Lin understood that it would not be to his advantage, which was why every time Alexander’s fist closed in, Xiao Lin would immediately stab his sword forward, and when the fist aura began to spread, Xiao Lin would use the brief moment of delay to retract his sword and slide away, using Phantom Steps to change the direction of his attack, causing Alexander to not be able to use his full force.

That method of battle frustrated Alexander as he felt like he could not fight with his full might. Even though he had the complete advantage in terms of strength, he could not turn that advantage into a victory.

“Interesting. You have a very good foundation. It’s the best I have ever seen!” Alexander praised unreservedly before laughing, “Very good! This is good! I will increase my power!”

Xiao Lin had no time to respond, being too focused on dodging, but he believed that the man was not lying. To be able to chat away in such an intense battle meant that Alexander was not using his full strength.

As he laughed, Alexander's expression turned into a sharp one as a green aura rose around him. That was the physical representation of fist aura, but it was the first time Xiao Lin had seen a green-colored one. Alexander started his attack, but he did not charge forward like before, and instead slammed his fist down on the floor.

Boom!

The entire training hall started to shake intensely after that strike. Cracks began to appear under Alexander's feet and started to spread. The deepness of the cracks were not even, and the deepest parts were meters deep. The training hall's floors had already been specially strengthened, but they seemed as fragile as paper under his fist.

The shocking punch had basically destroyed the training hall, and only a small area to stand on remained. That way, Xiao Lin had no way of using his speed to the fullest. When the dust suddenly parted, Xiao Lin lunged forward with his blade, a red flame covering his sword.

Alexander paused for a few seconds before smiling. The green aura in his hand expanded again as it went straight toward the flames on the sword.

Xiao Lin finally activated Ruin. He could feel that Alexander's skill had greatly increased after using the green fist aura, as it was no longer at a level that he could handle with Miracle.

Fist and blade collided once again, and neither of them had the advantage. They were both beaten back by sword and fist aura, and Alexander loudly exclaimed, "Haha! Very good! This is more like it!"

"You sure talk a lot!" Xiao Lin finally retorted.

Xiao Lin could actually not face up to Alexander if their auras were in a straight-up fight. After using the green fist aura, his opponent's destructiveness was already at a terrifying level. Facing Xiao Lin's flaming sword aura, the guy still did not dodge, and allowed it to hit his body. However, even if it was Alexander, the flame sword aura still left behind noticeable wounds.

Xiao Lin was in awe. It meant that Alexander had yet to use his S-rank talent, War God's active component. Xiao Lin remembered that the president had said that all magic was ineffective when Alexander was possessed by the War God, but Alexander was still being damaged by his flames.

Chapter 634 - Result Without A Result

Chapter 634: Result Without A Result

The two of them still held back during the fight. It was not because they underestimated each other, but rather because they both knew how terrifying their power would be at full capacity. Xiao Lin would definitely not use Myth during a spar, nor was he planning on using his dragon's breath.

However, in that scenario, Xiao Lin was actually on the losing end of things. After all, his abilities were mostly on the explosive side, but Alexander was just using his own strength to fight.

Even though it seemed like Xiao Lin had more than enough power to spare, he was very clear that he had almost run out of time using Ruin. His nerves were on the edge. Even so, his opponent's fists applied tremendous pressure on Xiao Lin.

The pressure was not through outward injuries. Every time Alexander punched, it seemed to be dodged or blocked by Xiao Lin, but in truth Xiao Lin could not completely block it. If he was an ordinary opponent, Xiao Lin would be more than able to block it, and Xiao Lin would not have to care that much.

However, Alexander was different, as his strength was much more terrifying than Xiao Lin anticipated. Every punch Xiao Lin blocked still damaged him. At that moment, Xiao Lin could feel his internal organs churning. If he did not force it down, he would already be spitting out blood.

The intense battle was still going on, and Xiao Lin still used his reliable basic swordsmanship and Phantom Steps to face Alexander. The effect was much better than when they just started. Even though Xiao Lin was always on the defensive end, facing the power of Alexander, it was very hard for him to even launch an attack every few minutes, but he had not been completely passive.

Xiao Lin was hard at work observing his opponent. Alexander's pattern of attack looked very monotonous, but Xiao Lin quickly realized that, in a true battle of life and death, the simplest and most direct methods were actually the most effective, and it was actually what he lacked himself.

Xiao Lin started to understand why the president agreed to the spar in his stead. The president wanted Xiao Lin to grow quickly, and wanted Xiao Lin to learn how to stand against opponents of this level because, in the future, most of Xiao Lin's opponents would be at that level.

Chances for fights like that were rare. Even when it was Lilith, Xiao Lin never had a chance to properly fight her before, so he treasured the moment. As an SS-rank talent holder, Academic Genius' active effect might not look that strong initially, but his passive skill was also constantly improving and showing how powerful it was.

With each slash, each block, and each dodge.

The extremely ordinary movements were constantly being perfected by Xiao Lin at shocking speeds. That was the effect of his learning ability. Observing his opponent and learning his opponent's strengths before perfecting his own defensive measures.

Alexander quickly realized it as well, and obviously he did not know what Xiao Lin's talent was. However, with the tremendous learning capacity Xiao Lin was showing, he immediately noticed it.

The green fist aura filled the training hall, destroying the floor, and even the surrounding walls were starting to break down. Alexander no longer held back his strength in that state, and each of his punches were enough to cover half the training hall in his green aura.

However, Xiao Lin could figure out the best way to react each time, and if he could not dodge, then he would figure out how to receive the least amount of damage. After slowly learning and grasping Alexander's movements, Xiao Lin could even start to attack with his flame sword aura. Of course, it only had miniscule effects against Alexander, but the high temperature flames were also not something the training equipment could easily withstand.

Alexander's training armor was quickly burned away as well, and both of their upper bodies were practically naked. Their bodies were filled with shocking wounds. Under their intense attacks, even being touched would be devastating.

Xiao Lin's current skill was already at Bronze rank, which meant that he could maintain his Ruin state for almost ten minutes. Of course, Momentary Ruin would allow him to preserve his strength, but against an opponent of Alexander's level, it was possible that he would be defeated by Alexander in the brief moments Momentary Ruin was down, so Xiao Lin did not want to take the risk.

As a spar, both of their presidents had mutually clarified that victory in the battle would mean nothing. It also meant that the two of them could fight, but they should not cause any trouble. Xiao Lin obviously wanted to win, and if he could not use Myth, dragon's breath, or his active talent, then he only had one trump card remaining: Absolute Defense.

Xiao Lin was in a state of absolute focus. While he tried to dodge Alexander, he was rapidly calculating his remaining strength and time.

The time quickly got to nine minutes, and he only had one minute left until Ruin reached his limit. Alexander's green fist aura was also a little weaker. It seemed like his opponent could also not use that destructive power without any limits.

It was time!

Absolute Defense!

Xiao Lin widened his eyes, forming a white circle of light around his body and repelling Alexander's fist aura. Over nine minutes of observation and learning, even if he had yet to completely master it, he still more or less grasped Alexander's attack patterns.

Alexander's punching speed and strength were both terrifying, but there was an almost half a second long pause between each punch. After all, such punches would definitely inflict a good amount of recoil on his own body. The fact that Alexander could control it in half a second was already very worthy of praise, but to Xiao Lin, he wanted to use that half a second.

Looking at Xiao Lin attacking for the first time, Alexander was not surprised, but Xiao Lin's timing was very accurate and perfect. During that time, he was preparing the energy for the next punch, and was in the midst of the next attack. The time frame was unbelievably short, but during that time, Alexander practically lost all of his attack power.

Alexander was actually very clear on this weakness of his, but before that, no one was ever able to make use of his weakness. That was also Alexander's strongest point. Even if his opponents knew his weakness, there was nothing they could do! Yet, this time, his fist aura lost its protective effect when facing Absolute Defense, and at practically the same time, Xiao Lin did not hesitate to use his flame sword aura.

The attack flowed like a coursing river, and everything happened in the blink of an eye. Outsiders would only be able to see a flash before the two of them clashed. After that, an intense explosion followed. In the explosion, the training hall could no longer handle it, and the ceiling started to crumble. The cracks on the wall were also rapidly growing.

After a few seconds, the training hall collapsed.

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The vice president of the Russian student union and Dawn Academy's president might have been watching the friendly match in the main training hall, but their thoughts were on the other training hall. After noticing the abnormal energy fluctuations and the final sound of the collapse, they both appeared instantly. Looking at the rubble in front of them, they exchanged glances, both of them speechless.

Xiao Lin and Alexander were pulled out of the rubble by employees after that, but they actually did not need any outside help. After recovering their strength for a short moment, they could already stand up by themselves. They still looked exhausted, but it was not at the level where they had used everything that they had. The battle was just a spar in the end. They did not put their lives on the line.

The two presidents asked about the other party's injuries symbolically, but it was obvious that they only cared about their own academies. The pleasantries quickly ended, and it seemed like the two of them were not in any critical conditions, so they both left while being supported.

Before they left, Xiao Lin and Alexander did not speak to each other, and they merely exchanged a glance, but they could tell what their opponent's gazes meant. They were looks of acknowledgement, acknowledging that the other party was an opponent that deserved respect, which was already enough.

The president brought Xiao Lin to his own office, sending everyone else away before slowly pouring Xiao Lin some tea. After sitting down for a moment, he could not resist asking, "What was the result?"

"President, I was just wondering when you would ask that question." Xiao Lin laughed. Looking at the president's twitching eyebrow, Xiao Lin immediately let out a dry cough and shut his mouth.

The president had a helpless look on his face, waving his hand as he said, "Fine, I admit that I'm a bit of a gossip. How about you satisfy my curiosity?"

Xiao Lin's smile disappeared from his face as he shook his head. "There was no result."

"Come again?"

"There was no victor." Xiao Lin thought for a moment before continuing, "I had wanted to use his weakness and carelessness to launch my only counter attack at the last moment. I thought I succeeded, but he actually turned his body to steel at the last moment. I don't know what that ability is, but it blocked my whole attack, and then, the battle stopped. The end of the battle is what you saw when you came."

"Turned to steel?" The president tapped the table with his finger, going deep in thought before saying, "I forgot to tell you before, Alexander's natural strength is very high, but he actually takes mostly defensive classes in the academy. Even without the strength that his talent gives him, in terms of defensive ability, he is also the top among the first-year students of the Russian academy."

Chapter 635 - Team Battles

Chapter 635: Team Battles

“Alexander, what were you thinking! You actually used so much power! Don’t forget what the president said before we came. He just wants you to observe Dawn’s opponents!”

On the other side, Voyna Akademiya’s vice president, a bespectacled, well-mannered man, was loudly nagging Alexander. Alexander shrugged in a nonchalant manner, saying, “I hate the feeling of losing. You all know that.”

“Why do you regard him so highly? We’ve investigated this new batch of students from Dawn Academy already, and Xiao Lin does stand out, but there’s nothing to indicate that he’s a talent holder to this day so, even if he’s not bad right now, his potential in the future...”

“Even though I don’t know how you got your information, I feel like you should fire every one of those people after my battle today!” Alexander still had a lazy look on his face. The bulky man was quite easy going outside of battle, at least when he was not drunk.

“What do you mean?”

“I don’t know how much he was holding back, but it was obvious that he had more trump cards that were still hidden than I do!” Alexander’s face turned serious.

“How is that possible!”

“How is it not? You underestimate Dawn Academy too much, but they’re still one of the founding academies in the end. I actually didn’t want to use my Man of Steel skill, but Xiao Lin forced me to do it in the end. That was already enough to shock me.”

...

In the office of Dawn Academy, Xiao Lin had already rested enough to recover most of his strength. After all, he did not use all of his power earlier.

The president did not disturb him, and only sat down there drinking tea while thinking. Xiao Lin recalled the earlier battle. Even though the entire battle only lasted a little over ten minutes, that brief time was even more valuable to him than continuously training or studying for a week.

After about half an hour, Xiao Lin slowly put down the cup in his hand, raising his head as he smiled. “The friendly match is still going on. Should we go take a look?”

“Are you done thinking?” the president asked.

Xiao Lin shook his head, saying, “Not so fast, but I gained a lot of experience. I’ll think about it properly when I get back.”

“That’s good. A battle with an S-rank talent holder is a very valuable experience,” the president said. “Then, let’s go look at the friendly match. I think the individual matches should be almost done.”

Xiao Lin knew that he would not be participating, but he was still curious how the Russian team worked together. When they reached the venue, the individual matches had just ended. Xiao Lin saw Chen Dao using a Pyroblast spell to send his opponent flying, slamming him into the walls of the training hall.

“It looks like Chen Dao managed to win.” The president nodded, smiling. “Cheng Ming won his match as I was leaving as well, so we won both of the individual matches.”

The president allowed Xiao Lin to find a spot to spectate the match himself. He walked toward Chen Dao because Chen Dao did not seem to be in a good state. He had wounds littered on his body, so it had obviously been a bitter fight. Xiao Lin thought for a bit, it should have been around half an hour since the president left, which meant that the match had lasted for at least half an hour. This meant that Chen Dao’s victory was hard fought.

“It looks like you won’t be taking part in the group fight either.” Alexander laughed as he appeared next to Xiao Lin. After that, he placed his hand on Xiao Lin’s shoulder like they were old friends as he said casually, “This guy who uses fire spells is not bad. His talent must be the S-rank Fire God? It’s a talent at the level of my War God!”

It was as if their relationship had been greatly strengthened after their fight. Xiao Lin rolled his eyes, saying, “The one on your side isn’t bad either, being able to hold on for half an hour.”

“Oh, his talent is very durable, even if he’s only an A-rank talent holder, but... Ahem, I can’t tell you all that.” Alexander stopped his words immediately, and he noticed the other Russians were sending him a speechless look.

“Is the team event being held here as well?” Xiao Lin shifted the topic, saving himself and the others from an awkward situation.

“The team event is obviously being held in the simulation room, but we can still spectate from the outside with the observation spell array.” Alexander laughed at Xiao Lin’s cluelessness. Even though he was a guest, he was still familiar with the place. Of course, it was because Dawn Academy had provided them the locations for training the past two days, so he enthusiastically led Xiao Lin over.

The simulation room was not far away from the training hall. It was a very wide and huge hall that was closed off. Going in would reveal a very realistic forest, with the sun, rivers and trees. There was a specialized viewing area outside the simulation room, and they could look at the whole match from the large monitor in front.

After Xiao Lin sat down with Alexander, he suddenly felt like something was off because he realized that everyone around him were Russians. Not far away, the monitors who did not participate also looked at him weirdly, probably wondering how Xiao Lin was suddenly so close to the students from the Russian academy.

“Hi! Your fight with Alexander is done. Let me guess, you were definitely beaten up by this drunkard, right?” The one who came over was Diana, who he got to know the last time. She was about to go into the simulation room, but turned around when she saw Xiao Lin. Her intimate tone caused many of the Russian men to shoot Xiao Lin a gaze of animosity.

“Diana, don’t you need to take part in the match? If you don’t go in now, you might have your credits deducted by the president when you get back!” Alexander said unhappily.

“Oh oh, it seems like you definitely lost very badly?” Diana raised her eyebrows at him, and did not wait for a reply before heading into the simulation room.

“I’d advise you to not provoke this woman,” Alexander reminded Xiao Lin.

“It looks like you’re pursuing her.” Xiao Lin smiled.

Alexander almost jumped up like he was bitten by a bug, exclaiming, “Don’t joke around! Who would get close to that woman?! Do you know what her talent is? It’s fine, you’ll see it for yourself later. That woman is horrifying! Truthfully, I pity the ones who are participating from your academy.”

Xiao Lin paused, unable to tell how strong that woman who was full of smiles was, but he said meaningfully, “Is that why your academy did not let you participate this time?”

“That’s right. Diana alone is enough!” Alexander said seriously and confidently.

Chapter 636 - Start

Chapter 636: Start

Translator: EndlessFantasy Translation Editor: EndlessFantasy Translation

The team event had already started, and Xiao Lin started to have a serious look in the spectator stands. Even though he did not need to participate this time, he would definitely need to participate in the official tournament, so he still needed to gain experience.

Dawn Academy’s list of attendees were Cheng Ming, Gu Xiaoyue, Sheng Guo, An Luo, and Sun Xiao. Among them, Cheng Ming had replaced Xiao Lin in the individual portion, but he still participated in the team segment. After all, it was just a friendly match, and there were no special rulings.

The composition was quite balanced. Cheng Ming and Sheng Guo were both close-ranged, melee weapon fighters. An Luo was the only archer among the twelve monitors. Sun Xiao was focused on magic. With Gu Xiaoyue’s support magic in the mix, the team did not have too many flaws.

From the gigantic screen, they could clearly see every detail and every corner of the match at all times. The moment the match started, the five from Dawn Academy immediately fell into the formation they had learned in their training, and charged right into the forest.

The two teams started at fixed positions in the forest, and were usually at opposite sides. However, since it was just a friendly match, they were not too far apart. Choosing to charge right forward would very likely lead to a fight breaking out in the middle.

“A wise choice. You will lose very tragically if you prolong the match.” Alexander looked very serious as well, and would occasionally talk to Xiao Lin.

“You’re very good at prolonged fights?”

“It’s easy to see from your composition that you’re using the standard methods. However, we aren’t... Ah, it’s a pity, even in a quick battle, you won’t be able to gain any advantages.”

“What composition did you choose?”

“We’re using four close-ranged fighters and... Ahem, you’re trying to trick me again.”

“Four close-ranged fighters only? How slanted!” Xiao Lin might not have experience in team battles like this, but they had at least gone through Yu Mei’s specialized training for a good period of time. Usually, team battle compositions would have a vanguard, guards in the middle and rear guard combination. The vanguard would be close-ranged fighters, the middle would be those with long-ranged attacks, and the rear guard were the supports.

However, Xiao Lin thought of something as he added, “What about Diana?”

“It’s already started. You’ll understand quickly,” Alexander said.

Looking back at the gigantic monitor, both sides had already met each other in the middle. Since the training hall was not big, the Russians also chose to rush straight forward.

The first one to fight was Cheng Ming. He was not very quick, but the dense forests had restricted the speed of both sides, so neither side chose to send speed-oriented members forward, which was also one of the reasons Yu Mei did not send out Xiao Lin.

When they were still two hundred meters away from the Russians, Cheng Ming already started to show the power of his heavy sword. He raised his blade and began to make the motions of Slashing. The opponents seemed to notice, but did not respond because of the distance. Their hesitation had led them to lose their best chance to dodge.

The blade in Cheng Ming’s hand fell, and a massive white sword aura flew out. The trees shattered immediately as the sword aura passed through, and the sword aura seemed to completely cover every student from the Russian Academy.

“Nice!”

“That was beautiful!”

“I’ve experienced Cheng Ming’s sword aura before. Even talent holders wouldn’t be able to handle it head on!”

Dawn Academy's spectators immediately cheered. Cheng Ming had always been well liked, and they were also facing foreigners at that moment, so Cheng Ming's performance naturally led them to get excited.

Voyna Akademiya seemed to be very calm. Alexander was the one who spoke the most among them, and continued to idly chat with Xiao Lin. "A very strong sword aura. It's at least 2.6 times stronger than a regular Slashing. How powerful! Dawn Academy is full of geniuses!"

Xiao Lin did not care for the praise, but Alexander's words led to him having a strange expression. However, he did not voice his thoughts.

The battle continued, and the Russians who had been chosen would naturally not fall so easily. Before the dust settled, a few rays of light shot out through the dust, falling right next to Cheng Ming and the others.

In the ensuing explosions, Xiao Lin looked to the side with some surprise. "Elemental sword aura?"

Alexander nodded in acknowledgement. "Compared to your elemental sword aura, it's way too weak. His elemental sword aura is at least fifty per cent lower than yours in power!"

Cheng Ming's attack caused the Russians to look a bit worse off, but they were not that injured. Elemental sword aura was stronger than regular sword aura of the same level. Cheng Ming was at the head, but he quickly felt his body turning lighter. Gu Xiaoyue had already started to cast her spells in the rear.

"A decent strategy. That big guy used Slashing earlier to clear the area. Your support is really strong. She actually increased the speed by seventy percent. A terrifying increase too. I remember that the effect of the Godly Movement spell is only thirty per cent." Alexander nodded, his face full of praise.

Xiao Lin could not resist anymore, suddenly asking, "How could you tell?"

"Godly Movement? That spell is easy to recognize."

"No, I'm asking how you could tell it was a seventy per cent increase. The other statistics you recognized earlier as well..." Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows. He obviously could tell that Gu Xiaoyue's spells were very powerful, but to be able to judge the numbers in a few short seconds was not something easily done.

"That isn't that hard. you just have to practice a little." Alexander waved it off before quickly shifting the topics, continuing to say, "Wow, your team is not bad. With that support as the core, you actually restricted the movements of our four-man group."

Xiao Lin rolled his eyes, slowly thinking about it. He obviously did not believe that he could actually do it with just a bit of training. Being able to judge power so accurately would need an unbelievable amount of training to be able to judge it with just his eyes.

"It seems like I will need to start practicing it myself."

Xiao Lin mumbled before he suddenly widened his eyes.. He looked at the monitor. “Hold on, you said your four-man group? Where is Diana? Why haven’t I seen her?!”

Chapter 637 - Diana’s Magic

Chapter 637: Diana’s Magic

“You’ll see her. I think her preparations are more or less done. It will start soon,” Alexander said in a mysterious fashion, but did not go into detail.

“Alexander, you’re saying too much!” Another Russian behind them suddenly coughed.

Alexander shrugged casually, shutting his mouth after that.

After it quieted down, Xiao Lin let out a sigh, but still furrowed his eyebrows. Alexander’s vague words caused him to worry for the participants on the field. Fine, his focus was still on Gu Xiaoyue.

As the only support, Gu Xiaoyue was definitely the core for the time being, and also the one they would focus on protecting. Based on the formation, even after the battle started, Cheng Ming and the others still remained close to Gu Xiaoyue, and would provide help whenever it was needed. Cheng Ming’s sword aura made his help very obvious, and he would always block any attacks toward Gu Xiaoyue.

However, Xiao Lin was still worried since Diana had yet to appear. He glanced over at the few Russians nearby, and they merely chatted with each other with a relaxed smile on their faces, not worried about what was happening at all.

Cheng Ming and the others also felt Diana’s absence, but due to the constant and unending disruption of their opponents, they did not have any chances to look for that woman at all. The mage of the team, Class Two’s monitor, Sun Xiao, was frantically expanding his perception outward, searching every corner of the forest, but from his expression, it was obvious that he did not find anything.

Sun Xiao’s intelligence might not compare to Gu Xiaoyue and Chen Dao, but his level of perception was not behind the two of them. A mage’s role in a team was definitely not limited to just being a mindless cannon. They needed to be wary of the surroundings and use their perception as a warning system. High-level mages needed to master both perception and high-level spells.

If Sun Xiao did not sense where Diana was, then Diana definitely had something to counter perceptive abilities. Either that, or the woman was not in Sun Xiao’s perception range at all.

“How big is the stadium?” Xiao Lin suddenly asked.

“You’d need to ask your own people,” Alexander answered.

“Thanks.” Xiao Lin stood up and walked over to the Dawn Academy’s spectator area. He went and directly asked the president.

Alexander meaningfully looked at Xiao Lin's back before saying to one of his companions softly, "It seems like he's figured out our strategy."

"So what? Even if he figures it out, there's nothing they can do. Speaking of which, Diana should almost be done with her preparations," his companion answered with disregard.

...

"The size of the stadium?" The president paused upon Xiao Lin's question before saying, "Around two thousand meters. Why?"

If Xiao Lin did not activate Miracle or Ruin. His perception under his normal condition would be about a thousand meters, and Sun Xiao's limit would be about that level.

"You think that Russian woman still hasn't participated in the battle at all?" The president furrowed his eyebrows. Dawn Academy was slowly gaining the advantage in the current battle on the monitor. Gu Xiaoyue's support spells had increased everyone's combat ability by a whole level, coupled with their advantage of numbers, it was a great issue that Diana still had yet to appear.

Most of them felt like Diana was hiding in the forest nearby, possibly waiting for the right moment to deal a finishing blow to Dawn Academy. That was a normal situation, and an assassin-type opponent would definitely place her target on Gu Xiaoyue.

"President, do you know much about magic? Oh, what I mean is, from the Bronze and Silver rank spells you know of, what is the greatest area they can cover?" Xiao Lin asked.

The president understood his reasoning. The president's eyebrows furrowed even further as he said, "Spells of this level would usually be about two hundred meters at most. Due to how the elements diminish, they won't be that threatening if they exceed that distance. In terms of attacking range, spells are usually considered middle distance."

"I understand that principle," Xiao Lin nodded. He had learnt it in the classes during the last semester. Every spell was formed by elemental compositions, and were controlled by the user, but over a certain distance, the control would drop, and the composition of the elements would lose their stability, affecting the power of the spells themselves. When the elements were reduced below a certain amount, spells would disappear.

"A spell that can cover over a thousand meters? I've never heard of any within her rank." The president shook his head, but his tone was not certain. Xiao Lin and the president exchanged a glance. Both of them were thinking of another possibility — she was a talent holder!

They did not wait long. After a few moments of silence, a sudden change happened. The monitor started to shake softly. No, it was actually the forest within the monitor that was starting to shake, and the fighters from the Russian Academy pulled away immediately; they did not hesitate to run away. Cheng Ming and the others from Dawn Academy did not know what was happening, but they still felt something and started their retreat, Gu Xiaoyue casted Godly Movement on everyone quickly.

"The winner is decided."

“It’s too late to run now.”

“But Aleksei is quite unlucky.”

“There’s no other way. Being with that woman will definitely lead to disaster.”

“They’ll definitely be compensated.”

...

Compared to the shock on Dawn Academy’s side, the Russian spectators were all very calm. It was obvious that they knew what would happen. From the words that he overheard, Xiao Lin was shocked and speechless to reach the conclusion that he did. Whatever the skill Diana was using, it seemed to be indiscriminate!

A loud rumbling could be heard as the ground in the forest was suddenly split open. Pillars of water shot up into the sky, and it seemed to reach the skies of the simulated environment. After that, a second one, and a third one... In a flash, countless water pillars covered everything they could see.

“Water Style Silver-rank spell, High Pressure Water Cannon. It uses water underground to cover a wide area of attack! But how is that possible? Where did that woman start her attack from, and why did no one stop her?!” a department head from the student union exclaimed in disbelief.

“That spell has been strengthened. The area of attack is much wider than a regular High Pressure Water Cannon. The victor has been decided.” The president sighed with a complicated expression.

“It’s only a Silver rank spell. They might be able to hold on.” Another department head immediately rejected it. If they admitted defeat just like that, they would lose their dignity because less than ten minutes had passed since the start of the match!

Chapter 638 - End Of Friendly Match

Chapter 638: End Of Friendly Match

Dawn Academy’s goal for arranging that friendly match was simple. It was in hopes that the first-year monitors could adapt to team battles quicker, and increase their teamwork and chemistry. So, the results of the friendly tournament itself were not important, and with Xiao Lin not participating, Dawn Academy’s skill could not compare to their opponents anyway, so the student union agreed on that point.

However, even so, no one expected that they would be defeated so thoroughly. Xiao Lin remembered Yu Mei telling them during their training that, even though the length of a team battle depended on the skills of both parties, usually, the fastest matches would last at least ten to twenty minutes.

However, this time, not even ten minutes had passed!

The student union members that came to spectate felt incredibly embarrassed. No matter what, they should at least have been able to hold on for ten minutes before surrendering.

At that moment, the Russian vice president walked over in front of Dawn Academy's president, sternly saying, "I think we can end this match now. If we continue, it's not that I don't respect your opinion, but if we continue, we can't guarantee that Diana will behave. After that woman activates her talent, she gets quite crazy."

"I think we should end this match now as well. There's no need to continue anymore!" Xiao Lin suddenly sighed as he said.

The president looked at Xiao Lin curiously before looking at the monitor again. The water cannons were still covering the whole forest, and even the four from the Russian academy were being submerged. If it continued, most of them would definitely lose ten years of their lifespan.

"Yes, let's end here. It's your victory," the president said plainly.

"A wise choice." The Russian vice president let out a sigh of relief as well, and both sides started to notify those in the stadium of the end of the match.

After the Russians left, the president looked at Xiao Lin again. Xiao Lin smiled bitterly and continued his words. "That woman... If it continues, she will probably end up using draconic spells. I'm sensitive to draconic energy, and I won't be mistaken."

"Draconic spells!" The president was shocked before saying in realization, "No wonder they said that woman would go crazy. I heard that the power of dragons would send a regular person's mental state into a high state of excitement. It's true, continuing would not benefit us."

The friendly match ended in an extremely short time, but fortunately, while the participants had varying injuries, none of their lives were in danger. After going through treatment, they quickly recovered. Xiao Lin let out a breath of relief when he saw that Gu Xiaoyue was fine, but Gu Xiaoyue glared at him angrily. With how smart Gu Xiaoyue was, she could more or less guess that the end of the match definitely had something to do with Xiao Lin.

The injured Russians were also generously treated by Dawn Academy for free, but only Diana never left the stadium. When Dawn Academy offered to look for her, they were rejected by the Russians. The Russians had a strange look on their faces when they said that there was no need to worry about Diana. Once enough time passed, the woman would come out herself.

Cheng Ming and the others were miserable, and were brought away by Yu Mei right after exchanging a greeting with Xiao Lin. Only the Russians remained, and Xiao Lin decided to stay behind after some thinking, quietly sitting in the spectator seats while he waited. When Alexander noticed him, Alexander smiled and walked over, "Don't tell me... Did you really fall for that woman?"

Xiao Lin rolled his eyes, ignoring Alexander's teasing as he asked, "Is Diana's talent Draconic Power?"

Alexander had just opened his mouth when he noticed the gaze of one of his companions. He could only smile and say, "All I can tell you is that Diana's situation is complicated, as her talent isn't as simple as you think. Ahem, I can't say anymore. She's already out, so I'll need to go look."

Probably worried that he would let more slip, Alexander rushed over. His teammates said something to him, obviously not wanting the guy to expose even more information to Xiao Lin.

Diana had indeed come out, and was being supported. She was practically carried out. The woman seemed to be in a state of half-consciousness, and a few Russians seemed to intentionally block Xiao Lin's sight, stopping him from going over. However, Xiao Lin could occasionally see the woman, and the clothes on her body had practically been ripped apart. However, what was revealed were scales that covered her skin.

When Xiao Lin wanted to make sure, the other party did not give him the chance. Diana was quickly wrapped up with some clothes and brought away. Alexander shot Xiao Lin a helpless look before he left, which meant that there was no way Alexander could help. The Russian academy would definitely not allow anyone from Dawn Academy to know more.

Xiao Lin did not say or ask anything else. He was obviously not interested in Diana that way, but the scales that looked like a dragon's gave him some food for thought. He knew that he had experienced that before as well. There was dragon's blood within his body, which allowed him to possess a tiny amount of draconic power, which was why he could use dragon's breath.

Last semester, Xiao Lin had gone on a rampage because of that power before, but after that, the power stayed hidden within his body, not appearing again.

"Whatever. It's someone else's problem." After thinking for a moment, Xiao Lin shook his head and stopped thinking about the matter.

The results of the friendly match still leaked out into the academy. Dawn Academy had definitely suffered a bad defeat, but Xiao Lin and Alexander's results were intentionally concealed. Outside of the relevant people, everyone who had asked in private was rejected.

The monitors were not in a good mood, but Yu Mei was very calm as the training instructor. The Russian academy left very quickly after the match ended, but Xiao Lin and the others still needed to continue training. After the devastating defeat, everyone was more obedient, and even the usually unruly Han Manman did not dare to mock anyone at that moment, nor did she dare to say that she would have been able to do better.

Everyone could see that the Russian academy had been holding back this time because Alexander did not participate at all. Just Diana alone was enough to defeat all of them, so if Alexander was participating, they would have no chance.

There were no more friendly matches in the months that followed, but Xiao Lin heard from Song Junlang that the academy had planned on arranging another one or two matches, yet they cancelled them after considering how much the bout against Voyna Akademiya had damaged their confidence.

Chapter 639 - New Elemental Swordsmanship

Chapter 639: New Elemental Swordsmanship

A month passed by quickly, and the rapid classes and high intensity training caused them to easily forget the flow of time. Xiao Lin's skill during that period did not change too much because the fight with Alexander had caused him to slowly understand his own shortcomings. He was too dependent on short-term explosiveness, and Alexander also had explosive power, which left Xiao Lin at a clear disadvantage in his normal state.

That was not good, as Xiao Lin's explosive time frame was not long. Miracle was no longer enough for most battles, and Miracle's evolution, Ruin, could not be constantly used, let alone Myth that required his lifespan as payment.

Improving his combat ability in his regular state was a problem Xiao Lin desperately needed to solve. After the fight with Alexander, Yu Mei's words were, "Xiao Lin, don't you think that your current state is very strange? I know you should already be Bronze rank, but do you really think you have the skills at that stage? Level and skill are two different things!"

Xiao Lin thought for a bit before realizing that, yes, he was indeed already at Bronze rank, but he had very few skills or abilities at that level. Normally, those at Bronze rank could even learn Silver-ranked skills if they had attributes that stood out, like Chen Dao did.

Xiao Lin had encountered many opponents to this date. They were either those we could completely not defeat, or those he could just handle with Ruin and his dragon's breath sword aura. That could not become his regular mode of combat, especially facing pressure from someone like Alexander. Xiao Lin understood that it was time he properly solidified his current skill.

So, during that month, what Xiao Lin did was simple. He first spent a whole week in the library, and based on the requirements that he had decided on, he looked for every skill book in the library. Normally, basic skills would be learned through professors in class, but Xiao Lin understood that his learning speed was far above anyone else, so traditional teaching was a waste of time for him, so he decided to teach himself.

The skill books in the library were more meant for the public eye, so those that were controversial or dangerous would not be available. Of course, Xiao Lin could definitely look for those sealed and restricted skills though Bell, but he did not want to take the risk at that moment.

Speaking of Bell, during the recent period, she very rarely appeared, and Xiao Lin did not have any reason to look for her himself. Xiao Lin knew that he still owed the girl a promise to use his Heaven's Eye and Time Rewind, so Bell not looking for him might not be a bad thing.

Xiao Lin's clearance in the school library was quite high. Ever since he looked for the president the last time, the president had raised his reading clearance to the highest. In name, he could enter any area of the library other than the restricted area, which gave him even more choices.

Planet Norma's skills were endless, and Xiao Lin was someone who evenly increased every attribute, so he had no weaknesses, but also had nothing that was particularly exceptional. After repeatedly mulling it over, Xiao Lin gave up on immediately learning Silver-ranked skills. The reason Chen Dao could do it was because Chen Dao's intelligence was very high, but the other attributes were very ordinary.

In terms of swordsmanship or magic, Xiao Lin still needed to learn them, but it should not be the main focus on his growth. He remembered the fight against Alexander in detail, and the only thing that he used that could threaten Alexander in his regular state was his elemental sword aura.

Then, it was decided. Elemental swordsmanship would be the focus of his learning.

There was no shortage of books on elemental swordsmanship in the library, and thankfully, Xiao Lin's reading clearance was high enough. He did not attend his classes, so he had enough time to look through the books in the library on the flying carpet, and quickly had some results.

More precisely, it was a compilation of elemental swordsmanship styles. There were four basic groups, which were Waterfall Swordsmanship, Flame Swordsmanship, Flowing Wind Swordsmanship, and Grand Earth Swordsmanship.

The four techniques made up the four basic elements, and there were no combination elements, so the requirements for learning them were not high. They were all Bronze rank, and only needed Basic Swordsmanship and Basic Meditation. When all four techniques were mastered, he could also learn the next step: Starburst.

Starburst was what truly attracted Xiao Lin, and was what led him to choose that swordsmanship style as his next aim.

Starburst was a swordsmanship style that had Silver-ranked explosiveness, but he did not need to specifically learn the skill. He only needed to learn the four swordsmanship techniques, and would be able to master Starburst through that.

What caused Xiao Lin some doubt was that Starburst did not seem to be the final swordsmanship style of the series because it seemed like the manual was lacking and the latter half of it was missing. Even after looking through the entire area of the library, he did not find any other parts, so he decided to set it aside first. He would learn the first half before deciding what to do.

The four techniques were not hard to learn. Fine, the ease of it was just because Xiao Lin was so exceptional. Xiao Lin was already very familiar with the unique sense of the elements, and the four techniques all needed the ability to sense the elements as a requirement, so he grasped them fairly quickly.

Xiao Lin usually practiced with the other monitors, but Yu Mei was surprised and curious when she saw him practicing Waterfall, and had gotten the student union to arrange a separate training hall just for himself.

The special treatment had obviously attracted the envy of others, but Yu Mei explained that Xiao Lin's swordsmanship's power was best trained away from the others. Otherwise, it would be troublesome if he injured anyone else by accident.

It was obvious that Yu Mei had heard of the swordsmanship technique before, but when Xiao Lin tried to press and ask for more information, the woman deliberately acted like she knew nothing, and only told Xiao Lin that the swordsmanship style suited him.

In the training that followed, Xiao Lin could clearly feel that the swordsmanship had very high practical value. The elemental swordsmanship he had used before was merely fusing his own sword aura with the elements before shooting it out. It was basically like throwing rocks at his opponent, but after he had this technique, Xiao Lin felt like he could sharpen the rock to be as sharp as a knife before shooting it out. Comparing the two, the latter was obviously more powerful.

Chapter 640 - Tournament Groups

Chapter 640: Tournament Groups

The learning of the four elemental swordsmanship styles went very smoothly. Xiao Lin was already very familiar with all of them after just half a month. Other than his talent, the elemental compression he had learned before helped a lot as well. Ever since he entered the academy, the things Xiao Lin had learned were rather scattered, but it felt like he had managed to piece all of it together.

After that, Xiao Lin then spent a week trying to learn Starburst. Starburst was a fusion of all four swordsmanship styles, and used a combination of the four elements. It gained its name because the sword aura it produced gleamed like the stars.

At the last moments, Xiao Lin also learned a few other basic skills, but most of them were just Black Iron-ranked skills. Those skills might not be that strong, but Xiao Lin still noticed that skills were not just limited to how destructive they were. There were many skills with utility that could not be replaced.

For instance, the Black Iron-ranked slow fall spell, delay spell and stealth detection spells — those spells all did not have high requirements to learn them, and were quite easy. Even if they did not learn them, after they entered the second year and everyone's Basic Meditation was at a solid level, the academy would teach it to all of them. So, Xiao Lin had merely fast-forwarded his schedule by over half a year.

Of course, Chen Dao and the other monitors that focused on magic had also looked for books in the library. It was not just Xiao Lin who thought this way, but in terms of the number of spells learned, they would not be able to compete with Xiao Lin. Even when it came to low-level utility spells, there were hundreds or even thousands of them.

Xiao Lin had initially just picked up a few at random to learn, but he quickly realized that most of the spells were very useful, such as healing spells and lumination spells. Those spells might just be low-level incantations, but because it required combining elements, they were second- or third-year subjects.

However, to Xiao Lin, they were not difficult at all. Combining elements was something he had already grasped when he started compressing the elements.

Combining elements could be called difficult, but could be called simple as well. Planet Norma was filled with the four basic elements, and the basic elements were the cradle of birth in the world. However, with the constant development of the world, even more elements were born, and those elements were all born from the basic elements.

For instance, once the density of water elements reached a certain level, they would turn into the ice element, and when water and wind elements reached a certain level of integration, it turned into the thunder element.

Combining elements required a very high degree of control of the elements, and was quite similar to compressing elements, which also needed a very high sense and mastery of the elements.

Academic Genius's passive skill was slowly becoming more and more important. Each skill he mastered saved Xiao Lin no short amount of time. Accumulating it all together revealed a very shocking amount of time. Some of the subjects Xiao Lin approached were those that only third years would touch. Now, he not only far exceeded the first years, he was even beginning to catch up or exceed the second-year students.

The month felt a bit too short to Xiao Lin. After he calmed down and threw himself into his studies, he could not stop himself from feeling a sense of regret when he received the notification from Yu Mei that the tournament was about to start. If he had even more time, he could definitely master even more.

Xiao Lin could not help but admit that he had wasted too much time on things unrelated to his studies before, such as being sent to the New World for tasks a few times. No wonder the old dean, the president, and even Song Junlang had reminded him before that he should not be meddling in too many affairs at his stage. The tournament was a reason, but more importantly was the new dean's restrictions on Xiao Lin, causing him to be unable to head to the New World anyway, which actually led to him being able to focus on his studies.

No matter what, the Inter-academy Tournament was finally about to start.

Based on the tournament regulations, the final stage of the tournament would feature eight academies, and Dawn Academy, Judge Academy, Sainte Académie, and Voyna Akademiya had all been seeded into it as members of the Supreme Council. The other academies would go through a series of matches to determine the last three spots.

The fights had already been concluded during that month. Yu Mei told the monitors that the final three spots had been won by the Japanese, German, and Turkish academies. They would join the five big academies in this Inter-academy Tournament.

"The eight academies will be split into two groups, and then will compete in home and away matches, using the number of wins to determine the standing in the groups. The top two in the standings will advance, while the other two will be eliminated. The elimination matches will no longer use home and away matches, so in the interest of fairness, the matches will be held on the New World.

"The group stage draws have already concluded yesterday. Our president was in charge of drawing, so he is not here today. The ones in our group are Japan, Turkey, and America."

After gathering everyone in the training hall, Yu Mei announced it to everyone. At the same time, she sent the general tournament schedule to everyone. Xiao Lin quickly browsed through it. Based on the schedule, their first opponents would be Judge Academy. After that, they would face the Turkish academy, followed by the Japanese academy. In the first round, other than the match against Judge Academy being an away match, they would host the other two, and the second round was the reverse.

They would host two of the matches in the first round, which was quite a big advantage. It was obvious that it was a special treatment toward the main academies because they would need to go through Earth from the spatial corridor back to their own countries before flying to the other country and heading to the opponent's academy. Putting aside how tiring the journey was, the tournament maps would be decided by the other party, which was definitely a huge advantage. So, the group stages were done in two rounds to protect the weaker academies.

The monitors looked at the schedule, and each of them had their own opinions. Cheng Ming said first, "According to power levels, Judge Academy should be our strongest opponents."

"Japan is actually in the same group as us. Yes, we'll need to trounce them!" The young Chen Dao had some impulsive thoughts.

"The Turkish academy should be the weakest. I remember they were the latest academy to colonize the New World along with Argentina, so their foundations can't compare to ours."

"So our only worthy rival is basically the Americans?"

"The first two in the standing will advance anyway, so it should be fine, even if we lose to Judge Academy."

Chapter 641 - Judge Academy's Strength

Chapter 641: Judge Academy's Strength

Translator: EndlessFantasy Translation Editor: EndlessFantasy Translation

During the training period, Yu Mei started to reveal the basic combat ability and condition of the other academies to the students. Looking at the composition of the group, everyone quickly made their evaluations.

In the group, the American Judge Academy was definitely the strongest. Even though the Americans were not part of the founding colonists, they managed to use a hundred years of peace to rapidly catch up. The other academies had all been bogged down by war, so Judge Academy now seemingly stood at the helm of all the academies.

Dawn Academy was no longer as impressive as it was in the past. After the war against the orcs, even though the academy had slowly recovered, they were still not at their prior state. However, comparing it with the smaller academies, Dawn Academy still had a big advantage.

So, the assessments made by the monitors were not wrong. The ones able to advance to the next stage in the group were basically only Dawn Academy and Judge Academy. The only difference was if it would be in first or second place.

Only Xiao Lin asked a different question after thinking for a moment. “Are there any S-rank talent holders in the Japanese and Turkish academies?” He remembered the president mentioning that every academy in the world seemed to have exploded with a large number of talent holders, and there would definitely be S-rank talent holders in the mix.

Yu Mei looked at Xiao Lin with praise before saying to the others, “That’s exactly what I want to talk to all of you about. It’s true that we are much stronger than Japan and Turkey, but do not underestimate them. Even though we don’t have reliable information, we’ve heard that the two academies have seen a surge in the abilities of their new students in recent years, especially Japan. They were fourth place in the last tournament, so they can’t be taken easily!”

Japan had only entered the New World around a hundred years ago, so compared to the other major countries, they had been late by about a decade. The country also had a very strong ambition, and was constantly in conflict with the academies around them. Their conflicts were particularly intense with Dawn Academy, but had slowly relaxed in the last few decades.

Everyone had learnt about that before in their history lessons, so after Yu Mei’s words, everyone could not help but feel some pressure. Chen Dao half-jokingly smiled and said, “It’s fine if we lose to Judge Academy, but if we lose to the Japanese academy, we’ll be scolded to death.”

Yu Mei said somewhat earnestly, “In the history of the tournaments, we’ve crossed blades with the Japanese thirteen times. Out of those times, we won twelve times and came to a draw once. Setting aside our past grievances, even in recent years, we’ve had more and more conflicts in the New World. If we lose to the Japanese, even I will be pressured by the higher-ups, so you all better take it seriously!”

“Putting aside the Japanese first, the first battle is against the Americans. Do we have any information? Such as their participants or abilities.”

“The participants and the monitors are easy to find out, but in terms of talents, outside of a few of them, we still don’t know anything about most of them. Let me tell you, the last eight tournaments have all been won by Judge Academy. I’ve said before that this tournament is a way to tell the relative strengths of the various academies, and Judge Academy has slowly crept ahead of everyone in recent years, largely in part due to these tournaments.”

“Do we have any information on the past Judge Academy tournaments?” Xiao Lin asked again. Even though there was no way the participants of the tournaments would repeat, they could at least use past information to make some inferences.

“Yes, I was just about to show you. It’s not information, but recordings. In consideration of fairness, every match will be recorded with memory crystals.”

Yu Mei came prepared, and immediately took out a memory crystal she had with her. She brought everyone to a darker room. After activating the crystal, it was like a film. Large amounts of energy shot out of the crystal and turned into a clear screen.

“This is a group stage match from the last tournament. Judge Academy is facing Royal Academy. Even though the British aren’t as strong as America, as an old Academy, they can’t be underestimated.” After that, Yu Mei quieted down. Everyone had already been captivated by the recording.

Xiao Lin’s face was a little strange, because he saw a familiar person in the recording: Lilith. He suddenly remembered that Lilith truly made a name for herself during the last tournament, which completely solidified rumors of her SS-rank talent.

The other monitors had never met Lilith, but that did not stop their evaluation of her skills. A few minutes after the battle started, Cheng Ming said thoughtfully, “This woman is very strong.”

On the screen, an Englishman tried to do a sneak attack, but was discovered by Lilith immediately and was quickly killed off!

Yes, it was a quick kill. The entire process was not longer than five seconds. The people in front of the screen did not even see Lilith’s technique clearly, and only saw the image of a scythe flying out before the unfortunate Englishman collapsed in a puddle of blood.

“Very strong individual combat abilities, but their teamwork is very bad. Look, other than that woman, the others are just hanging back. The distance is so far that there’s practically no way for them to help her.” Class Eight’s Sheng Guo smartly made an assessment.

Xiao Lin rolled his eyes and could not help but say, “No, that was Lilith’s request. She did not allow her teammates to interfere back then.” He had heard about some rumors of Lilith from Song Junlang before. Even though it might not be about this particular battle, his understanding of Lilith and the situation there was exactly so.

“One against four?” Sheng Guo said doubtfully.

Xiao Lin did not retort. After five minutes, he looked back again, and amusedly noticed that Sheng Guo’s face was pale and his lips were constantly trembling, as if he did not know what to say.

On the screen, the battle was already over. The battle only lasted five minutes, which was even faster than the friendly match between the Russians and Dawn Academy. There was nothing to say about the fight. Lilith ran into the English formation alone, and in a few minutes, she decisively caused her opponents to lose all strength.

Other than investigating and using perception to report on the opponents at the start, Lilith’s teammates did not do anything.

“Lilith? I think I’ve heard rumors before. She should be the only SS-rank talent holder alive!” The others had an ugly expression on their faces, and Cheng Ming suddenly thought of something.

“That’s right! That’s the Lilith they’re talking about!” Xiao Lin sighed. Looking at Lilith’s recording, he could not help but admit that Lilith was stronger than him, even back then.

“You know her?” Class Six’s Li Jiayi had a curious face.

Xiao Lin ignored that gossip as he continued, “Judge Academy’s fights from the last tournament were basically all like that. The other four would collect information, and Lilith would settle the fight herself.”

Chen Dao looked at Yu Mei, saying, “But didn’t you say before that teamwork is very important in team battles?” It was obvious that Lilith was basically fighting solo, but her opponents could do nothing about it.

Yu Mei nodded. “That’s right. I said that before, but today I want to teach you something else. When one person’s skill exceeds a certain limit, teamwork can be ignored. I never told you before, because there’s no one who is at that level among you. Of course, you don’t have to worry too much, as there’s no one at that level in the other academies either.”

After those words, Yu Mei glanced at Xiao Lin and Xiao Lin let out a dry laugh. If it was really with his full strength, Xiao Lin believed that he would be able to go blow for blow against Lilith if he used Myth. However, Myth could not be used easily. If it was just Ruin, he could suppress any regular academy, but Ruin was not enough for those at the level of the Russian academy.

They wasted a bit more time watching all the group stage matches of Judge Academy. After that, all of them decided to not watch the elimination matches. Judge Academy had won the last tournament by a landslide. Any form of teamwork was just a joke to that batch of new students. They even suspected that Lilith could actually have won the whole tournament by herself; she was just forced to have teammates due to the rules.

There were no benefits from watching those fights, and it was even a blow to everyone’s confidence.

Moving on to the tournaments from a few editions before, it was more normal. Even though Judge Academy’s strength was still extremely strong, there was no one like Lilith.

However, everyone turned even more quiet and the looks on their faces got heavy. Lilith’s strength could be explained with an SS-rank talent, and everyone could console themselves with that. After all, there was only one Lilith, and she could not take part in this tournament. It could even cause some of them to misunderstand that Judge Academy’s power was just because of their luck that they obtained Lilith, but that notion was quickly dispelled.

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In the earlier tournaments, Judge Academy still showed an incredibly strong dominance. Even though it was not as exaggerated as Lilith, their opponents still usually had no way of fighting back, and could only stare as they lost. There were even quite a few surrenders.

“What mastery! Look at that guy’s Flame Ball! It landed right on the opponent’s weapon, but did not harm any of his teammates nearby.”

“Their teamwork is basically perfect.”

“Are they really first-year students? First-years just like us?”

“Impossible! They must be from upper years!”

Chapter 642 - Judge Academy's Recordings

Chapter 642: Judge Academy's Recordings

Yu Mei expressionlessly looked at everyone but did not say anything. After broadcasting all the memory crystals, Yu Mei turned around and left the room.

The monitors had still been able to converse with each other in low voices before, and could remark on or comment on certain skills, but after that, everyone started to quiet down.

It was already the recordings of quite a few tournaments, and each time the participants were different. Their skills were not the same either. There was even a tournament where Judge Academy had no talent holders on their team. That was their hardest fought victory, but they still won.

Because of that, the monitors finally understood Yu Mei's other reason for making them look at those recordings. She hoped that they understood Judge Academy's strength was not just individual. It came from the strength of the academy itself, and came from the will of every person in the Judge Academy. The environment shaped the people.

After all the recordings were done screening, it was already the evening. All of them stayed in the moderately sized room. They either stood or leaned against the sofa. Some of them were deep in thought, some of them were preparing some tea, and some of them were staring out a window, but no one spoke. They were recollecting each battle in the recordings, and asking themselves, were they really strong enough to go against Judge Academy?

Xiao Lin was the first to stand up, and Cheng Ming looked up and asked, "Xiao Lin, do you have any plans? Maybe we should discuss it. There are only a few days away from the tournament, and Judge Academy is our first opponent."

Xiao Lin smiled, shaking his head. "Let's forget it for today. If you're already scared now, then we might as well give up on the first match. Then you won't have to be so worried the whole day. After all, we can still advance if we beat Japan and Turkey."

"Give up?"

"Scared?"

"Quit joking!"

"Xiao Lin, even though we're friends, don't think we won't beat you up!"

"What's there to be scared of? Dying just means a bottle of Lifewater. Who's scared?!"

"That's right! This concerns the academy's pride."

"I think you care more about the rewards from the academy."

“It’s the same thing!”

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The silent room suddenly erupted. Everyone unhappily refuted Xiao Lin’s earlier comment. The clamor went on for a few moments before they quieted down, but everyone was noticeably more relaxed.

“It seems like everyone has recovered quite a bit, alright. That’s good. Go get some early rest,” Xiao Lin said, ignoring the few insults he could hear thrown at him. He did not need to think to know who said it.

However, everyone still reacted after a brief pause, understanding that Xiao Lin had said those words on purpose to help them recover. Everyone understood that it was pointless to give up before the battle started. If they were afraid now, then they really might as well give up on Judge Academy.

Xiao Lin left the room and noticed Yu Mei leaning against the wall not far away, admiring the sunset. The space had been created based on the New World, and the sunset here was more beautiful. It gave anyone who saw it a sense of peace and tranquility.

After thinking for a moment, he walked over. He was quite familiar with Yu Mei. Compared to the respect the other monitors treated her with, Xiao Lin felt like she was more of a friend. Of course, that was also because Yu Mei never acted like a superior when she interacted with him.

“Why did you suddenly share the recordings with us? That was not needed,” Xiao Lin said.

“Are you afraid that you’ll lose confidence? No, it should be them!” Yu Mei raised her eyebrows, “Among all of you, you are the only one who will never lose his confidence.”

“Of course.” Xiao Lin would definitely not be afraid, even when he just had Myth and Ruin, and now he had mastered a whole new slew of skills, so he was naturally even more confident.

“It looks like you’ve recovered some of their confidence.” Yu Mei asked. She naturally knew nothing of what happened in the room.

“How could it be so simple?” Xiao Lin sighed with a wry smile. “They’re actually under a lot of pressure. I’m worried it will affect their performance.”

“There’s nothing that can be done about it. The difference in skill there, and the difference in education methods, is something accumulated over many years. Whatever, there is no reason to discuss our methods now. I made them see the discrepancy in skill in hopes that you will all mature faster.” Yu Mei had a look of concern on her face.

“How is Dawn City now? That old fart — ahem — I mean the new dean. Did he do anything?” Xiao Lin said.

Yu Mei rolled her eyes. “The new dean isn’t intentionally targeting you. Even though he had his differences in opinion with the old dean in terms of governance, he still has Dawn Academy in his heart in the end.”

Hesitating a bit, Yu Mei sighed, not being one to hide her feelings. “Some things can’t be known by those who haven’t graduated, but the situation in the New World isn’t good. There have already been many changes happening in recent years, but in the recent months, the situation is rapidly turning worse.”

Xiao Lin thought for a moment and said, “Has Asabanor done anything? Or are there any strange movements from our Orc neighbours? Or maybe the elves in the North have rejected the American treaty and are moving for war?”

Yu Mei paused for a moment before saying, “You really know a lot. All of those things are secrets. Just from this alone, I have reason to lock you up. No wonder you were so calm after those recordings. The dean had his reasons for trusting you.”

Xiao Lin did not care about the woman’s words that were meant to scare him, but he felt a bit helpless because Yu Mei was obviously avoiding the topic, obviously not wanting him to know too much. Even though Xiao Lin was still worried about all of them, he quickly shook his head, cursing himself for worrying too much.

No matter if it was Asabanor, the orcs, or the elves, they were all matters he could not approach, nor could he change. There was nothing he could do about the situation, no matter how worried he was. Xiao Lin also believed that the academies were not useless, and the power they had established in the New World was not just for show.

Chapter 643 - Setting Out

Chapter 643: Setting Out

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

There was less than a week until the first match. Ever since they looked at the recordings of Judge Academy’s past tournaments, everyone seemed to be much more serious. They were no longer as relaxed during their training as they used to be. Of course, there were some whose performances were even more exciting, such as Chen Dao and Cheng Ming.

To them, being able to participate in the tournament meant being able to face even stronger opponents. In truth, since the last half a semester, those with talents like Chen Dao had seen their skills greatly increase. Putting aside regular students, even the other monitors had seen them slowly pulling away.

It was easy to see that Cheng Ming and the others rarely met their match. Even during the monthly examinations, the tests focused on the overall difficulty of war, so this would actually be the first time they were facing opponents that were much stronger. Even though they were nervous and worried, they still could not contain their excitement and anticipation.

Everyone treasured the remaining time they had. Even during their break times, everyone would gather in the rest lounge, brewing some coffee or tea while they discussed among themselves.. The contents were more or less the same, which was the final line-up for the tournament.

According to Yu Mei, five-person teams usually comprised two long and two close-ranged fighters. The long-ranged fighters would be decided into archers and mages, and then the four would be complemented by a support.

That was a standard formation. In the New World, both adventurers or special task squads would always use that composition. In truth, the earliest team tournaments were held due to the need for elite squads in the New World.

However, the formation was not unchangeable, as each academy would deviate from the standard based on the conditions of their own students. For instance, the Russian academy had used four close-ranged fighters with one long-ranged mage as their composition. They used the close-ranged fighters to buy enough time for Diana's talent to unleash a long-ranged magical attack.

So, in the past few days, the monitors, and even Yu Mei, were busy thinking about their line-up. They had considered quite a few compositions, but it was a pity that there was not enough time to experiment with them and put them into practice. Each new composition that was brought up had their own reasonings to it, but the others would naturally point out the relevant flaws. They would argue amongst themselves, and no one was truly convinced.

The last period seemed to pass by in a flash, and Dawn Academy was finally going to attend their first match. Their opponents were Judge Academy, who were called the strongest. It was decided that it would be held during the weekend. Since the Americans were the hosts, Xiao Lin and the others started their journey a day before with the vice president in the lead, going through the wormhole and heading to Earth. They went straight to Los Angeles before using the wormhole there to head to Judge Academy.

Yu Mei and the president did not follow. Due to the regulations, those at Gold Rank or above were not allowed to return to Earth, and both Yu Mei and the president were obviously at that level. That was why the vice president was in charge of bringing the team to any away matches. That was one of the disadvantages of being the away team, since it meant that Xiao Lin and the others would be deprived of guidance at the American academy, and would only be able to rely on themselves.

Other than the vice president, Xiao Lin was assigned as the leader of Dawn Academy's representatives, and was therefore in charge of the other eleven monitors and Gu Xiaoyue. The others were unhappy about that because that assignment meant that the president had already silently acknowledged Xiao Lin as the year leader. However, with Xiao Lin's abilities, no one could say anything about it.

What was worth mentioning was that the position of vice president had actually been born due to the need for a leader during the tournaments. For instance, the Russian academy had also sent their vice president during the last friendly match.

Due to time constraints, they immediately boarded the bus prepared by the Earth division right after arriving on Earth, and they headed straight to the airport. Other than giving their parents some hasty phone calls, they had no time to do anything else. Xiao Lin had a brief call with his home before glancing back at Gu Xiaoyue, who was sitting at the last row of the bus, quietly staring out of the window.

Everyone had been busy during this period of time, and Xiao Lin had been busy practicing elemental sword aura during his free time. Alongside that, there were many people in the training hall, and Gu Xiaoyue would usually avoid the crowds, so Xiao Lin had a hard time finding time to talk to her. Of course, that woman would not look for him herself either.

“Are you not giving Chengyun a call?” Xiao Lin went to the last row and asked.

Gu Xiaoyue rolled her eyes. She fell silent for a moment before she said, “Chengyun? You’ve only known that girl for a few days. When did you get so familiar?”

Xiao Lin had long since developed a habit of being shameless in front of Gu Xiaoyue, so he smiled. “Of course, Chengyun is such a cute girl. She’s so active and happy. Even just interacting with her for a day, anyone would take a liking to her immediately. I naturally came to care about her.”

“Take a liking?” Gu Xiaoyue narrowed her eyes.

Xiao Lin immediately looked up. It was the first time he noticed that that woman could be so sensitive, so he helplessly said, “Please, it’s the kind that’s like a sister. What are you thinking!”

Gu Xiaoyue snorted lightly before looking away and going quiet. Of course, Xiao Lin was very patient, and did not continue disturbing her, but he did not leave either. He chose to sit next to her, glancing at the woman’s beautiful silhouette.

Some of the others would occasionally glance backward, looking at the two strange people in the back row curiously. However, they would all be glared at by Xiao Lin. Ever since he was appointed as the team leader, Xiao Lin started to manage the monitors’ daily routines without much difficulty. Everyone else also knew that Xiao Lin would be the year leader eventually, and would have that right.

Gu Xiaoyue’s skin was not as thick as Xiao Lin’s, and the undisguised gazes caused her to feel a little uncomfortable. She finally turned around, helplessly explaining, “Chengyun is still my sister. I just wrote a letter to her some time ago, and I’ve told her everything that needed to be said. There’s no need for a phone call, lest she get worried.”

“Some time ago? How long ago?”

“Oh, about a month.”

“That’s so long ago!

Xiao Lin felt exasperated at that woman who did not seem to understand human relationships. He thought for a few seconds before immediately taking out his phone. He decided to help her for once and quickly dialed a number.

Chapter 644 - Meeting

Chapter 644: Meeting

Gu Xiaoyue was not the only one with Gu Chengyun's number!

Gu Xiaoyue stumbled for a moment before trying to reach out and snatch the phone away, but it was already too late. A sweet voice could be heard on the other end. "Hello? Is this Big Brother Xiao Lin?"

Gu Xiaoyue glared at him.

Xiao Lin smiled softly before saying in a gentle voice, "Chengyun, your sister wants to talk to you."

"Ah! Is my sister there as well? That's great!" Gu Chengyun's voice was filled with surprise and emotion, causing Gu Xiaoyue to reveal an ashamed expression.

Gu Xiaoyue obviously loved her sister very much. She worked so hard all the while, putting her own life on the line, all for the sake of curing her sister's legs. However, because of that, she would occasionally forget the more important things. To Gu Chengyun, her disability was not the most important. What that girl really needed was her only family.

Xiao Lin handed the phone over to Gu Xiaoyue and waved his hand for a bit before a small sound bubble appeared around Gu Xiaoyue. The others in the bus could not help but glare at him, as they had all perked up their ears, curiously wanting to listen to what that usually cold woman would say to her sister.

Gu Xiaoyue did not express any gratitude, and instead glared at him again because that sound bubble might have excluded everyone else in the bus, but it did not exclude Xiao Lin. That guy had unashamedly put himself in the barrier, and could hear everything.

The conversation did not last that long. Gu Xiaoyue was not a great conversationalist. However, Chengyun and her were really close sisters, and they were also the only family that the two of them had left. The short phone call even caused Gu Xiaoyue's eyes to redden.

Xiao Lin sighed as he thought about Gu Xiaoyue's lifespan again. Before that problem had a solid solution, each call with Gu Chengyun could very well be her last. Xiao Lin believed that the sisters both knew that. Xiao Lin felt some pity, and could not stop himself from holding Gu Xiaoyue's little hand. Her palm was quite cold.

Gu Xiaoyue looked at Xiao Lin in shock, but did not scold him like she wanted to. A very faint 'thank you' could be heard from her lips.

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The journey to America took quite a while. After calling their families, everyone started to rest. They only had one day to acclimatize themselves after arriving at Judge Academy, so they needed to grasp every bit of time they could to adjust their own condition, which was one of the disadvantages of being the away team.

It was already late at night when they arrived in America, but none of them stopped anywhere or bought anything. They went on another private plane, and flew straight to the American division in Los Angeles. Judge Academy's staff was already waiting there, and under their guidance, Dawn Academy's representatives got in the spatial carriage that night and arrived at Judge Academy.

The unrelenting journey had caused everyone to be exhausted, but that also meant that everyone had gained an extra half a day of rest.

It was not the first time Xiao Lin had been to Judge Academy, but for the others, it was the first time they were at another academy, so they would naturally be curious of the sights.

"If you wish to, we can send someone to give all of you a tour." The American representative was a golden-haired and blue-eyed young lady with very American features. She looked like she was either in her first or second year.

"There's no need. We're here to compete," Xiao Lin rejected, glaring at a few of the monitors who had wanted to agree.

"Very well. Do any of you have any special dietary needs for these two days?" The woman was incredibly polite. She spoke fluent Mandarin, and her well-mannered demeanor and attractive looks made everyone feel at ease.

"Thank you, but we have no special requirements. If there's nothing else, please bring us to the meeting room. According to the regulations, your academy must have arranged somewhere for us to use." Xiao Lin rejected it plainly.

"Very well." The woman was a bit regretful, but still politely answered.

In Judge Academy's private space, it was still the evening. They decided to wait until nighttime before they rested. That way, they would be able to adjust to the time zone difference easily. The vice president was a third-year senior student, and was rather easygoing, but did not seem like someone with power. This time, he came mainly to handle the daily affairs. In terms of the actual fighting, he had no authority on it.

The vice president also knew his job, so when he saw Xiao Lin preparing for a meeting with the others, he left. He was in charge of communicating with Judge Academy's student union for matters such as training halls and equipment.

"Let's not talk about anything else. Our opponents are very strong this time. I trust all of you have a deep impression of the recordings." After entering the meeting room they had been specially assigned, the American beauty left, and told Xiao Lin that the room was absolutely sound proof.

The other monitors mumbled for a bit and slowly quieted down. No matter what, Xiao Lin was currently the leader in charge of this group, and could very well be the year leader in the future. Everyone knew of the contents of this meeting; it would definitely be to determine the line-up for the tournament.

Normally, this should have been Yu Mei's decision to make, but that woman had passed on the authority to Xiao Lin. Before coming over, she encouraged Xiao Lin to boldly make the arrangements. It was fine if they lost, as he could just take it as a chance to accumulate experience.

Xiao Lin obviously did not want to lose. The group matches would be held in simulated spaces, and dying there would still cost them ten years of their lifespan. Suddenly making him decide on the line-up had caught Xiao Lin off guard, and he had constantly been thinking about the problem on the way. As everyone gathered in a circle, his gaze fell on Gu Xiaoyue.

Xiao Lin remembered the call she had with Gu Chengyun, and remembered Chengyun's emotions. If Gu Xiaoyue died, then her sister might actually lose all her happiness.

The line-up would need to be handed in a bit later, and Judge Academy would announce their line-up as well. The line-ups could not be changed at all once they were announced, so the academies were required to use their own judgement and predictions to arrange their compositions. Normally, academies would choose the most balanced teams if they did not know their opponents, but if that was the case, it would also be much more difficult to win if there was a gap in skill.

Chapter 645 - Xiao Lin's Plan

Chapter 645: Xiao Lin's Plan

The gazes of the other twelve settled on Xiao Lin at that moment. Some of them opened their mouths, seemingly wanting to promote themselves, but ended up obediently shutting their mouths. No matter if they agreed or accepted it, the final name list fell into Xiao Lin's hands.

Everyone there hoped to be able to participate. Compared to potentially losing ten years of their lifespan in the tournament, the rewards they could obtain were much more attractive.

Before they came, the president had told them about the rewards. Other than the Eternal Fruit that the champion could gain, in order to encourage the students, Dawn Academy had arranged lucrative rewards for them during the group stages. During the group stages, every match that they won would see three thousand New Dollars awarded to the participants.

Those were New Dollars, a widely recognized currency in the New World. It was completely different from rewards that could only be used in the academy. Now, the monitors all knew how much New Dollars meant, so when they heard of the reward, all of their eyes widened. It was probably only Xiao Lin and Gu Xiaoyue who did not care about the reward.

However, the rewards were only limited to the participants, and those who were not in the name list could only watch on in envy. At that moment, all of them could not help but get nervous. Even Han Manman, who was usually rude to Xiao Lin, became a bit less irritable in recent days, almost definitely setting her ambitious sights on the New Dollars.

Xiao Lin tapped his fingers on the table, glancing at each one of them. After thinking for a long time, he looked back to the form in front of him. Yu Mei had nonchalantly given him the right to choose, and it felt a little bit like she was avoiding the responsibility. At a certain degree, Xiao Lin felt like the woman was just throwing him a thankless job.

Xiao Lin remembered that, before he left, he had asked for Yu Mei and the president's opinions. Both of them told him that, if it was truly a contest of skill, Dawn Academy could never beat Judge Academy.

Truly, even with Xiao Lin's exceptional capabilities, Yu Mei and the president did not think they could win. The president was even more straightforward. Even if Xiao Lin used his Myth ability, their chances of winning would only be at sixty per cent, but Xiao Lin would have to bear an even bigger risk for it. Dawn Academy could not afford to lose Xiao Lin. All of them were clear on that point.

After looking at the recordings of the past years, Xiao Lin could not deny how strong Judge Academy was, but he would never willingly admit defeat. After thinking for almost half an hour, Xiao Lin finally slowly filled up the form.

The form was passed around to everyone at the table, and each of them had a strange expression on their faces after looking at it. All of them seemed to reveal the same thought: 'You've got to be insane!'

"This is the final decision, so there won't be any changes. Dismissed! I'll hand in the form later." Xiao Lin did not give anyone any chances to cast any doubts or argue. He made his decision on the spot.

...

After ten minutes, in Judge Academy's office, a thirty-year-old man, Judge Academy's president, had a head full of faint blue hair, and he looked very educated and well-mannered. Standing next to him was the one in charge of the tournament. Based on regulations, the tournament committee would send someone to invigilate each match.

"Has Dawn Academy decided on their name list?" The others knew why Xiao Lin was there.

Xiao Lin nodded as he took out the filled up form, but he was not in a hurry to pass it over. Instead, he looked at Judge Academy's president. Based on the rules, they needed to exchange the form at the same time, and there were no changes allowed after the forms were submitted.

"This is our name list." The president's voice sounded very sweet, and he generously handed over his list of names. That generosity also showed how absolutely confident their opponents were. The calm yet proud expression seemed to be telling Xiao Lin, 'We don't need to do any tricks with the name lists. No matter who the opponent is, we will still win.'

The person from the tournament committee was a skinny old man who had a thick pair of glasses on. He did not seem very strong, and was probably an administrative person. After accepting the forms from both sides, he checked it before clearing his throat and speaking.

"The American Judge Academy's name list; individual participants are Smith and Thomas, secondary profession participants are White and Martin, and the team participants are Lopez, Clark, Walker, Allen and Raymond."

"The Chinese Dawn Academy's name list; individual participants are Cheng Ming and Chen Dao, secondary profession participants are Gu Xiaoyue and Xiao Lin, and the team participants are Sun Xiao, An Luo, Li Jiayi, Sheng Guo and Chen Fangming."

"Those are the participants from both sides. Are there any issues?"

“OK!”

“There are no issues!”

Xiao Lin and the president shook hands, and the tournament name list was decided, so there was no way to change it, even if there were any changes of thoughts.

“You actually didn’t need to waste so much effort. No matter what happens, there’s no way you can win. You will only lose the points that you should have earned. I’m a little disappointed at the list,” the president shook his head and said.

“It seems like you’ve investigated us,” Xiao Lin said.

“Did you not do so as well?”

“Then we’ll meet at the match,” Xiao Lin shrugged and said.

“I wish you good luck.”

“Ha, if we have good luck, then it would be to your detriment.”

The name list was fixed, which relieved Xiao Lin of some stress. What followed would be how they executed. He planned on resting early after the tiring journey, but he still had to explain the list to a lot of people.

The doubt casted by those like Han Manman could be ignored, but Cheng Ming and Chen Dao, even Gu Xiaoyue’s suspicions, needed to be patiently abated.

“I know what you’re thinking. You all feel like the chances of winning with this list is very low, especially with regards to the team portion, right? Fine, let me tell you clearly that I don’t plan on beating Judge Academy during the team match at all. You’ve all already seen Judge Academy’s teamwork skills. To be frank, with our current formation, the chances of winning are astronomically low, so we might as well just give it up.

“It’s a seven-point match, and we just need to take down the first four points and we can win. In terms of individual skill, I’m very confident in the two of you. As for the secondary professions, Gu Xiaoyue is the most hardworking out of all of us. I don’t think she’ll have an issue here... Fine, to be honest, I’m not absolutely confident with this arrangement, but I still think it’s our best chance of winning.”

Chapter 646 - : Martin

Cheng Ming and Chen Dao were not very happy with Xiao Lin’s answer. Even though they had seen the strength of Judge Academy from the recordings as well, they still were not willing to accept giving up so early.

“Don’t be too cocky either, the individual matches won’t be so easy.” Xiao Lin interrupted their mulling as he looked at the list in his hand, which was Judge Academy’s participants. He said,

“Judge Academy is sending Smith and Thomas. Based on the information the president gave us, the two of them aren’t easy to handle.”

“I heard the two of them are specialized in individual fights.” Cheng Ming’s complaints were not that intense, and once he heard Xiao Lin’s words, he shifted his focus onto his opponents.

They had already obtained some basic information from Dawn Academy. The information showed that the two of them were already very passionate about one-on-one fights since they entered the academy. Every weekend, they would set up a gambling ring, using lucrative rewards to attract others to duel them. Until now, the two of them had won all of their duels within the first year, which was a shocking result.

The information did not show what talents the two of them had, but they could not be too weak. Furthermore, the information had been obtained earlier on, and the two of them were probably even stronger already.

Chen Dao mumbled a few words and basically acknowledged Xiao Lin’s arrangement. However, he seemed very confident, patting his chest as he said, “Don’t worry. I don’t know much about team battles, but I won’t lose to anyone other than you in individual fights!”

“Leave the individual fights to us, but can you and Gu Xiaoyue win the secondary profession matches?” Cheng Ming was more worried about that.

“I won’t have any issues, but as for Gu Xiaoyue. Ah...” Xiao Lin was just about to speak when the door was knocked again. Not waiting for him to get up and open it, the door was forced open.

The one who came was Gu Xiaoyue. Xiao Lin had wanted to let everyone rest early to recover, but it seemed like a lot of them were still not asleep. Xiao Lin was not surprised by Gu Xiaoyue’s arrival. He smiled at Cheng Ming, “Speak of the devil and she shall come.”

“I’ll leave first.” Cheng Ming was amused as he giggled, patting Xiao Lin’s shoulder meaningfully before pulling Chen Dao away by force.

When the door closed, only Xiao Lin and Gu Xiaoyue remained in the room. The rooms Judge Academy provided them were only regular student dormitories, but it was not too bad. It was basically a five-star hotel back on Earth.

Of course, Gu Xiaoyue would not feel awkward being in a room alone because her face was full of anger at that moment. To that cold woman, that was a rare expression.

“What’s the deal with the name list?” Gu Xiaoyue asked.

Xiao Lin felt a little helpless. Even though he knew the woman would definitely come over to ask him, he still had a headache. If it was anyone else who asked him, such as Cheng Ming and Chen Dao earlier, Xiao Lin could absolutely use his rights as the team leader or his friendship to skirt pass the topic, but it was impossible with that woman.

“I know what you want to say, but you are the most suited for the secondary profession. You are the most hardworking in every class, and the Intelligence attribute also increases your memory

and comprehension. As the one with the highest Intelligence among us, you're naturally the best choice," Xiao Lin patiently explained.

"You are insulting me!" Gu Xiaoyue's tone was cold as she slowly turned around emotionally. She waved her arms around, her volume rising as she said, "I don't need your pity. It's true, I know I don't have much of a lifespan left. I know you don't want me to die, but that's not a good reason! I need to tell you clearly that I don't care about my life. I only care about curing Gu Chengyun."

"I know." Xiao Lin nodded, adding, "I want to cure Chengyun as well. The Eternal Fruit is a good chance, I told you before that I would help you get it, and this promise is still in effect."

"But you're giving up on the tournament!" Gu Xiaoyue calmed down a little, but her look was still not too friendly.

"Why do you think I'm giving up?" Xiao Lin asked.

"I know that you plan on giving up on the team match and securing all four points before that, but is that possible?" Gu Xiaoyue calmly assessed despite her anger. "We know Chen Dao and Cheng Ming's strength clearly, but Judge Academy knows their strength clearly as well, so they might not be able to win, which is the first issue. The second issue, and the most important one, is two secondary profession matches... How can we win? How could we possibly win?!"

Gu Xiaoyue took the Judge Academy's name list. Even though she had already seen the list before. She pushed the list in front of Xiao Lin and pointed at a name. She said each word carefully, "I know you've also seen the name list that Captain Yu Mei gave us last week. Putting aside everyone else, do you think any one of us can beat this Martin person? No, do you think anyone can beat him among all of the academy's first-year students?"

There was the least information about him from Yu Mei's reports because that person was actually a very ordinary person in Judge Academy, and was practically unheard of in the last semester. Yet, when Judge Academy opened up secondary profession courses, that person's name suddenly spread throughout the whole academy.

That Martina man needed only a week to pass the novice medicine certification. After that, he passed the mid-tier certification exam in a month, and smoothly obtained the high-tier certification two months later. In another four months, which was during the last month, Martin was awarded the title of grandmaster in the Medicinal Studies Conference in the New World.

Last month was Martin's twentieth birthday. That age, along with that pace, was already enough for that unassuming man's name to spread to all the academies.

Even though after many checks, everyone could practically confirm that Martin was not an SS-rank talent holder, it was undeniable that the man's influence and usefulness could be compared to Judge Academy's SS-rank talent holder, Lilith.

With someone like that participating in the tournament, anyone would know that Martin would absolutely take part in the secondary profession portion of the tournament. Even though it seemed like he had only just reached Black Iron-rank, that point was probably the most secure point for Judge Academy.

Chapter 647 - Before The Tournament

Chapter 647: Before The Tournament

Judge Academy was very strong, but their strength was not only because of some SS-rank talent holders like Lilith. Their strength lay in their overall power, and their advantages were quite absolute. That was why in recent years, the other academies felt deeply helpless when facing Judge Academy.

Judge Academy might not be as strong this time around, but in the end, the last tournament was practically single-handedly won by Lilith. This year, Judge Academy did not have an SS-rank talent holder, but comparatively, their overall strength had increased.

Before coming, Yu Mei sternly warned them. In terms of overall strength, Judge Academy this year could be said to be the strongest in history!

After watching Lilith's vicious performances, the monitors could not help but feel relieved despite their shock. All of them felt fortunate that they came a year later, so they did not have to meet someone crazy like that.

Yet, Yu Mei told them that Judge Academy this year was even stronger than Lilith's year!

The warning had even caused some of the more pessimistic students to lose hope, but Yu Mei still had to remind them beforehand. It was still better than them being affected during the tournament itself.

No matter if it was the president or Yu Mei, they did not voice the other meaning to the words, but everyone could more or less feel it, which was that they had no hope of winning this match. It was fine, no matter what the results ended up being. They could at least gain some experience in battle; that was the most important. After all, they were usually only exposed to the level of monthly examinations, and truly strong opponents were actually very rare.

With that reasoning, Xiao Lin believed that Gu Xiaoyue would actually be able to understand his reasoning. Using any standard measures left them with very low chances of winning. Even if Xiao Lin himself did not want to accept it, he wanted to believe in Yu Mei's judgement. Without using Myth, it would be hard for him to hold off so many of them alone.

"Martin's medicinal study talent is really shocking. I actually don't have absolute confidence that I can beat him, but among the thirteen of us, only I can somewhat compete with him. Gu Xiaoyue, I know you're anxious, but our opponents aren't someone you can defeat with anxiety," Xiao Lin said patiently.

"I'm sorry." Gu Xiaoyue only lost control whenever her sister was concerned, but she quickly returned to that cold and calm woman. She adjusted some of the errant hair on her forehead before nodding and apologizing.

Xiao Lin took in a deep breath, unable to say what he wanted to. He could absolutely understand Gu Xiaoyue; the woman only had less than two years left, and she had yet to find any effective

solutions to this date. Gu Xiaoyue had only been concerned about her own sister the whole time, and he had no way of persuading her to do anything. Just like he said earlier, Xiao Lin wanted to help that cheerful and active girl as well.

“How about this? I promise you that I will definitely help you obtain the Eternal Fruit from this tournament, so before that, leave everything to me!” Xiao Lin said gently.

Gu Xiaoyue fell silent and looked away subtly, but she could not hide her reddened eyes. Even though Xiao Lin’s confidence did not seem to be grounded in anything, Gu Xiaoyue chose to give him the benefit of the doubt and place her faith in him.

...

The next morning, everyone got out of their beds and gathered in the public lounge outside the dormitories. Even though that day should usually be used to adjust and adapt themselves to the new environment instead of doing anything forceful, everyone was full of vigor for the upcoming match. They planned on undergoing last minute training.

When everyone gathered, Xiao Lin said as the leader, “Cheng Ming will be in charge of the training today. The training hall has been provided by Judge Academy. Everyone should focus on recovery training, so don’t do anything heavy. The tournament officially starts tomorrow. Injuries can be treated quickly, but stamina can’t be replenished.”

“You’re not going?” Class Eight’s Sheng Guo asked strangely.

Cheng Ming and Chen Dao were not surprised since Xiao Lin had notified them last night, but the others were still confused, and Han Manman could not help but snidely say, “Are you giving up?”

Xiao Lin did not want to argue and he smiled as he said, “I’m not going precisely because I don’t want to give up. Oh, I forgot to tell all of you, I’m planning on staying in the dormitory to revise my medicinal studies knowledge. Based on the arrangements, this time, my opponent is the youngest medicinal studies genius, Martin.”

“Oh, I’m taking the medicinal studies course as well, but I remember that you haven’t been attending it since the first class,” someone suddenly thought of something and mumbled out.

“That’s right, so I need to properly revise it today,” Xiao Lin said seriously.

Everyone’s mouths twitched.

No matter what, Xiao Lin had absolute authority as the leader. The others were dismissed while feeling like they were assured to lose. After that, Xiao Lin found that beautiful golden-haired woman again. He asked for a large pile of medicinal study books, actually planning on hiding in his room and studying earnestly.

The woman in charge looked at Xiao Lin with a strange expression. She understood Mandarin, so she understood everything Xiao Lin and the others had said before. The woman brought all the books to Xiao Lin’s room, but she could not resist saying, “The tournament prohibits any tools or substances that could affect the fairness of the matches.”

“Huh? What do you mean?” Xiao Lin’s was about to shut the door.

The golden-haired woman probably felt like Xiao Lin was deliberately acting dumb and stared at him before explaining, “You might not have looked at the rules clearly since it’s your first tournament. Based on the rules, any special medicines or tools are prohibited from being used during the course of the tournament. I know some medicines can increase your memory temporarily, but regretfully, these are all not allowed to be used.”

Xiao Lin paused for a moment, finally understanding what that woman was saying. He did not know how to react, but he was too lazy to explain as well, “Alright. Thanks for your reminder. Good bye.”

Bam!

The door was shut.

Chapter 648 - Start Of The Tournament

Chapter 648: Start Of The Tournament

Looking at the closed room, the golden haired woman was startled, and mumbled angrily, saying something along the lines of Xiao Lin being ungrateful before she turned and left. She stopped at the corner, and two American men, who seemed to have been waiting for a long time, asked, “Senior, how is it going?”

“He seemed quite vigilant, and regretfully, I did not manage to get any usable information. However, I think he’s just acting. The Chinese are all sick!” The woman shrugged, her expression one of contempt, but she respectfully looked at the tall man in front of her. “He doesn’t seem all that strong. I believe that you are the strongest from all the academies, Raymond.”

Raymond was built quite tall and sturdy, but his voice was gentle. He shrugged as he smiled wryly, “Don’t say that. I’m definitely not the strongest. Don’t disregard the others either. Don’t forget the existence of that demon, Lilith... So, please, focus on the man called Xiao Lin because, a while ago, I went to the New World for an assignment with Lilith, and Lilith mentioned him then.”

“Lilith?” the woman widened her eyes in disbelief, saying, “I don’t understand. Why would Lilith pay attention to a weakling like that?”

Raymond rubbed his chin, his face also showing a confused look. “I’m not sure about the specifics, and Lilith did not reveal too much, but I clearly remember what Lilith said in the end.”

“What did she say?”

“Lilith said that if there was anyone that could really rival her, then Xiao Lin is the most possible candidate. She really looked forward to their future match...”

“Lilith really said that?!” The words came from a short man beside him. Compared to Raymond, this man was still quite young. His face was quite pale, and he looked thin and weak. He felt like

someone who could be blown away by a stiff breeze. Standing next to Raymond, the two of them looked like an elephant standing next to an ant.

However, the way Raymond looked at him had no trace of disrespect at all. He regretfully shook his head, smiling as he said, "I was actually looking forward to this match after what Lilith said, but it's a pity that his opponent isn't me, but you, Martin."

"I think he's just running away. Not taking part in the team fight just means that he is weak!" The woman then encouraged Martin, "You'll definitely beat him, right?"

Martin pursed his lips, nodding vehemently. "I will definitely lose in terms of skill, but since he dared to compete in medicinal studies, I will make him understand the consequences of arrogance tomorrow!"

"Hahah! I definitely believe that. Even the dean has said before, in the same year group, the person that can defeat you in medicinal studies has not even been born yet!"

The woman nodded meaningfully. "I did look at the books he wanted. All of them were books on medicinal studies. Strangely enough, the books ranged from the most basic to the most professional. It's hard to believe it; does he actually think he'll be able to read them all in a day?"

"He wouldn't be able to even if he ate the books!"

Xiao Lin knew nothing of what was happening outside. Of course, he knew that, for a regular person, it was impossible to memorize all of the books there in a year, let alone a day. However, just like Xiao Lin said last night, Martin might be very strong, but if someone could beat that guy in terms of medicinal studies, then Xiao Lin was definitely a possible candidate.

Practically half of Xiao Lin's brain was stuffed with medicinal knowledge. When he decided on the medicinal studies course, he had wanted to use his own power to find a way to solve Gu Xiaoyue's issue with her lifespan. With Bell's help, using that special and dangerous technique called energy conversion, he had stuffed a large amount of books into his head.

However, that did not mean that Xiao Lin had immediately grasped that knowledge. Using Bell's illustration, Xiao Lin was just like a storage disk at that moment. Since his skill was too low, there was no way of retrieving all of the information at once, or his brain would explode.

So, Xiao Lin needed to retrieve the smallest portions of information whenever he needed it, which was why he needed to revise, allowing himself to be able to retrieve the information from his brain as fast as possible. The books he asked for were actually just so he could form a record in his mind, making it easy for him to look things up.

To Xiao Lin, who was currently surrounded by books, time passed in a flash. It was only when the others came back did he realize it was late. From what Cheng Ming told him, the training during the day did not have any accidents, so he relaxed, especially since there was no way to switch up the name list after it was determined.

...

The day of the weekend, which was also the first match of the Inter-academy Tournament's group stages, Judge Academy arranged the venue to be in the biggest hall. The tournament matches were all held on the weekends, unless there were special circumstances, and the biggest reason was so that the regular students would be able to spectate.

To those students who were not participating, being able to witness fights of a high caliber was amazing, no matter from an entertainment perspective or as a learning experience. As for the academy, it would strengthen everyone's sense of belonging in the academy, which was very necessary.

The tournament venue was split into two types: the individual matches and secondary profession matches, which were held in specialized examination venues. However, the team portion was similar to monthly examinations, wherein an isolated space would be created to simulate various environments and battlefields. It would then be broadcasted throughout, but those from the outside could not communicate with anyone inside to prevent any form of cheating.

Under the observation of the tournament committee, the participants from both academies both went into their dedicated areas, and the back-up members could only watch from the spectator stands.

Even though everyone had more or less received information about the other party before the examination, it was practically the first time they had all met. Other than curious gazes measuring each other, the participants from Judge Academy had noticeably confident smiles. Comparatively, Dawn Academy's expression was different. They were either filled with battle intent, uncertainty, or they were completely nonchalant.

Chapter 649 - Cheng Ming Against Smith

Chapter 649: Cheng Ming Against Smith

Xiao Lin measured that tall and burly, yet polite and well-mannered leader of the American Judge Academy. It was the first time he met the man, and his only knowledge of Raymond was limited to the information that Yu Mei had given them. However, Xiao Lin had a deep impression of the man because Raymond alone had taken up more than half of that information.

"You need to pay more attention to this person, as he's very strong. His power is different from Lilith's strength, because Raymond has a very ordinary talent. It's not even S-rank, but he's extremely hardworking, and can even suppress S-rank talent holders to become the first-year year leader of Judge Academy. He's not a simple person," Yu Mei said to him at the time.

"I'm Xiao Lin from Dawn Academy. Your academy is quite nice. I'll definitely tour the place after the tournament ends," Xiao Lin politely replied.

"You'll get the chance to." Raymond smiled kindly.

There were no ceremonies; the colonist academies did not care about putting up appearances. After the tournament committee member made sure that there were no problems or changes in the participants, the tournament formally began.

The first to start were the two individual fights. The first fight featured Smith from Judge Academy against Dawn Academy's Cheng Ming. Smith was a bald man who was over thirty years old. According to the tournament rules, both sides were only allowed to wear gear that was specially prepared for the tournament. They had the choice between leather or plate armor, and there was a wide selection of weapons. However, the weapons were all very ordinary. Other than being slightly more durable, they did not carry any special effects.

What surprised everyone was that Smith did not choose any equipment, including any weapons. He merely wore a short T-shirt as he entered the arena. The simulated battlefield was over a hundred meters in diameter, and it was an empty stage. Based on the rules, the individual tournaments were all single-elimination, and the arena was not to be very large.

Cheng Ming furrowed his eyebrows when he saw Smith walking empty-handed, and used his broken English to ask, "Are you underestimating me?" Even those who specialized in using the fist usually wore gloves of some form, which would at least be better than blocking his sword with his bare hands. No matter how ordinary the equipment used in the tournament was, it was still a sharp blade!

Since no one else could enter the arena, the other participants looked on from outside. Those from Dawn Academy had a sour look on their faces as they looked at Smith enter the arena, but a calm voice could suddenly be heard next to Xiao Lin, that said, "Smith isn't underestimating you. If he was, he would have picked a weapon. Not bringing a weapon in means that he's taking Dawn Academy very seriously."

Xiao Lin suddenly turned around and realized that it was Raymond. He was very surprised. Even if he had his full attention on the tournament and did not have Miracle or Ruin on to enhance his perception, the fact that Raymond could come so close while avoiding all detection meant that his abilities were very shocking.

Raymond was not surprised at Xiao Lin's lack of a response. Possibly thinking that his Mandarin was not good enough, he continued, "You'll understand later. Smith's strength does not require any weapons."

The match started, and Cheng Ming chose to attack head on with his sword. Many people knew of his talent, which was Swordheart. It allowed him to increase any swordsmanship techniques he had by a whole rank. To be more precise, it was a talent that enhanced swordsmanship.

"It's Phantom Slash!" Chen Dao's eyes brightened.

"Cheng Ming never disappoints!" The others could not help but praise him.

It was a Silver-ranked sword skill, and it had very high requirements toward speed and agility. With Cheng Ming's Agility attribute, it probably took him an immense amount of focus and hard work to learn it, but the moment he did, the skill was even more powerful in Cheng Ming's hands.

In the match, Cheng Ming used his sword aura right away, filling the arena with images of swords. Those images might be illusory, but each illusion still contained Cheng Ming's sword aura. Thanks to his naturally high Strength, the power was impressive.

The usual choice when facing Phantom Slash was to pull away a great distance, but the restrictions of the arena ensured that Smith could not do so, nor did it seem like he had any intentions of it. Facing the intense sword aura, he suddenly roared at the sky and the thin shirt on his body was ripped apart as his muscles rapidly expanded several times. Countless black and coarse hairs rapidly grew on his body.

“Lycanthropy!” Xiao Lin immediately knew the name of the talent. He had read up on a lot of talents before since his opponents would have various talents.

“That’s right, but Smith’s werewolf form isn’t a regular one.” Raymond had actually remained with Dawn Academy to explain, and looked to be very close to all of them despite the fact that no one knew him.

Cheng Ming was surprised, but his sword aura did not stop at all as he did not hesitate to slash at Smith’s body. Blood and countless wounds appeared on the body of Smith who had no armor on, and the powerful sword aura sent Smith flying and crashing down on the floor.

“That should be the end!” Chen Dao muttered.

“No, it’s just starting.” Raymond still had a smile on his face.

Smith stood up again. Even though he seemed to be littered with injuries, he did not seem like he was affected at all. His eyes slowly started to turn red, and after a howl, his strengthened feet slammed on the ground as he shot forward like a cannonball.

The sword in Cheng Ming’s hand glowed again as he used Total Annihilation. It filled the area around him with a dense sword aura. It was a good choice both to attack and to defend.

“Too slow!” Raymond shook his head.

After a second, the others understood who Raymond said was being too slow. Before Total Annihilation could even be used, Cheng Ming was slammed into by Smith. Even if he was barehanded, the claws in his wolf form were incredibly strong, and the armor on Cheng Ming’s body crumbled like paper as it pierced into his flesh beneath, leaving two massive wounds that were spurting out blood.

“It’s not your garden variety Lycanthropy; it’s King Lycanthropy!” Xiao Lin’s expression immediately turned heavier.

“That’s right. Smith’s talent is King Lycanthropy.” Raymond confirmed calmly. Even though talents were usually kept a secret, Smith’s werewolf form was too special, and anyone who was not blind would be able to guess it.

Lycanthropy and King Lycanthropy... Even though both of them were talents that transformed the body, just one word of difference brought on a vastly different effect.

Chapter 650 - : Golden Sword Aura

Chapter 650: Golden Sword Aura

Lycanthropy was just a B-rank talent, and it was a relatively common body transformation talent. After activation, it greatly enhanced the strength of the user's body, and also enhanced recovery abilities. Normally, those talents that were limited by time were not rated very highly, and the werewolf form itself had some side effects — namely that it was very easy to lose control after activating it.

However, King Lycanthropy was different; it was an S-rank talent, and possessed all the abilities of Lycanthropy, but stronger. The talent also had a passive ability that greatly increased all the user's attributes when the user was injured. That ability greatly increased when the talent was activated as well, which meant that, whenever the user received grave injuries, the user could very easily break past their own physical limits, and could even compete with those with SS-rank talents!

Smith himself was equal to Cheng Ming in skill, but after being heavily injured by Cheng Ming, Smith had eclipsed Cheng Ming both in speed and power.

"King Lycanthropy's power might be very horrifying, but it's not suited for team battles. However, in a duel like this, it's practically unbeatable after being activated," Xiao Lin muttered. With his incredible memory, the amount of information he had crammed during this time was immense. After pausing, he turned and looked at Raymond, and he said, "An interesting strategy."

Raymond nodded in agreement, saying, "Cheng Ming is very strong as well, but it's best if he surrenders. Since you understand the King Lycanthropy talent, you should know how this is going to play out."

Xiao Lin's expression was a little ugly as he said, "King Lycanthropy's side effects are worse than Lycanthropy. Even though you can keep your rational thoughts, the urge to kill is extremely high. After activating King Lycanthropy, the user's actions will be affected. However..."

Xiao Lin turned the topic around. "All of you are underestimating Cheng Ming. He will never admit defeat!"

Just as Xiao Lin and Raymond expected, other than Cheng Ming's initial advantage, Raymond quickly gained control of the fight. The claws in his hand did not lose out to Cheng Ming's blade, and was potentially even sharper. Each attack Smith made after transforming tore into Cheng Ming's armor easily, even clawing at his flesh. Due to the special effects of the talent, the wounds could not even recover by themselves. Cheng Ming would definitely have to undergo special treatment after the battle in order to recover.

The whirlwind-like assault lasted for over a minute, and Cheng Ming was already littered with wounds. The armor on his body was a mess, so Cheng Ming just threw it aside. However, Smith's attacks had stopped as well, because the hairs on his body had slowly begun to recede, and the redness in his eyes were rapidly fading. There were not many wounds left on his body.

"I see." Xiao Lin looked at Raymond in realization. "Smith should be specialized in courses that emphasize self-recovery. On top of the King Lycanthropy's natural recovery ability, even after heavy injuries, he can quickly recover, and will not fall into the awkward trap of being unable to fight after being heavily injured."

“More or less, but even if Smith has lost the power of his active talent, the victor is already decided. That student of yours does not have any self-recovery techniques, and Smith will be able to defeat Cheng Ming even in his normal state,” Raymond said.

Xiao Lin had slowly begun to relax his tense nerves. It was the first time he let out a smile since the start of the match. “Raymond, I’ll have to express some regret. If Smith had thrown aside all caution and maintained that state, we might really have lost this match. However, it’s different now. I don’t know how much information your side has on Cheng Ming, but I know very well that Cheng Ming is way too humble normally. He’s so humble that a lot of people forget his hard work and skill!”

In the match, Cheng Ming spat out a mouthful of blood as he looked at Smith who had reverted to his normal state. Even though his injuries looked much more severe than Smith’s, he did not plan on giving up at all as he slowly picked up the sword in his hand.

“Does Cheng Ming have any more trump cards?” Hearing Xiao Lin’s words to Raymond, Sheng Guo could not help but ask.

“He does. I’ve sparred a lot with him, and I know him very well. It’s just that he’s never had the confidence usually, but I don’t think he has a choice now.” Xiao Lin did not shift his gaze from the match. He understood Cheng Ming’s skill the most, so he trusted Cheng Ming the most.

Cheng Ming did not attack immediately after assuming a fighting stance, and seemed to be waiting for his strength to recover. Smith’s attack did put a lot of pressure on him earlier, but if one inspected closer, they would notice a formless aura condensing around Cheng Ming.

It was the purest form of sword aura, but with their current skills, it was incredibly rare for anyone to control sword aura to such a pure form. Cheng Ming’s sword aura was different from Xiao Lin’s elemental sword aura. His sword aura was the purest, and it was incredibly hard to train, but with how bitterly hard Cheng Ming worked, it was nothing worth mentioning.

“Let me see what level your sword aura is at!” Xiao Lin was actually looking forward to it as well. Cheng Ming rarely revealed his full skill during practice. It was not that he disrespected his opponent, but Cheng Ming was just too much of a nice guy. He knew that his explosiveness would definitely cause heavy injuries, or even death, to the other person, which he was not willing to see.

If Smith had not forced him to such a degree, Xiao Lin doubted that Cheng Ming would reveal his true skill.

Boom!

In a flash, the arena seemed to erupt in a thunderous explosion as a golden, lightning-like sword aura filled the arena.

“Golden sword aura!”

“Oh my god!”

The spectators all exclaimed as everyone’s expressions looked like they were extremely interested. Judge Academy’s expressions were mostly dejected, while Dawn Academy was full of smiles. Cheng

Ming had always been a friendly person, and being on the same side, everyone naturally did not want to see Cheng Ming lose.

Golden sword aura was a highly ranked sword aura, and could only be mastered with the purest form of sword aura. There was no way for Xiao Lin's elemental sword aura to be used that way.

Golden sword aura was incredibly difficult, and had a condition of being at Gold rank. Cheng Ming's swordsmanship was already at Silver rank, and with the effect of his talent, he was able to fulfil that condition. Even so, the hard work he had to put in did not diminish.