Empress 551

Chapter 551: Are You Even in the Same Rank as Me?

After all, the rules of Return Day are only effective for Transcendents, these judges aren't even flesh-and-blood life forms, so naturally they're not restricted. The accompanying satellite stopped dozens of miles from the ground.

The accompanying satellite isn't large, when spread out its surface area is roughly equivalent to half of the Rodinia Continent.

However, as the distance approached, the gravity between the accompanying satellite and Theia Planet also crazily increased.

The accompanying satellite stopped outside the Roche Limit distance, avoiding being torn apart by the Theia Plane.

Several judges rode a palace-shaped Divine Artifact, flying towards White Mountain.

Their speed was very fast, just as Sofia was weighing whether or not to act, they had already arrived.

The palace-shaped Divine Artifact hovered above White Mountain, several judges floated toward White Mountain, staying in the air dozens of meters above the Peak of White Mountain.

The appearance of these seven judges is slightly different from regular humans, and they share a common feature: their eyes have no pupils, the eyeballs are purely red.

The leader of the judges is three meters tall, clearly not a normal living being.

The appearance of the judges helped Sofia make a choice, she temporarily put aside her killing intent and looked toward the sky with interest, waiting for the judges to speak.

The Transcendents originally watching the spectacle at the perimeter also hurriedly ran toward the judges' feet.

Some of these Transcendents sprinted wildly, some used various skills to travel quickly, and some summoned Exotic Beasts to leisurely ride.

Roland glanced at these Transcendents from the corner of his eye, assessing their strength, judging their identities through physical characteristics.

There are certainly mediocre ones, but there are also quite a few experts.

Witch Doctors and Shamans from the South Continent, Jungle Rangers from the southern New Continent, Tribe Warriors from the northern New Continent with faces smeared with paint.

Besides these outsiders, there are also many once renowned figures from the Rodinia Continent.

Transcendents starting from Tier Seven possess lifespans beyond ordinary people.

People's physiques cannot be generalized, lifespans naturally vary, but Tier Seven experts, as long as they don't overdraw their bodies, living two or three hundred years isn't a big problem.

Over the past three hundred years, many admirable and tearful strong individuals have appeared on the Rodinia Continent. Their stories are widely told, so collecting their information is quite simple.

But that information all comes from several years ago, lacking accuracy.

In recent years, the continent's Transcendents have collectively retired, waiting for today.

The judges finally came, how could they not be happy.

The tall judge with no hair on his head displayed the standard strong person hairstyle, his red eyes glanced at everyone without saying a word.

Just as many felt uneasy due to his actions, he opened his mouth wide and laughed.

"Welcome, candidates, to the Fourth Return Day feast."

"Wait, Judge sir, isn't it the Sixth Return Day?" A Transcendent couldn't help but question, puzzled and confused.

The judge glanced at him coldly and said: "Speaking without permission, you shall be punished!"

With the judge's angry rebuke, a milky white Light Hammer descended from the sky, directly hitting the unlucky Transcendent who had just asked.

This Transcendent was indeed a bit reckless, but it's not surprising.

Transcendents naturally lack friends, inherently lonely, some even hide in reclusive places for several years or even decades, socially detached naturally lacking emotional intelligence.

The moment the Transcendent spoke, Roland knew he was in trouble.

The clumsy act of killing a chicken to warn the monkeys has been used since humans entered social classes and hasn't changed.

But it's effective.

The Divine Chosen Judges are certainly strong, but which of these Transcendents is an ordinary person?

They have all achieved impressive results in their respective fields, hence qualified to be here.

However, in the eyes of the Divine Chosen Judges, they are no different from ants.

Many present didn’t even know the name or deeds of the Transcendent just now.

But that is no longer important.

The Light Hammer accurately hit the Transcendent’s head, directly cracking it.

The unlucky Transcendent didn’t even groan before his head was smashed and died on the spot.

Looking at his corpse laying on the ground, the originally uneasy Transcendents became even more panicked.

The leader of the Divine Chosen Judges looked satisfied with the Transcendents’ attitude and smiled, saying:

"Let’s start with a self-introduction. I am the Divine Chosen Judge Hawkeye, this is Blind Hero, and this is Eyeless Olival..."

Hawkeye pointed out the judges’ names one by one, then smiled and said:

"Today’s gathering of Transcendents totals one hundred ninety-five people, oh no, it’s one hundred ninety-four."

The Divine Chosen Judge patted his forehead, self-mockingly jested.

Though he was witty, no one dared to respond.

The chattering chicken lies on the ground, how could the monkeys dare to act rashly.

Seeing everyone remain silent, the Divine Chosen Judge suddenly realized and patted his forehead once more, then solemnly said:

"I represent the three Great Goddesses to establish rules for you."

Hawkeye extended his right hand, shaking his ring finger, "The first rule, before speaking to me, you must raise your hand and only speak after receiving permission."

"Second rule, all of you must survive the survival challenge similar to a battle royale I designate, only the living will have the qualifications to embrace a new era."

"And the last rule to answer the penalized friend's question just now, this Return Day is indeed the Fourth Return Day, but it's not everyone's Fourth Return Day, rather it is the exclusive Return Day for the strongest."

The judge saw everyone's expressions change, and couldn't help but laugh heartily.

"Look at your mental resilience, I am the Divine Chosen Judge, not a butcher, of course, I will leave opportunities for you."

"Everyone listen up, this Return Day allows the strongest to directly break through to Tier Four, and permits ten outstanding individuals to advance early into Tier Five."

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After listening to the referee's introduction, a relatively young Transcendent was about to speak, but suddenly remembered that someone had been killed on the spot just moments ago, and quickly raised his right hand.

"Judge, I have a question."

"Speak!" The referee's voice was exceptionally loud.

The chosen Transcendent nervously looked at the referee and softly asked, "Judge, besides the strongest advancing to Tier Four, and ten strong ones stepping into Tier Five, do the rest of us have to remain at Tier Six?"

The referee slowly shook his head, "Of course not. Although Tier Six has no quota, there is a pass line."

Pointing at the questioner with his fingertip, the Hawkeye Referee said expressionlessly, "You, are out. You still have some time before midnight, you might want to consider writing a farewell letter, and I'll help deliver it."

The questioner's massive body shook, almost unable to believe his ears.

He was eliminated?!

Unconvinced, he protested, "Judge, you can't do this. I have been cultivating for ninety-nine years, waiting for this opportunity, and you tell me I'm out. I am not convinced!"

His eyes turned bloodshot, his body trembling wildly as anger overpowered fear, he coldly asked,

"Judge, I want to know my ranking, I need to know how many more points I need to surpass those ahead of me."

"Out of all the Transcendents present, your strength ranks sixty-third, and I only award the top sixty Transcendents."

The Hawkeye Referee cheerfully said, "If it's you, there's indeed a chance."

Upon hearing this, the Transcendent who had spoken up was suddenly invigorated.

As everyone discussed the rules, the referee suddenly raised his right hand, smiling faintly, and said:

"By the way, your suggestion just reminded me — I will now offer everyone present today a chance to change their fate; as long as you fight your way into the top sixty, you'll have landed safely."

The Judge waved a big hand, and a virtual light screen appeared in the air.

"By the way, this is the current ranking of everyone."

Sofia was prominently in the first place, with a line of text in the annotation section after her name.

The Fourth Return's Enjoyer.

The meaning was clear: Sofia was the ordained super strong who would jump two levels, as long as she didn't die, she would be the sole winner, and others were not to maliciously place orders against her.

What if she died?

No one asked such a foolish question.

If Sofia died, naturally, the ranks behind would fill in one by one.

Merely eliminate the competitors ahead of you, and in no time, you'd be at Tier Four.

Sofia and Roland's expressions barely changed.

Sofia remained calm because she was the only winner, so she and her calm. Roland was happy because he wouldn't have to continue facing Sofia.

With the release of the promotion rankings, those within the list dared not slack off, afraid of being replaced.

Those outside the list were hell-bent, charging toward their targets.

Roland slowly walked towards Sofia.

Sofia stared at him with a strange look, softly asking: "Do you also have thoughts about Tier Four?"

"I do, but not today."

Roland frankly asked, "If you were directly faced with an onslaught from the ten ranked 2 to 11, could you withstand it?"

Sofia snorted without responding.

Roland let out a sigh of relief; as long as one is willing to talk, there’s always a way.

He said somewhat indignantly, "This is too unfair! You’ve been fighting for so long, your stamina probably isn’t even a tenth left, placing you at the forefront at this time is clearly an act of shirking responsibility."

"If you were at full strength, who would dare look around."

This flattery suited Sofia perfectly, though she couldn’t help defending herself with a few words.

"A tenth is an exaggeration; even now I still have a third..."

Sofia suddenly narrowed her eyes, stopping her speech.

She sighed inwardly; being an enemy of Roland was always so uncomfortable, inexplicable mistakes would keep occurring.

Roland understood Sofia was in a bad mood, so he didn’t play any small tricks, nor did he jokingly over-familiarize himself.

He swiftly helped Sofia analyze the pros and cons.

"You need to withstand the siege of later-comers, and I also need a higher ranking, so we can totally cooperate."

"I'll block those contenders for you, and you help me kill a few of the higher-ranked ones."

"Return favor?" Sofia asked succinctly.

"You name it."

"I might need to kill a few more people, and you must stand by my side." Sofia said calmly, casually revealing a significant matter.

Roland nodded in agreement as he waved his hand, and Sylph and the others stood around Sofia according to formation to provide protection.

The formation originally used to combat Sofia now became a great formation to protect her.

This world is indeed an enormous improvisational ensemble, everyone is quite unprofessional.

Chapter 553: Fulfilling the Contract

Roland and Sofia conspired on the battlefield about collaboration, with no objections from the entourage.

Angelina, ranked 32, need not worry about those ranked 2-11, nor about the top 60. Her position is very stable.

Also as stable as the old dog were Sahalin of the Blade of Destruction and Pulkin the Great Shepherd, who rushed in upon hearing the news; their ranks were also in the twenties.

Not quite at the top but better than at the bottom, their primary strategy was survival—staying alive would ensure they could wait for commendations.

These three all came from the Vladimir Empire and usually had good relationships, naturally forming a collaborative team.

They did not approach Sofia.

It's not that they didn't want to escort her, but they lacked the ability. The enemies Sofia faced were in a league they couldn't venture into; entering such a high-level field recklessly would only lead to instant shattering.

The gap between Tier Sevens was simply too vast; they couldn't help.

Sofia's gesture to them was very clear, demanding that they protect themselves.

Angelina certainly didn't oppose Sofia and Roland's compromise. The earlier probing attack proved that Roland's five-person team had the ability to counter the dissatisfied Sofia, possibly even turn the tables.

Though Sofia's Bright Blue Fury was yet to be unleashed, Angelina already broke out in a cold sweat.

She suddenly recalled the past incident of being captured and imprisoned by Roland.

Though she believed Sofia would not be defeated, she still felt inexplicably nervous.

With so many opportunistic bastards lurking around like hyenas, a temporary ceasefire between Sofia and Roland was the best outcome.

Compared to those uninvited guests from overseas continents, Roland and Alina were at least from the civilized society of Rodinia, where everyone could sit down and talk.

Sahalin hadn't expected Her Majesty the Empress to be forced into negotiations with Roland, feeling more painfully helpless and unable to assist.

Amidst the agony, he also felt a sense of lament.

Just a few years ago in Val City, he could easily overpower Roland but suffered losses due to Roland's cunning schemes.

After those losses, he kept them in mind, hoping to regain ground.

However, in just three short years, his gap with Roland had widened.

His rank was 27, not only unable to catch up to Roland but even on par with Angelina.

Once the Blade of Destruction, now a side character off the central stage, Sahalin felt somewhat discontented but fully supported Sofia's decision.

The only one among the Rurik trio who likely didn't wish for reconciliation was Pulkin the Great Shepherd. He wasn't targeting Roland but the Divine Court of Light.

As the leader of the Orthodox Church of Light that branched from the Divine Court, the rift with the Divine Court was almost irreconcilable.

Despite his reservations, he chose silence.

Just now, he looked up at the leaderboard, quickly submitting to reality.

Christine, ranked 14.

Just three more opponents to vanquish, and she could ascend directly to Tier Five, soaring to new heights.

With support from Sofia and Roland, her rank promotion was almost inevitable.

Thinking of this, Pulkin’s already sorrowful and wrinkled face grew even more creased.

Feeling dejected, aside from preserving his life, he cared about nothing anymore.

The joys and sorrows of humans never interconnect; much happiness is built upon the sorrow of others.

While Pulkin suffered, the Pope Eugene of the Divine Court of Light felt much better.

Eugene personally ranked 50, hopeless for early advancement but not facing much trouble securing a promotion slot.

His strength was inferior to his old rival Pulkin, saved only by the vast foundation of the Divine Court, maintaining the orthodox status of the Light lineage.

These years under the pressure of his old rival, his life had been tough.

But all of this was ending—Divine Court of Light had a successor. Christine ranked 14 was the Divine Court’s greatest hope.

As the strong individuals schemed and formed small alliances, he slowly approached Christine.

Under Christine’s gaze, he raised the Scepter of Light.

"Christine, you are the Lord of Light’s most outstanding disciple, and the finest among the young ones. The future of the Divine Court belongs to you; please do not decline."

Christine certainly wouldn’t decline, even feeling some of the old folks had been lingering too long.

She should have received the Scepter of Light long before.

Since Eugene was so perceptive, his future would transform from being purged to being revered.

Christine accepted the scepter with both hands, saying slowly, "Your Grace Eugene, this is a wise choice. Your humility won't be disappointed."

That statement was enough.

Though Christine might seem cold-blooded and harsh to outsiders, she was never capricious, always fulfilling her words.

She stated Eugene could settle calmly, regardless of what he might have done in the past—he wouldn't face retribution.

Eugene said nothing, quietly joining up with the Chief Judge of the Divine Court of Light.

The Chief Judge ranked 90-something; hoping for a promotion opportunity would require a miracle. He saw clearly that if there was no chance, survival took precedence—no stirring trouble.

Their reason for not aligning with Christine was similar to Angelina and others: self-awareness.

Roland merely glanced at the leaderboard and already knew it had issues.

His peripheral vision fixed on the floating flying palace. Hawkeye Referee's conscience was very bad—that guy was here just to watch the spectacle.

This ranking was mostly accurate, but many adjustments had been made in the details, intentionally promoting mutual slaughter.

The second rank was held by the king from the New Continent, Ansue.

This world's New Continent was not devoid of civilization; in its central region lay the powerful Jialan Empire.

And the chief strongman of Jialan Empire was Ansue the Wise Man, wielding the Thunder Staff.

Chapter 554: Fulfilling the Contract (Part 2)

The Thunder Sage had never set foot in Rodinia before, but had been secluded in his own territory for hundreds of years. After subduing nine Thunder Serpents, he felt the time was right and landed in Rodinia a few days ago to participate in the final battle.

Almost every Tier Seven powerhouse with potential advancement had heard the news of the Day of Return through various channels.

Whoever can transcend the shackles of life, whose path as a strong contender ends, will all be decided at the Peak of White Mountain.

The Thunder Sage, Ansue, is here.

Sword Saint Grosso, who avoided the battle after being challenged by Sofia, also returned. He stroked the longsword of unknown material in his hand, his eyes sharp, and filled with killing intent.

Since avoiding the battle, his reputation has plummeted. The only way to restore his honor is to personally slay Sofia.

The most powerful Shaman on the South Continent, Kolokolo, has arrived.

From the distant Balat, Prince Narudo, a master of Yoga Body Techniques, has arrived.

The Spirit Medium, defeated but not killed by Sofia, has also arrived.

Their rankings on the leaderboard are 2, 3, 4, 12, and 13 respectively.

These individuals more or less have grievances with Sofia, some even direct enemies.

The top three's ranking isn't much of a problem, though Roland doesn't think he has no chance of defeating them, he acknowledges their strength.

But starting from the Spirit Medium, the rankings get a bit nonsensical.

According to Roland's understanding, Prince Narudo and the Spirit Medium's real rankings should be around 15th, after Christine, who should definitely be in the top ten.

However, the Hawkeye Referee reversed their rankings.

Being a Hawkeye, their observation ability shouldn't be poor, yet they make such a mistake, suggesting they hope to see rivers of blood.

Roland himself is ranked fifth, Alina is sixth, Lisa is eighth, and Sif is placed just at the eleventh spot.

This ranking seems fine, but in reality, it's full of problems.

In terms of overall combat power in Roland's group of five, Sif is the strongest, Roland is on par with her, Alina and Christine are slightly inferior, while Lisa, although having received the Magic Association's inheritance, is too one-sided in her skills, and thus the weakest.

However, the Hawkeye Referee placed Lisa ahead of Sif, clearly stirring trouble.

Sure enough, the moment Sif saw the ranking, her expression turned extremely sour.

She admits that Sofia is stronger and can accept Roland being above her, but what about the others?

She is the Elf Empress, recognized by all the wise men (Roland), possesses complete Inheritance Memory, and after retrieving the Flawless Foot, her body is without blemish. These are her capital for challenging Sofia and her basis for standing above the rest.

Murderous intent surged within her chest, Sif was truly angry.

Roland squeezed her hand and glanced sideways into the sky.

He said nothing, but Sif fully understood.

Roland was reminding her that the real culprit was the Hawkeye Referee.

"Damn bald-headed fool."

Sif silently cursed in her heart, her expression gradually returning to normal.

As for those above her in her own group, never mind for now, but for those ahead of her otherwise, she would slay them personally.

Even if it was a provocation, so what? Some already harbored murderous intent towards her, so why speak kindly?

Sif took a deep breath, her eyes flickering with a pale golden light as Insight took effect.

She looked at the Spirit Medium and Prince Narudo, and indeed, these two wore fierce expressions, wanting to replace her.

I’m not stirring trouble, this is self-defense.

Sif took a deep breath and lowered her voice, "Roland, leave those two to me later."

Though she didn't name her enemies, Roland understood her well enough to know who her targets were.

Seeing the Transcendents below all take their positions and find battlefield partners, the Hawkeye Referee's lips curled slightly as he placed a whistle in his mouth.

"The survival challenge is about to begin, and it will end at midnight."

"Tomorrow marks the first day of the New Epoch, so what should this Seventh Era be called?"

The bald-headed referee pretended to think, quickly giving his prepared answer, "Annihilation. Yes, let's call it Annihilation. Do you like that name?"

"Since none of you are speaking, the competition will begin now!"

The bald head blew the whistle in his mouth, the long sound echoing across the mountain peak.

The sound waves spread outwards, soon passing through Val City and the battlefield where tens of thousands had recently died, reaching even further distances.

Everyone who heard the whistle felt their hearts tremble inexplicably.

Ordinary people merely felt palpitations, but Transcendents sensed a greater threat.

They heard a mad voice echoing in their hearts.

"Those who do not receive honors will become sacrifices for the New Epoch, and will face annihilation before dawn."

The lower-ranked Transcendents could no longer suppress their inner rage, some even cursed aloud.

A burly Berserker threw his axe into the sky.

He was ranked at the bottom.

Though Berserkers were generally not the smartest, he was no fool.

Being ranked 194 and hoping to break through to the top 60 was simply international jesting.

Since there was no chance of survival, he might as well not hold himself back.

The harshest words, the final thrill.

As his axe flew into the sky, this unfortunate Berserker used the fastest speaking speed of his life to curse the Hawkeye Referee and others, going back seventeen generations, expressing a strong desire to engage in intimate relations with their female relatives.

The bald-headed referee was stunned.

Though he wasn't a being of flesh and blood, he did have a mother and grandmother. Despite his race not needing sexual reproduction to propagate, the idea of lowly humans wanting intimate contact with his mother was clearly beyond his tolerance.

The Berserker's words made him feel inexplicable and enraged.

Chapter 555: Fulfilling the Contract (Part 3)

The bald referee struck with a heavy punch.

Hawkeye casually swung the whip in his hand, and the flying axe changed direction, smashing towards the Berserker.

The flying axe sliced towards the Berserker at an unbelievable speed.

Hawkeye certainly wouldn't easily let go of the offender. The flying axe, like a dancing blade, madly slashed, cutting off pieces of muscle from the Berserker, splattering everywhere.

The Berserker was skinned alive.

However, Hawkeye's means didn't stop there. He threw down a special potion, enveloping the Berserker in a red mist, skillfully maintaining the life of the Berserker.

"I said, the eliminated will die as a sacrifice at midnight. Balutus is the first chosen sacrifice, he must die at midnight."

"The survival battle, begin!"

Hawkeye's methods shocked those who originally wanted to protest or even resist.

This was a super strong power beyond their understanding.

Controlling a weapon to kill an enemy three hundred meters away was already a strong ability. He could also precisely control the rotation angle of the flying axe, letting Balutus endure the maximum pain without dying.

On this night, Hawkeye was the highest Dominator.

Unlike others' fear, Sofia squinted her eyes, hiding her intent to kill.

She rarely wanted to kill someone so much.

Although she had killed many people, she never tortured her opponents, and rarely killed without reason, always giving the deceased a reasonable explanation.

The Hawkeye referee killed two people as soon as he descended, touching Sofia's psychological bottom line.

But if it was just that, she wouldn't have much intent to kill.

There are many rampant powerhouses in this world, Hawkeye wasn't even too excessive.

What truly made Sofia angry was that Hawkeye floated in the air for too long.

She didn't like anyone being high and mighty in front of her.

The last arrogant person like this was Christine, who already paid the price.

Hawkeye, you're next.

Just as Sofia squinted her eyes, Roland's group of five positioned themselves around her, ready to face their enemies.

In this battleground where only sixty could survive, the thing they lacked the least was enemies.

Roland was striving to buy time for Sofia to recover her strength, but he could never imagine that Sofia wasn't thinking about the survival challenge, but whether to make a huge move after breaking through to Tier Four.

As Roland and his group formed their formation, the loose alliance formed by overseas Transcendents and Sofia's enemies finally reached a consensus under the leadership of Ansue and Sword Saint Grosso, surrounding them from two directions.

Ansue stood thirty meters away from Roland.

His gaze fell on Roland’s face, warm and gentle.

He slightly opened his mouth and said with a smile, "Mr. Roland, I have heard of your name more than once overseas. You are a smart person and should know that this is the only opportunity to kill Sofia."

"As long as you step aside, I guarantee you and your companions will all enter the top 11."

"Is that so, what about them?"

Roland pointed to the Spirit Medium, Narudo, and others.

"There are a total of eleven spots, that’s enough." Ansue’s voice was magnetic, as if the best speaker filled with allure.

"Roland, Sofia’s character is strange, unpredictable. If she becomes the only Tier Four in the world, we will all die."

The total number of spots is eleven. Here, there are at least ten qualified candidates. Ansue’s words directly cut off the paths of others.

He spoke calmly, not feeling unqualified.

Isn’t it?

Even though Sofia was strong, her current stamina was not even a third of her peak state, and the continuous wars had exhausted her Heart Power.

This was the best opportunity to get rid of her, and also the last chance.

Seeing Roland not speaking, Ansue smiled and continued to add, "Roland, the Sussex Empire and the Vladimir Empire have long been at each other's throats, and there is no enmity between us. There is further opportunity for cooperation in the future."

"As long as you are willing, the northern plains of the New Continent can be yours. I have no interest in mundane power struggles, I only want to proceed further on the path of power."

Seeing Roland show a tempted expression, Ansue continued to sweeten the deal, "If you are not satisfied, you can continue to make requests, whether land, wealth, or Divine Artifacts, anything."

Roland did not answer directly but turned to glance at Sofia, asking with a half-smiling, half-questioning look:

"Sofia, they raised the offer, what do you say? Do you want to raise the bid as well?"

Sofia answered Roland with one word.

"Pah."

She despised those who reneged on agreements. Earlier, she and Roland had already reached a cooperation framework, and now he wanted to raise the price on the spot?

If Roland dared to agree to Ansue's request, she would not hesitate to draw her sword against Roland.

Whether her one-third of stamina could last till the end did not matter to her anymore.

Sofia's refusal to raise the bid was entirely within Roland's expectations.

He even felt a bit worried for her gentleness, had she exhausted herself beyond expectation?

In Roland’s eyes, this kind of provocation without Sofia drawing her sword made her condition seem grim.

Seeing Sofia’s extremely poor attitude, Ansue breathed a sigh of relief, he said with a smile:

"Roland, have you thought it through?"

Roland took a deep breath, and said loudly: "Ansue the Wise, I’ve heard your name, I know you’re a man of your word, so..."

Ansue was overjoyed, his eyes flickering with lightning.

Sofia frowned, her right hand already on the hilt, ready to act if Roland reneged.

In the midst of their contrasting expectations, Roland calmly said, "So I’m learning from you, to be a man of my word."

"I have already reached an agreement with Miss Sofia, I cannot break that agreement."

Chapter 556: Fulfilling the Contract (Part 4)

"Mr. Ansue, please retreat. With me here, you cannot harm her."

Roland spoke calmly.

Ansue’s smile froze on his face.

The cold wind blew, lifting his pale purple long hair and messily brushing across his cheeks.

Fury gnawed at his reason, and he stared at Roland with gritted teeth, saying, "Roland, you’ve chosen death. I hope you won’t regret it at the moment of your demise."

He would naturally be angry; if Roland had betrayed, the chance of killing Sofia would have been a hundred percent.

Yet Roland chose to keep his word.

Just as Ansue was about to lose control, a voice as unpleasant as a screech owl emerged from the shadows.

"Ansue, you always like to flaunt your so-called wisdom, but ultimately, it’s still force that decides victory or defeat."

It was mockery from the Sword Saint.

The face of Ansue the Wise Man turned purple, unable to retort.

He raised the Thunder Staff in his hand, quickly retreating out of the Flower Sea’s range and began chanting a lengthy spell.

He knew that the Flower Sea gave Roland and others a significant advantage, so he planned to destroy it.

While he was chanting the spell, others encircled him to protect him.

The Sword Saint was in no hurry to act.

A sharp blade was suitable for killing, but not convenient for cutting trees and grass.

Let Ansue cause some destruction first.

As Ansue raged, Sofia’s hand on the sword hilt froze.

She looked at Roland’s back with a complicated expression.

It was clear that Roland never intended to betray and was merely toying with Ansue.

He didn’t even look back to demand a promise, instead confidently handing his back to her, to the mortal enemy he had been battling just minutes before.

What exactly was he thinking?

Sofia didn’t quite understand Roland, but she knew she could never draw her sword against him again.

A warm current touched her icy heart.

From childhood to adulthood, she had received a cold education, surrounded by cold interpersonal relationships.

From the moment her parents used her as a political bargaining chip, her world turned especially cold.

When her ex-husband subjected her to extreme humiliation, her world was also frozen.

Roland was...

The smile at the corner of Sofia’s mouth lasted only a second before freezing once more.

A clear voice echoed in her heart, "Sofia, such trivial emotions as being moved shouldn’t exist in your world."

Her fingertips trembled slightly, and Sofia’s heart froze once more.

Being moved? A trivial and laughable emotion.

Her world did not need to be moved; she only needed to keep growing stronger, become a true powerhouse, and step on the path to the Divine Domain.

She accepted Roland's reconciliation terms not because she was deceived by his flowery words but because she wanted him to join the Vladimir Empire.

This was her last mundane obsession.

She had promised when she donned the crown that given time, she would repay them with a strong nation.

She needed Roland's help to fulfill that promise.

That's all.

He was the most troublesome enemy.

And the most dependable ally.

Sofia's fingertips touched the Bright Blue Fury, and her gaze returned to calm.

The clash of swords, explosions of spells, roars of rage, and screams of agony continuously resounded by her ears, playing a melody akin to Purgatory, yet unable to shake her in the slightest.

Her gaze turned towards the fiercest part of the battlefield.

Roland and Sif were facing off against Ansue.

To be honest, Ansue's power was indeed not weak.

Now she had only a third of her physical strength left, was mentally exhausted, and her spirit was waning. Ansue truly had the ability to match her in battle.

He alone stood his ground against the combination of Roland and Sif's Holy Shield and Golden Spear, even finding time to bombard the Golden Ginkgo Tree with wild thunder, disrupting the Flower Sea, showcasing his formidable strength.

Roland and Sif were forced back out of the Flower Sea by Ansue.

Once retreated, Ansue would then use lightning to eat away at the Flower Sea, reducing Sif's area of activity.

This method was clumsy but effective.

Roland and Sif kept retreating, yet they never turned around to seek her help.

They chose to trust.

Trusting her completely to choose the timing to strike.

Sofia let out a soft sigh, her hand on the sword hilt clenching tightly, veins of blue and red faintly visible beneath her fair skin.

She closed her eyes.

The world seemed to turn blue.

She opened her eyes again.

The Bright Blue Fury was finally unsheathed.

The sounds of battle completely ceased.

In truth, the sounds did not disappear, but Ansue could not hear them.

The Thunder Sage looked at Sofia in horror.

Within hundreds of meters, she was at him in a flash.

The blue sword light wiped away all the colors and sounds from his world.

Along with his life force.

Ansue stood proudly, his body unmoving like a mountain.

Sofia exerted greatly, spitting out a mouthful of blood, retreating several steps, her body trembling.

Just when everyone thought her surprise attack had failed, Ansue's head, which had been held high, drooped listlessly.

His wide-open eyes, no longer had any sign of life.

Ansue, dead.

Chapter 557: Strike!

This is a bloodthirsty and frenzied night.

The death of Ansue did not stop the overseas Transcendents from their frantic pace; quite the contrary, as he was slain by Sofia, the Sword Saint drew his second sword.

This is a two-handed heavy sword; he is going all out.

Roland raised his Shield to meet him, fighting side by side with Sif. Her Long Spear darted like a viper, producing sharp whistling sounds to disrupt the Sword Saint's rhythm.

Her coordination with Roland was perfect, requiring no words or glances to achieve flawless cooperation.

Outside the Flower Sea, the battles on other fronts were equally brutal, even more bloody.

The chances for survival were too few.

Besides the two unlucky ones eliminated before the start, the remaining 193 Transcendents on the field were vying for 60 precious tickets.

Approximately only one in three could survive.

Though there were gaps in strength among the Transcendents, in the eyes of ordinary people, they were all akin to superhumans.

All were outstanding figures stride forward on the path of power, who among them doesn't have some glorious past?

If I'm still alive, why say I have no chance?

Everyone embraced a belief that defeating one more is one, thoroughly crazy.

Apart from the elite games at the Flower Sea mountaintop, the surrounding Transcendents were also very coherent in seeking opponents with similar rankings to engage in combat.

Screams, roars, and shouts collectively composed a Hellish funeral dirge.

On the fierce battlefield, several judges stood on the floating palace's observation deck, looking with interest at the bloody battlefield below.

Watching nearly two hundred Transcendents in melee, the only female judge in the jury yawned, somewhat impatiently saying:

"This is the least participated preliminary ever, how boring."

Her words made a young male judge nearby frown slightly, also provoking laughter from others.

The Blind Hero Oliver, covered with a purple blindfold over his eyes, smiled and explained:

"It's not surprising; this time we only gathered eligible Land Transcendents. Those Ocean Transcendents, Core Transcendents, Beasts, Fierce Beasts, Shady Spirits, and descendants of the Magic Empire are not participating. Though there are not many people, the selection process is quite exciting."

Oliver's words did not resonate with the female judge; she frowned, snorted lightly, and with her fingertips glowing a faint green, disdainfully said:

"Exciting? Aside from the Empress of the Frosty Winter's barely excellent performance, just those few at the Flower Sea can barely be seen worthy, where is anything else exciting?"

Oliver didn't argue with the lady judge; he merely sighed softly, calmly saying:

"Look over there, those playing cards with their opponents, their duel is quite exciting."

The female judge was somewhat surprised, casting her gaze on the pair pointed out by the Blind Hero, observing for a moment, unable to help but stare at the Blind Hero, "Are you serious?"

"Certainly."

The female judge couldn't help but laugh, "Those two are ranked 185 and 183 respectively. Unless a miracle occurs, there's no chance at all, and their combat skills can only be rated as poor. I know you want to say they're fighting for survival, the beautiful bloom of life, right?"

"Jena, you're wrong."

The Blind Hero did not argue with the lady judge, he merely said hauntingly, "As you said, only a miracle can save them, so they are fighting for a miracle."

Though Oliver said it earnestly, Jena couldn't understand it; she continued to retort, "Humans always like to believe in those ethereal things, we Elemental Spirits are different, I only believe in strength and skill."

Oliver sighed lightly, saying nothing.

There are also differences among Elemental Spirits.

He believes in fertility, blessed by the Lord of Fertility, can condense flesh and blood, had a bit of mindset towards flesh creatures, other judges are different, the elements constituting their bodies are wind, earth, water, fire, light, and dark, they cannot understand the vivid splendor of flesh life.

Oliver abandoned the argument, silently watching the battlefield, watching 183 and 185 like chicken pecking at each other their final performance.

No miracle occurred.

and 185 were evenly matched, both exhausted, were opportunistically reaped by passing number 145, yet 145 had no time to revel, he too was soon taken by number 92 who just slew 133.

Such battles continued to unfold, and the number of people on the battlefield was rapidly decreasing.

Seeing 183 and 185 passing one after another, the lady judge Jena couldn't help but give a crisp laugh.

"Oliver, is this the miracle you said? It really is interesting."

Jena's cold sarcasm incited laughter from the other judges.

Since Oliver acquired a flesh form, there had been some alienation between him and the others.

To them, Oliver had become dirty, unclean.

How can the pure higher elements be polluted by lowly blood and flesh?

The mortal flesh body is very fragile; only if they reach Holy Sanctuary (Tier 3) can they qualify to be equated with them.

After Ascension to Divinity, the fragile flesh will become a Divine Body, then it is another matter.

Those humans below, merely Tier Seven mortals, naturally are despised flesh.

Most of the judges were watching ants fight, all with a mindset of wanting to see rivers of blood.

The more intense the internal conflict of the human Transcendents, the happier they were.

The Blind Hero Oliver was completely a maverick among the judges.

He even held a Crystal Ball to record the battlefield dynamics.

The Crystal Ball in his hand is also a Divine Artifact, the recording range is very large, and it can capture many video images.

He likes photography in his leisure time; this Crystal Ball recorded countless fierce battle images, also containing sparring among the judges.

He also often reviewed and replayed, helping himself improve.

Chapter 558: Slash! (Part 2)

Seeing Oliver diligently recording the battle below, Jena couldn’t hold back and loudly protested: "Oliver, you’re recording my battle scenes here too, right? Delete them, I don’t want these with the images of these lowly beings."

Usually very good-tempered, Oliver finally couldn’t contain his outburst.

"Don’t worry, I’ll delete your image records after the battle ends."

Jena was at a loss for words, but she couldn’t find a reason to object.

After all, she just didn’t want her images to be stored together with those of humans, and Oliver agreed to that.

Not wanting them stored together doesn’t necessarily mean deleting the human images; her images could also be deleted.

Oliver expressed his dissatisfaction in this way, and although Jena was angry, she could only endure it.

After all, Oliver’s strength was far superior to hers.

The Blind Hero’s abilities were very close to the chief referee Hawkeye, a whole level above hers.

In the Su Ling Race, where strength is paramount, the weak cannot speak loudly to the strong, otherwise getting beaten up is well-deserved.

Previously, Oliver tolerated her, allowing her to show off, but now that Oliver didn’t want to tolerate it, she had to submit.

Just as Jena’s eyes blazed with green light in anger, the chief referee Hawkeye couldn’t help but interrupt them.

"Stop arguing, watch carefully, such grand battles won’t be seen again until the Saint Tier Return Day."

"Look, the Sword Saint has entered the Flower Sea, the most spectacular battle is starting!"

With Hawkeye’s reminder, the judges simultaneously turned their gazes to the Flower Sea.

As Sofia exhausted everything to slay Ansue, her remaining energy was completely depleted, and she could only retreat to rest under the Ginkgo Tree.

On the surface, she effortlessly killed Ansue with one slash, charming and dashing, like a War God; if it were ordinary people, they’d definitely be frightened out of their wits.

However, her enemies were not ordinary and weren’t fazed by this tactic.

If Sofia could still fight on after using all her strength to single-handedly kill Ansue, she wouldn’t need to hide under the Ginkgo Tree.

On the surface, it looked like Sofia killed smoothly, but from another perspective, Ansue achieved a one-for-one with his life, forcing her to leave the battlefield early.

As long as those protecting her, like Roland, are eliminated, she'd also perish.

To prevent Sofia from being ambushed and slain, Roland had to keep Christine, who specialized in defense and healing, to take care of Sofia.

It amounted to Ansue exchanging one for two.

In the eyes of the Sword Saint and others, Ansue, although dead, died a worthy death.

Although Ansue himself wouldn't have thought so, being dead, no one cared about his opinion.

Now the situation was Sword Saint, Shaman Koloko, Yoga Prince, Spirit Medium versus Roland, Sif, Lisa, and Alina.

Christine could only stay behind providing support, not daring to go all out.

Sofia leaned against the Golden Ginkgo Tree, holding the Bright Blue Fury, quiet as a statue.

The Sword Saint brought out his trump card, the Blunt Heavy Sword.

It's well known that swordsmen are noted for their comprehensive abilities and flexible sword techniques, but their penetration ability is far inferior to long-handled weapons.

This leads to swordsmen duels often involving lance confrontations.

The more prestigious the swordsman, the more oversized their spear, eager to enter wielding a seven-meter anti-cavalry lance.

Only purist swordsmen, like Grosso, who view their sword as a second life, insist on using a sword.

However, regular longswords couldn’t break through Roland’s shield, not even Sword Saint Grosso.

So, he unveiled the several hundred-pound super heavy sword.

This was the Meteorite Iron Heavy Sword, crafted from special ore gathered from meteorites.

The most prominent feature of meteorite iron is its weight.

Grosso lifted the heavy sword above his head, his expression solemn, his tone reverent, "Roland, Sif, I respect your strength, so I will use my true ultimate move..."

Grosso was a traditional warrior, cherished martial honor and would never resort to sneak attacks. He even planned to introduce Roland to the origins, weight, and features of this Meteorite Iron Heavy Sword before formally slaying Roland in an honorable duel.

In his belief, dying to a rival’s ultimate move was a warrior’s honor.

He believed Roland also held the warrior’s sense of honor.

Unfortunately, he was wrong, Roland did not.

Roland was a knight, how could he have a warrior’s sense of honor?

Not only that, neither did Sif nor Lisa.

The first to act was Lisa. She didn’t even wait for Grosso to finish his dashing lines before moving.

Her eyes blazed with fierce flames, her entire body engulfed in fire, transforming into a vividly flaming figure.

She was genuinely furious. Was this person talking nonsense?

What did he mean by respecting Roland and Sif, what about her? Was she just an unworthy side character without a name?

Before she wasn't a Transcendent, never studied magic, they looked down on her, that was fine, but now she's a top-tier Extraordinary Mage, they still looked down on her, then her magic was all for nothing.

Rage burned within her, Lisa let out a clear cry, stepping on fiery clouds, soared upwards like a great bird.

"Look quickly, that's Phoenix!"

The fiery element spirit from the sky judges exclaimed.

"How can a mere human master the Phoenix's ultimate skill?" The Flame Elemental Spirit was stunned.

The Hawkeye Referee squinted his eyes, discerning carefully before shaking his head with a smile.

"You're mistaken, that's just a firebird shockwave mimicking Phoenix's attack style; to be precise, the firebird is also simulated, she's using blazing impact."

"If it's simulated, it's frighteningly similar." The Flame Elemental Spirit muttered.

Though puzzled, she accepted Hawkeye's explanation.

Phoenix is a Divine Domain powerhouse mastering fire, on par with the three Goddesses in power. If a Phoenix truly appeared on this battlefield, everyone present would perish, and even the entire Half Mountain would be incinerated, turned into a fiery hell.

Even the Firebird is a Tier Five Strong.

Lisa merely briefly elementalized herself, simulating the form of the elemental creature Firebird, to unleash the purest flame impact.

Even so, it had already exceeded the Flame Elemental Spirit's understanding of human Transcendents.

"Is this something human Transcendents can achieve?"

Although Hawkeye's attitude towards humans was arrogant and domineering, he was relatively gentle towards his own kind. He smiled and explained:

"A specialized Transcendent ability combined with pure flame magic control can create miracles."

Miracles.

This word invigorated Oliver and made Jena's expression a bit unnatural.

She didn't like this notion, nor did she believe that Lisa could break through Grosso's Offensive and Defensive Integration.

The rankings just announced by Professor Hawkeye contained many errors, including those involving the Thunder Sage and the Sword Saint.

The usual state of the Sword Saint indeed wasn't a match for the Thunder Sage, but when he raised his heavy sword, entering the Offensive and Defensive Integration state, his strength surpassed Ansue.

He and Ansue were Schrödinger's runners-up; either of them could win.

At this moment, the Sword Saint was literally number two.

The pinnacle of swordsmanship is Offensive and Defensive Integration, and the pinnacle of flame is high temperature, a high temperature that surpasses defense.

"Sizzle!"

Lisa, having transformed into a Firebird, shot flames from the sky, precisely hitting the Sword Saint.

Grosso was engulfed in flames, his entire body ablaze, but he remained unmoved.

His Offensive and Defensive Integration swordsmanship was enough to withstand any damage.

Though he was in pain, he believed Lisa would give in sooner.

His guess wasn’t wrong. Despite his skin being burned in multiple places and even getting a bit scorched, he still held on.

Grosso looked at Lisa falling from the sky, a cruel smile appearing at the corner of his lips.

To kill without mercy is the greatest respect.

Miss Lisa, please proceed on your way.

Just as he swung his sword to fend off Roland and Sif’s attacks, waiting for Lisa to land, unknown powder sprinkled from the sky.

He instinctively held his breath but was still irritated by the powder in his nose, causing him to sneeze violently.

Was it pepper, chili powder, and cumin?

Forced to inhale the air, Grosso was dumbfounded.

Before he could speak, Lisa burst into clear laughter in the sky, "Sorry, the seasoning was sprinkled late; the flavor might not be great, wasting ingredients."

Everyone knew this was mockery and provocation, yet Grosso was still broken.

His old face flushed red; this damn woman actually treated him like grilled meat?!

...

In the air, the Flame Elemental Spirit was laughing heartily, flames flickering in his pupil-less eyes, matching his joyful mood.

"It’s so interesting. This human actually treats the enemy as a dish."

"No, this is a brilliant provocation method. Look, the one holding the heavy sword rushed into the encirclement."

"The battle is almost over."

Hawkeye sighed lightly, pointing to Alina reciting prophetic poems under the Ginkgo Tree.

"She is quite bold too, daring to make a loan prediction."

"Professor Hawkeye, what is a loan prediction?" A young, adorable Elemental Spirit asked curiously in a soft voice.

Hawkeye didn’t answer immediately but instead asked with a smile, "Do you know the ultimate killing move of Astrology?"

"Yes, the Great Prophecy Skill." The young Elemental Spirit replied instantly.

"The Great Prophecy Skill is a loan prediction. It foretells the enemy’s death in advance and then utilizes the disparity in power to turn the prophecy into reality, thus avoiding backlash. This is the Great Prophecy Skill."

Hawkeye smiled and said, "The Great Prophecy Skill is a very powerful skill, but it’s also very dangerous. If the prophecy cannot be fulfilled, the backlash force can easily tear apart the prophet."

"That human Astrologer has made five loan predictions simultaneously. If she fails, it would result in a dual death of body and soul."

"What if she succeeds?" The young Elemental Spirit asked curiously.

"Success is just success," Hawkeye replied nonchalantly.

"Is there no benefit?" The young Elemental Spirit was a little disappointed.

"Not having to repay the loan’s interest, isn’t that a benefit?" Hawkeye was amused by the young Elemental Spirit.

"See, the battle is about to end."

As Hawkeye made the judgment, the battle came to its climax.

Sword Saint Grosso’s mental cultivation was ultimately lacking a bit. Because he was broken by being treated like grilled meat.

If it were Roland, he would have laughed and asked the opponent to watch the cooking temperature.

If it were Sofia, she would have cut down the enemy with a single sword.

Unfortunately, Sword Saint Grosso lacked both Roland's mindset and Sofia's strength. Balanced abilities in all aspects also mean overall mediocrity.

Grosso was eventually killed under the Ginkgo Tree by the joint efforts of Sif and Roland.

The next battle was the showcase for Alina and Sif.

Alina made a loan prediction at the moment Grosso rushed into the Flower Sea, determining Grosso's death.

Before she was backlashed by the prophetic force, Grosso died.

She pressed on, continuing to predict the deaths of the Great Shaman, the Spirit Medium, and the Yoga Prince.

Roland and Sif cooperated perfectly, taking them down one by one.

Roland was the Steel Wall, and Sif was the Piercing Spear. Wherever they went, Alina's prophecies were fulfilled one by one.

As the heart of the Spirit Medium was pierced, the battle in the Flower Sea was declared over.

All members of Sofia's team survived, but Sofia and Lisa were severely injured and lost their combat ability, while the others were also wounded.

All members of Sofia's enemy team were annihilated.

The outcome was lopsided, but the process was perilous.

If Grosso could have cooperated tacitly with others, there was a complete chance to break Roland’s defensive circle.

Once Roland fell, Alina would face backlash from failed prophecies, Lisa would burn herself out, and Sif could only perform the Elf’s swan song under the Ginkgo Tree.

Chapter 560: Slay! (Part 4)

But he endured.

As the only male in the entire team, Roland stood like an iron wall in front, creating a stage for the perfect bloom of the Flower Sea Elves.

The victory was theirs, but also his.

Roland raised his shield and scepter, spat out a mouthful of bloody froth, and teased with a feigned nonchalance:

"We are..."

"Champions!"

Sif picked up where Roland left off, her mind drifting to the stage play of the Elf Empress returning home, and further back to encounters from the beginning of the prose competition.

The battle on the outskirts continued, but that was the bronze division and had nothing to do with them.

Christine and others beckoned the Transcendents from their camp into the Flower Sea, waiting for the results to be tallied.

She didn’t rush out to kill some lucky Transcendents to boost her ranking.

It’s better to leave a line behind, rather than make enemies of the whole world.

No matter how many she kills, she couldn’t secure a spot in the top eleven for others in her camp, so why bother?

The battle on the outskirts raged on, but no one dared to intrude into the Flower Sea.

Both the second and third-ranked super-powerful individuals had perished in the Flower Sea; any small fry coming in was a waste.

When the midnight bell tolled, there were still seventy-five Transcendents on the battlefield.

Transcendents ranked 61-75 fought desperately, seizing their last moments.

Time was up.

The Hawkeye Referee and Judges descended from the sky.

Most of them couldn’t fly independently and could only slowly descend, playing it cool.

Hawkeye raised both hands, smiling as he said, "Everyone, stop."

"Thank you all for letting me witness a spectacular performance."

He read out the names of those ranked 61-75, bowed slightly, his expression solemn, "Your hard-fought battle showed me the unique courage of humanity. I salute you."

The fifteen Transcendents outside the decimation line were initially in despair, but hearing Hawkeye’s words, a flicker of hope ignited within them.

Could it be...

Hawkeye lifted his hands, his voice deepening, "Rest in peace now, I will remember your names and your final performance."

"No!"

"Bastard!"

"***!"

Some wailed, some raged, and others just cursed; at the brink of death, isn’t it permissible to shout a few curses?

Hawkeye observed with clarity the anger, unwillingness, and despair of the disqualified, but he nonetheless rendered his cold verdict.

Elimination!

The bodies of the fifteen disqualified slumped down softly, no miracle unfolded.

Just at rank 60, a Transcendent clutched his still-bleeding wound, gasping heavily, his legs giving out as he knelt to the ground.

He had narrowly eliminated the previous holder of the 60th position, hitting the mark just in time.

He created a miracle, at least it was a miracle to him.

The battle concluded, the awarding began.

Hawkeye first presented the bronze medals.

Those who received medals soon broke through to Tier Six, achieving a transformation. Some were excited, others calm, while some had mixed feelings.

This time they passed by luck, what about the next return day? But their disappointment didn't last long; as long as they were alive, who could say they wouldn't continue to create miracles?

The bronze medals awarded, next came the silver medals.

The five-member team all passed, with Roland prominently ranked second, becoming the overall runner-up beneath Sofia, surpassing the four other contract partners.

After awarding the medals, Hawkeye glanced at Roland, waved his large hand, and said calmly:

"The side effects of this Soul Blood Link are too severe; it's better not to use it."

Roland's complexion changed slightly, swallowing the expletives he was about to utter.

This was his trump card; to be told not to use it, just like that?

Yet, he quickly came to terms.

If not using it, then so be it. The Soul Blood Link, where one death meant a meal for the whole family, was indeed risk-ridden. With the battle over, it was better to let it go.

With the runner-up medal in hand, Roland closed his eyes slightly, an influx of knowledge pouring into his mind. When he opened his eyes again, he skipped Tier Six [Iron Guard], advancing to Tier Five [Vanguard of the March].

The promotions of these two tiers stemmed from the auxiliary profession of Holy Knight.

After all, his shining moments in this Battle of the Flower Sea were all attributed to the Holy Knight profession, with not much relation to his main profession as a Scholar.

The advancement to Vanguard of the March endowed the Holy Knight with offensive capabilities equal to his defense.

Roland's lips curled into a slight smile.

This progression profession isn't bad; in future battles, he wouldn't just be a pure tank.

The final award was for Sofia.

She accepted the gold medal, her eyes flickering open and shut, now a Tier Four [Tyrant].

This progressed profession furrowed her brow.

Compared to these judges who dismissively wiped out the life's efforts of fifteen transcendents between jokes, how was she the one labeled tyrannical?

Just as she intended to protest, a flood of memories surged into her mind, her face turned particularly pale.

She remembered everything. So that's why, no wonder she attained this progression.

Seeing the Judges about to leave, she suddenly spoke up, "Please wait."

Roland looked at Sofia in astonishment, continuously giving her signaling glances, urging her not to act rashly.

But would Sofia listen to reason?

As she faced the few judges who turned around, she softly inquired, "There’s something I’d like to ask, what were you thinking when you killed those fifteen people just now?"

Though her words were gentle, their content was somewhat aggressive.

Hawkeye frowned, coldly saying, "Sofia, are you questioning me?"

He snorted coldly, lightly clenched his fist, causing the air to erupt in a blast, the sound roaring like a volcanic eruption over the entire White Mountain.

"Since you want to know, I can tell you. Crushing a few ants, do you still need to consider the ants’ feelings? Sofia, you are just like them, also an ant."

After finishing his words, Hawkeye stomped his foot with force, causing the whole White Mountain to tremble.

With this earth-shaking stomp, he turned and prepared to leave.

Sofia remained silent, eyes closed. Memories of the past surged in; she saw the backs of three deserters and realized why she was called a tyrant.

She disliked these past events, desiring a complete separation from the past.

Even if the cost was permanently losing the power she once possessed.

The path she walked wasn't necessarily wrong, but it couldn't be tread again. If she retraced her old steps, those three deserters would definitely come back to end her.

She understood them too well.

Sofia instantly made her decision: without destruction, there can be no construction; without bidding farewell to the past, how could there be rebirth?

Seeing Sofia close her eyes, Roland breathed a sigh of relief.

Thankfully, Sofia was arrogant but not foolish. The strength of the Hawkeye Referee was at least at Tier Two if not Tier Three; a conflict with him would mean certain death.

Just when Roland thought Sofia had submitted, she opened her eyes.

Roland's blood froze.

Her eyes were devoid of any human emotion.

Void, cold, as if leading straight into the vortex at the universe's deep end.

Roland's soul trembled.

Hawkeye turned back in horror, witnessing a scene he could never forget.

The midnight sky instantly turned black, the crimson accompanying satellite in the sky also turned dark brown.

In this hopeless darkness, a bright blue sword light shining like sunlight illuminated the night sky.

Bright Blue Fury transformed into a blue glow, disappearing into the air.

The sword’s energy crossed space, gently striking Hawkeye and his companions, as soft as a caress.

However, the moment the sword energy struck, Hawkeye’s life and soul simultaneously shattered.

The Judges, annihilated.

The world returned to darkness, stars twinkling, the accompanying satellite gradually rising into the sky, returning to its original place.

Tides receded, mountains and rivers calmed.

Only a crevice, hundreds of meters deep, stretched from the Peak of White Mountain reaching all the way to the Rodinia Riverbank.

All were stunned.

Is this a power humans can possess?

The bodies of the Judges slumped down softly, the Elemental Heart scattering on the ground, and a crystal-clear Divine Artifact Crystal Ball rolled, spinning towards Sofia.

She tapped it with her toe, grabbing the Crystal Ball in her hand, her sweet voice resounding through the sky.

"I don’t like Annihilation. From now on, the name of the New Era is..."

After a pause, she softly said, "Rebirth."

(End of Volume Three)