

God level 671

Chapter 671: Fierce Battle in Nightmare Space

Da Fei led the Angel Army like a meteor across the Despair Plain, the struggling giant figure of the Thunder Angel appearing before him. Behind the Thunder Angel, a Nightmare pursued relentlessly like a dazzling fireball!

They finally arrived just in time!

Seeing Da Fei's army arrive, the Thunder Angel suddenly sped up as if burning its last energy, tears of excitement streaming down its face, "It's been ten thousand years, and I've finally seen my companions!"

At that moment, the Nightmare's wild laugh resounded through the heavens and earth, "Ten thousand years, and I finally see the birdmen sticking their heads out of their shells! None of you will return alive!"

Da Fei's heart tightened. Could this lone BOSS really be this confident?

Ror shouted, "Warriors, prepare for battle!"

In an instant, the brilliance of various healing skills, fortification skills, strength skills, blue refill techniques, and stamina recovery spells enveloped the entire group, including the Thunder Angel who had come to join them. As the golden light of the spells fell upon the Thunder Angel, it let out a scream of agony, "Pain!"

Why would it hurt?

The Nightmare immediately laughed maniacally and provided the answer, "His body has been corrupted and is no longer your companion!"

The Thunder Angel said in a deep voice, "My faith will not change!"

The Nightmare laughed loudly, "Then let your faith find doom in the nightmare!" With that, its whole body flashed with fire, turning the entire world a fiery red in an instant!

—System Prompt: The Nightmare has activated the Nightmare Space skill. Scene loading, please prepare to respond!

Da Fei's brow jumped in shock. Damn, it's the first time he's seen the system specially load a map for a monster's ultimate move. This Nightmare truly deserved the treatment of a Divine Beast level?

After a moment of waiting, the scene finally changed, and Da Fei, the Thunder Angel, Ror, and the other angels appeared in a scorching fiery red space.

Ror immediately reminded, "Warrior, be careful. This is the Nightmare Space! Everything you encounter here is real!"

Da Fei hurriedly looked around, only to find himself above an endless Lava Sea, with numerous giant poker cards floating in the sky, each with a human face and limbs, armed with weapons. There were also giant chess pieces with human faces, ferocious toy bears, toy rabbits, even books with fangs opening and closing!

This place was a toy loft floating above a sea of fire, and it had a certain feeling of "Alice in Wonderland"! But the key was, where would he set foot? Surely he couldn't just keep floating in the air?

At that moment, the Nightmare's laugh resounded through the space, "Mortal, your battle of dodging hundreds of pursuers was impressive, so I've prepared an equally splendid battlefield for you. Also, I invite you to play cards and chess. May you have fun, hahaha..."

As the Nightmare's laughter filled the air, those floating poker cards, chess pieces, and toys turned hostile and began closing in on Da Fei's army.

Da Fei frowned. With the speed of these monsters plus Little Fei's Petrification Aura, they obviously couldn't catch his angel army. The problem was his army would eventually tire out, and then where would he land, only to fall into a fiery sea and become angel stew? This meant that he had to find the key to breaking this situation before his army exhausted its stamina!

Da Fei confirmed again, "Miss Ror, are you sure these monsters are real and not illusions?"

Ror said in a deep voice, "Yes, they're real. Battle is inevitable. We need to find where the Nightmare's true body is hiding during combat."

Where the true body was hiding? That was like finding a needle in a haystack! Looking at the vast numbers of poker cards flying in the sky, Da Fei suddenly lost confidence in his God-level Reconnaissance Technique. In fact, during the competition, his God-level Reconnaissance Technique hadn't even spotted the sandworms in camouflage!

Just then, the Thunder Angel spoke, "The Nightmare loves to invade children's dreams to collect Nightmare Force, and then it uses that force to materialize such a real space. In some ways, the Nightmare Space is almost a Divine Domain, but in a Divine Domain, a god is the sole master of the rules. In the Nightmare Space though, the rules affect both sides. So, warrior, if we find the rules of this space, we can defeat the Nightmare without having to locate its hiding true body."

Ror exclaimed in surprise, "Is there really such a method? Then what are the rules of the Nightmare Space?"

Da Fei quickly asked, "Same question!"

The Thunder Angel smiled, "The root of nightmares often lies in the fear that parents forcibly instill in children. For example, if you throw your toys around and don't clean your room, then the monsters will come out at night. So the scene before us is actually the children's nightmare. We might as well help the children clean up their room, perhaps by starting to collect a full set of poker cards?"

Collecting poker cards? So that's the principle, just like dispelling the Resentful Spirit's obsession! No wonder he was an Ancient Angel, so experienced! A full poker set with 54 cards, with so many floating around, how hard could collecting them be?

Da Fei immediately said, "Okay, let's start with the poker cards! Let's avoid the toy bears for now."

Now, Da Fei's team rushed toward the first card in sight, a Spade 5. With Da Fei's career in the Great Crusader raising his Strategic Attack to 134, boosting angel damage by 670%, making it a full 7-fold increase, and that's not to mention Da Fei's Master-level Attack Skill Morale Strike further enhancing damage. That's the fundamental difference between an army led by a hero and wild monsters led by none. Even a powerful BOSS without crowd control or AoE skills that bypass defenses couldn't compete with a hero-led army.

Now, the Elite Angels swarmed the poker card, inflicting tons of damage in an instant. Massive red numbers, "-780!" "-730!" sprang forth. The poker card shattered into pieces and fell into the Lava Sea below before having a chance to counterattack.

—System Prompt: You obtained a poker card, "Spade 5"!

The first battle was remarkably easy, but Da Fei was left astonished! Not for anything else, but because of the poker monster's health, it was at least over ten thousand! Meaning any of these monsters could be considered a BOSS with stamina despite its poor combat capacity!

Now Ror grew ever bolder and immediately lunged at the second poker card.

Meanwhile, Da Fei quickly checked the spoils of war.

—Spade 5: Using this card allows you to instantly defeat all 2, 3, 4, and defeat Heart 5, Club 5, Diamond 5 of all suits. Once used, the card disappears.

Da Fei was startled, damn, so he really was invited to play cards, huh? If he didn't want to waste stamina and time, he could use cards to dispatch a monster? So that's how it was!

Da Fei then lifted his head to focus back on the battlefield and was surprised to find that in the short time he examined the spoils, Ror and the others hadn't managed to take down the poker monster yet. Not only that, but the poker card also retaliated with a sword, dealing 100 damage even with Da Fei's massive defense advantage. He realized that it was the Diamond J!

Damn, face cards! So the higher the card, the stronger the power!

At that moment, more playing cards approached! Damn! Retreat, Da Fei had to abandon the Diamond J. Now Da Fei faced an even bigger headache; if he couldn't deal with a Diamond J, what about Qs, Ks, As, and even Jokers?

Oh, right, especially the Jokers, who knew how powerful they could be? Perhaps they couldn't be dealt with using player strength alone and might require poker rules, like collecting four of the same cards for a bomb or a Straight Flush. In any case, that seemed like the most reliable speculation right now. So he needed to focus and look closely, starting with the smaller, easier cards first.

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At this time, in the competition arena, five minutes had already elapsed without any attack or movement, and all 400,000 worldwide spectators were booing! If the contestants could hear the boos, the whole arena would likely be ten times more exciting than a football World Cup, which can only hold tens of thousands of people.

In reality, the issue under discussion by the event committee members at this moment was precisely this: whether the contestants should be allowed to hear the audience's calls like in ordinary matches. With nowhere to express their dissatisfaction, spectators were quite upset. If a paid channel for calls opened, surely some would pay to swear, right? But this would pose a strong test to Battle.net's capabilities.

Now, SAWSAW had handed over the main forces to the Vice Hero, stayed far from the center of the battlefield, and sneaked close to the Lava Lake in the arena map. Then, he made a Demon Transfer's Instant Teleportation onto a rock in the Lava Lake. Then, he waited quietly. With the difficulty raised to S-level and an ultra-long warning range, the BOSS would be drawn out just by waiting.

SAWSAW's undisguised movements, as if already knowing the BOSS was in the lake, drew Fortson's dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, all players were well aware, like an unwritten rule across any forest or lake. All viewers started eagerly awaiting just what kind of hidden BOSS would emerge!

Finally, the Lava Lake surged, a giant lava wave rose high as the sky covering the rock SAWSAW was on, but in a blink, SAWSAW teleported away in advance.

At this moment, audiences worldwide clamored, as they saw a flaming giant horse, its size comparable to a Unicorn, break through the waves, a roaring neigh echoing through the arena space! It was a Hell Horse BOSS!

Now, the Hell Horse BOSS's hooves flamed fiercely as it galloped over the Lava Lake, fiercely chasing after SAWSAW, who was, of course, sprinting in the direction of Da Fei's army. Success in luring the monster!

And at this very moment, killing poker cards in the Nightmare Space, Da Fei seemed to hear a familiar horse neigh. Was it the Nightmare? No, it was from the competition arena! He hurriedly switched to the contest small screen and was dumbfounded!

Damn you!

Chapter 672: The Key to Breaking the Situation in Nightmare Space

For Da Fei at this moment, this Nightmare Boss was undoubtedly the most frustrating boss he had encountered in the game, even more frustrating than the Hydra, because he couldn't find his target. And what's more frustrating than facing one Nightmare? Facing two Nightmares!

What to do? Over there at the competition area, we can only stand firm, believing that no matter how strong a competition area Boss is, it wouldn't be much, maybe it's just a regular Hell Horse Boss?

Without further thought, Da Fei immediately commanded the Earth Element Boss to move out and meet the enemy.

——Earth Altar Guardian: A giant elemental life form of leader-level, Attack 60, Defense 85, Damage 55-115, Life 10500, Magic Resistance 75%, Attack Speed 8, Move Speed 14, Command Value 150, Special Skills: Earth Rebirth, Rock Throwing Attack, Attack Rebound, Master-level Defense Skill, Dazing Strike, Crushing Attack, Horizontal Slash.

——Earth Rebirth: The life form recovers 1% of life every second standing on the ground.

This is the long-lost property of the Earth Element, recovering 1% of health every second, which is 100 points of health per second. With the 150 Defense added from Da Fei's competition account, the

Defense of the Earth Element is close to that of a level 3 city wall, plus the Earth Element's signature skills like Attack Rebound and its inherent Master-level Defense Skill, theoretically this Earth Element could easily face any Boss without pressure.

In any case, just rely on the Earth Element to hold the line. As for that SAWSAW, if he tries to take advantage of the chaos to attack, then sorry, My Human Cannon is going to be unsealed in front of the whole world's people! Elena's over 10,000 lightning damage could blast nearly a thousand levels of 1 and 2 troops in one shot, the American's Horned Demon Governor troops are really nothing compared to two shots from Elena.

And just when the Hell Horse charged in front of Da Fei's troops, the Hell Horse neighed longly, its body flashed with fire, and the entire arena lit up in red!

——System Prompt: Nightmare has activated the Nightmare Space skill, loading scene, please prepare for countermeasures!

Da Fei spewed a mouthful of saliva! Damn, so this competition Boss is really a Nightmare, what the hell, I'm just playing a match, do I need Divine Beasts roaming everywhere?

Then the scene changed, in the competition arena, Da Fei's troops appeared on a giant square with alternating black and white tiles, surrounded by dozens of strange buildings that resembled watchtowers. When Da Fei saw a giant horse head sculpture on one of the tall buildings, he suddenly realized, these were all chess pieces, and this square was a chessboard!

At that moment, a huge horn sounded from the chessboard, those buildings resembling chess pieces moved, Da Fei recognized this move, that's called pawn advancement! Will there also be knights, rooks, and queens moving later? Given the game's nature, does every chess piece have the difficulty of a big Boss? Challenging a Nightmare equates to challenging dozens of Bosses at the same time? Which one was the real body of the Nightmare? The most jumping knight? Or the King?

But now Da Fei, already overwhelmed with dealing with battles on two fronts, couldn't manage that much anymore. Compared to just a match, the Nightmare Space in the Divine Punishment City is not to be failed! Just continue to withstand until the end, not to mention having over three thousand Demon Children, even three thousand pigs standing here for you to kill would fatigue your hands from killing!

So Da Fei continued to defend in place, careless, unconcerned, immovable!

At this moment, looking at the sudden appearance of a huge chessboard in the arena, the 400,000 worldwide audience were shocked and in uproar! A battle scene within another battle scene was obviously eye-opening, the audience, which had been bored for 5 minutes, finally got a huge point of interest.

And just when the audience was intently watching how Da Fei would respond, Da Fei remained immovable like a mountain, seemingly unaware even the scene had changed? Was he really having diarrhea? Or did he fall asleep on auto-pilot, completely unaware of entering the match?

At this moment, harboring the same question of course were also the members of the Supernova Team watching behind the scenes, like Fortson and others.

And as a team manager who wasn't particularly skilled in the game, Igarashi very tactfully posed this question based on his outsider status, which everyone was surely concerned about, "I just saw Da Fei's Earth Element move, otherwise I would have thought he was really AFK, but what exactly does he intend to do? Could it be that hiding inside the chessboard could avoid the adverse effects of lava terrain?"

Fortson chuckled: "Unlikely, the chessboard is still in the competition area, the longer Da Fei stays in the arena, the more disadvantageous the situation becomes for him, and each chess piece here has attack and defense power not weaker than a Nightmare, I am really curious what tactics Da Fei has to break this chess game."

Igarashi exclaimed in shock, "I didn't expect the Nightmare to possess such astounding power, even a Demon King might not be that strong!"

Fortson shook his head and smilingly said, "Nightmare has its weaknesses too, Da Fei still has a chance, as long as he can checkmate the King in this game of chess."

Howell laughed heartily, "Da Fei is impossible to checkmate under the attack of so many chess pieces. Even if he checkmates the King, he wouldn't be a match for SAWSAW outside the chessboard."

Igarashi indeed kept exclaiming in amazement, "I see!"

While aware of its weaknesses, witnessing such power of the Nightmare, Igarashi was somewhat eager to change Japan's development strategy, and fully develop Nightmares. It must be said, the abilities of the Nightmare indeed extended beyond normal troops' special skills range.

So, facing the Nightmare, facing the Chess Army pushing forward like a giant wall, what will Da Fei, the world's number one amateur player, do to break the game? Spectators around the world are watching closely.

How to break the game? As the person involved, Da Fei himself doesn't know, Da Fei can't manage that much, he's too busy collecting poker cards with wide eyes.

And Da Fei finally saw the formation of these flying poker cards clearly, poker cards also team up hand in hand!

For example, a long string of mixed straights "3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,J,Q,K,A" flying over like centipedes from afar! Holy crap, is this playing landlord or what? And according to the game's nature, wouldn't such teamed-up straights share a Life Value? If so, it can't really be resolved by clashing with troops directly, looks like he can only avoid them and start with collecting individual cards. Fortunately, cards below J are very weak, and they get instantly killed on contact without fighting back.

And when a weak Diamond 7 turns into ashes above the Lava Sea, the awaited bomb arrives as expected:

- System Prompt: You have Diamond 7, Club 7, Heart 7, Spade 7, successfully combining into a bomb! The bomb can obliterate any card formation except for the two jokers! The bomb cannot counter a larger bomb.

Da Fei is overjoyed, it really is playing landlord! With the bomb in hand, even jokers are no problem anymore! So what are we waiting for, where's that long straight from before? This is a beneficial trade, four weak cards for 12, a quarter of the deck just like that!

And while Da Fei was looking for the straight, he saw another long string "333, 444, 555"!

Oh snap! Da Fei laughed, this is the "plane" from playing landlord! Just need to shoot down the plane, then he basically gets 3 bombs, with bombs in hand, he can conquer the world!

Da Fei immediately changed his mind, lunged toward this hand-in-hand string of Poker Monsters, and decisively used the bomb, four cards flew out like missiles, exploding in the air like fireworks!

- System Prompt: You used "Bomb" four 7s to exterminate the target card formation, you lost the bomb, obtained card formation "plane," only a higher-numbered plane, or a bomb, jokers can counter it.

- System Prompt: You have Diamond 4, Club 4, Heart 4, Spade 4, successfully combining into a bomb...

Looking at the heap of extra cards, Da Fei laughed loudly! Who would use a plane against a plane, the bomb is the real deal!

What else to say now, go find that big straight! In playing landlord, the role of straights is to speed up playing, and here, no doubt, it's meant to speed up card collection for players!

After finding the knack, Da Fei joyfully darted across the sky, and in less than two minutes, Da Fei continuously bombed and snowballed, collecting 200 cards, besides duplicate suits, could basically make 4 sets of cards, now the critical issue came, among the flying poker cards in the sky, you just can't see the big and small jokers!

Then Da Fei realized where the difficulty of this gameplay lies, where could the big and small jokers be? Hidden in the very center of the poker array? Does it require sweeping through this endless deck of cards? Even if he breaks through, if the jokers appear as a pair, none of his cards would match, so he must dispatch troops to clash directly? Da Fei simply couldn't imagine the strength of a pair of jokers.

At this moment, Thunder Angel spoke: "Warrior, I am very tired now, I don't have much time left."

Da Fei's eyebrows twitched in shock, that's right, caught up in his own fun, he didn't notice that Thunder Angel has been bleeding! And even if Thunder Angel wasn't injured, his troops' Stamina wouldn't be enough to clear so many poker cards, right?

Da Fei hurriedly said, "Now we've collected many cards and still no result, what should I do?"

Thunder Angel looked around the sky and said solemnly, "This is a children's dream, children cannot judge with normal thinking, perhaps, we should change our approach and start with another type of toy."

Change the approach? That's right, broaden the mind and the possibilities are endless, if one path is blocked, try another! Da Fei quickly glanced around, reassessing this sky filled with all sorts of poker, Chess, toy bears, and Magic Books.

Wait, chess? Speaking of which, international Chess is usually kept in a wooden box, right? The competition site's Nightmare Space has a chessboard, why isn't there one here? If cleaning up the room is key to breaking the game, then putting the chess pieces back on the board is the right way to go, there should be a chessboard here, right? And if the chess pieces here are so large, how big should this board be? It should be at least as big as the one at the competition site, meaning maybe the board can serve as a resting point!

Yes, a resting point is needed! This is a Divine Beast Level Nightmare Space, not something that can be solved in minutes, now he must find the chessboard!

With a clear goal in mind, Da Fei quickly saw from Little Fei's perspective something small and black and white floating high in the sky, is that the chessboard? So tiny?

No! Or is it because it's so high and far away, it appears smaller than anything else? If the chessboard is floating that high, hiding so sneaky, it definitely is the key to breaking the game!

Chapter 673: Slaying the Nightmare, the Arena BOSS

In order to verify his thoughts, Da Fei immediately controlled the Blood Eagle to fly stealthily into the sky. The target in his view grew larger and clearer with black and white colors. Indeed, it was a chessboard! A chessboard as big as a soccer field! To Da Fei, this floating chessboard was like an island discovered by a drowning person in the ocean!

Da Fei exclaimed with joy, "We've found a foothold, let's rush up!"

The Thunder Angel said in a deep voice, "I can't fly that high!"

Ror quickly replied, "It's okay, we'll pull you up!"

The group of angels immediately grabbed the broken chains on the Thunder Angel and flew towards the sky. With this pull, the Thunder Angel let out a miserable howl, and blood splattered as fresh as ever!

Da Fei was shocked and tightened his grip. Damn, these chains are connected to his flesh; you white-clad angels better be careful!

As the angels kept themselves busy with pulling the Thunder Angel, they naturally couldn't deal with the poker cards intercepting mid-air. But it was okay, Da Fei had two hundred cards in hand, and dealing cards quickly was as easy as receiving them, and receiving cards fast made dealing quick.

So under the continuous sound of fireworks in the air, amid the Thunder Angel's howls, the Angel Army finally reached the floating chessboard high above.

Watching everyone safely land, Da Fei couldn't help but laugh out loud! There was nothing floating here above the chessboard anymore. This was the high point of the Nightmare Space and, undoubtedly, the key to breaking the game; as long as his troops had a place to rest, the initiative would be in his hands, haha!

The Thunder Angel, now as weak as a dying dog, said breathlessly, "Warrior, finding this place shows you've made significant progress, but I'm done for; I need to rest to recover stamina and stop the bleeding. Please don't crack this space before I regain my strength, or I won't have the power to fly back to the Divine Punishment City."

Da Fei hurriedly said, "You must hold on, just rest well!"

The Thunder Angel said no more and closed his eyes to sleep.

Ror sighed, "It's a pity his body is demonized; otherwise, our Holy Light could heal his wounds. Let's hope he recovers soon so we can break the game faster, or the defense of Divine Punishment City will be much weaker."

Wow, if Divine Punishment City goes bankrupt, will you beautiful ladies follow me forever?

Da Fei quickly said, "Don't worry, everyone take a rest quickly; as long as we have a place to rest, we can slowly and meticulously find the Nightmare's weakness."

Ror nodded, "Okay, Warrior!"

Da Fei let out a long sigh of relief, finally catching his breath. As long as I'm at this high point, I can calmly utilize the God-level Reconnaissance Technique's advanced treasure appraiser advantage to overlook the situation; I refuse to believe I can't find the Nightmare! Anyway, let's see the competition field.

Switching to the competition field, Da Fei found the scene unbearable to watch. Several high chess pieces, as if giant war machines, surrounded his troops layer by layer; hundreds of Demon Children were being flattened into meat patties under the "feet" of these giant pieces like the Six-headed Snake did before!

Damn it, in just two short minutes, the dense army was mostly wiped out, leaving only a small group surrounded. It was just a field BOSS, but the scale of this Nightmare Space couldn't compare to the one in Divine Punishment City, why so brutal? Is my 150-point defense fake? As expected, the butcher has great power, and killing soldiers is easier than slaughtering pigs!

In shock and anger, Da Fei studied the whole board and suddenly realized that all the pieces were up except for a tall, thin piece at the back. This was the Emperor, what we Chinese players call General, right? It was so timid and clearly not the Nightmare! It's so obvious!

That is to say, now all the pieces have come to encircle me, making the Emperor the lone Commander. If not now, when is the time to break through and behead it? The problem is, I'm surrounded inside and out like an iron bucket, how can I break out?

This question not only bothered Da Fei, but all the watching players around the world wanted to know. Indeed, as Fortson and his group observed from behind the scenes, Da Fei seemed destined to lose; however, his calm demeanor of "letting you surround" and "letting you kill" made them uneasy. As a player who killed the S-level difficulty Six-headed Snake, would he sit by and wait for death like this?

At this moment, the Hell Captain Howell shook his head and sighed, "The intelligent weakness of this Nightmare is too obvious, every ordinary player watching knows the final Emperor is the key. Besides, right from the start, those fast-acting Queens, Rooks, and Bishops launched an attack. Now these fast pieces are encircled by slowly arriving pawns, unable to move, and if Da Fei breaks through, the Emperor will have no fast-piece protector."

Fortson frowned, "No choice, the field BOSS can't connect to intelligent brains, the intelligence level can only reach such a degree."

George VIII laughed heartily, "Does Mr. Howell think this is Da Fei's pre-planned bait tactic? Then how could Da Fei break out from this multitude of barriers, squeeze out from between two pieces?"

Just then, the scene changed; Da Fei's Elf Ranger Female Hero held a weapon that flashed with Demon Light, and a large group of Demon Children suddenly appeared outside the pieces' encircling circle! This group immediately caught the attention of the surrounding pieces, which then moved, creating a small gap in the once iron-clad encirclement!

At this moment, the global audience was in an uproar! Da Fei finally made his move!

At this instant, the Supernova Team meeting room was utterly stunned: "Illusion Army! Absolutely an illusion army under God-level Magic, capable of placing illusions anywhere on the battlefield! Capable of materializing illusions to achieve realistic effects to deceive NPCs effectively!"

Watching the pieces drawn away by illusions, George VIII was even more shocked, "This was indeed his bait tactic! He had a strategy from the start, this Chinese man is terrifyingly cunning and calm!"

Fortson's face darkened, "I thought this Chinese won due to luck and decent awareness, but now it seems I've underestimated him!"

Igarashi lamented bitterly, "So this BOSS is dangerous again? Da Fei might get good stuff again?"

Fortson waved his hand gently, "Rest assured, the Nightmare's drops are too advanced and targeted, Da Fei wouldn't find them useful even if he gets them."

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Now, Da Fei's remaining troops charged like a torrent breaking through a dam, led by the Unicorn, towards the lonely Emperor standing far on the chessboard, who was as immobile as a pawn. With nowhere to escape, even if it defended like a level 10 city wall, against Da Fei's strong Attack and tons of damage output, everything was a joke, not to mention Da Fei also had the Human Cannon!

The critical point was the support from other pawns. But no worries, Da Fei continued to use the Demon Child as cannon fodder!

At this moment, the whole world audience was stunned by what took place before them!

The Emperor was surrounded by Da Fei's breakout army, with countless single and double and triple damage figures filling the screen; nobody knew how much damage the Emperor took in that instant, only that the other pieces remained far behind in a mass, too late to aid; the Emperor's defeat was already sealed!

At this moment, all players' previous speculations, distrust, and mockery were answered by Da Fei. Da Fei made a decisive counterattack that reversed the situation in an instant! What an astonishing level of judgement, even professional players may not have such calmness and poise, Da Fei truly deserved the title of the world's strongest amateur player!

Finally, under the shocked eyes of all global players, the towering Emperor fell with a crash!

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—System Prompt: You successfully killed the hidden BOSS in Lava Hell, the Nightmare Beast, earning the competition reward: S-level strategic treasure "Nightmare Horn," and obtained "Chess." You earned +10

units of Refined Crystal and +30 units of Refined Crystal Sulfur. Competition rewards will be delivered to your server after the competition ends.

—Nightmare Horn: S-level strategic treasure, accessory, enemy Morale -1, Luck -1. Using the horn will summon a powerful Nightmare Beast to fight for you. Note: Can only summon Nightmare Beasts in special scenes like Nightmare Space, Jade Dream, Wine God Mysterious Realm, and Dream Mystery Realm.

—Chess: Artistic treasure, toy. Ingeniously crafted artistic piece and toy. A great gift, can be sold for a good price at auctions or the black market.

—System Prompt: You obtained the arena achievement "Hell Strider," gaining a troop enhancement in Lava Hell arena: "Recover 1 HP and 1 Stamina every 10 seconds."

Chapter 674: Annihilation of SAWSAW

When the Emperor Chess Piece couldn't withstand the onslaught of Da Fei's Army for 10 seconds, Da Fei burst into laughter!

If it were just a regular Hell Horse BOSS, at least there would be a Flame Shield and Fear Aura Skill. This kind of setup wouldn't work with Low-level Soldiers even if you tried. The piece transformed into something with high attack and defense attributes but nothing else; if all the pieces hadn't turned to support Da Fei, he might have doubted whether this was really the core. Ultimately, a competition BOSS is just a competition BOSS, or rather, the weaknesses of the Nightmare are just that weak.

With the fall of the Emperor, the entire guild channel erupted: "Brother Fei, you really scared us!"

"Brother Fei counterattacks with precision!"

"Wondering what kind of gear Brother Fei will get from killing such a bizarre BOSS?"

"Brother Fei, be careful, the Americans have you surrounded outside the chessboard!"

"The Americans are obviously going to use Horned Demon self-detonation, be careful, Brother Fei!"

Da Fei was eagerly watching the BOSS drops when he suddenly remembered the Americans outside! Damn, I only have less than six hundred soldiers left. If it comes down to a head-to-head fight, I can't win! No choice but to have the Human Cannon, Elena, take action. I thought no player could force me to act at this stage!

You're forcing my hand, and when I get serious, even I get scared!

Now the chessboard began to blur and disappear. With a change of scenes, Da Fei returned to hell, and at that moment, before he could see the surroundings clearly, a massive blaze came rushing toward his face!

Scene change ambush! Usually used to ambush players who have just exited an instance or Teleportation Gate, who often haven't had time to see their surroundings yet. The attack is timed perfectly for a sneak attack, leaving no room to counter. This is a very old and effective ambush method, timeless even in today's high-level gameplay.

However, no matter how extraordinary a player's reaction speed is, they can't compete with a computer! So Da Fei, prepared in advance, had already set Elena to "automated combat"!

So the moment the fire rushed forward, Elena's Fireball Technique was also unleashed!

—System Prompt: Your Vice Hero Elena casts "Enhanced Fireball Skill" on SAWSAW's army!

Indeed, the Lava Hell terrain provides a certain boost to the casting speed and power of Flame magic. In this health-draining, stamina-draining lava environment, the bonus to Flame magic is undoubtedly the strongest. Therefore, the computer-controlled Elena had no hesitation in using Flame magic to counterattack.

At this crucial moment, Da Fei held nothing back, immediately activating "Lucky Hand," and a rainbow light ascended! Not for any other reason than to have the Unicorn's strategic Divine Skill, "Anti-Magic Barrier," block a couple of spells. The probability of Anti-Magic Barrier activating is only 15%, but Da Fei's God-level Luck Skill adds another 10%, making a considerable chance.

—Boom boom boom!!! SAWSAW, along with six simultaneous Fireball Techniques from his vice heroes, instantly engulfed Da Fei's forces in a sea of fire. Simultaneously, the "bang bang bang bang" sound of the Horned Demons' self-detonation echoed around the remnants of Da Fei's army!

—System Prompt: Your "Hellhound" units have been annihilated by Hell Fireball Technique!

—System Prompt: The Unicorn's "Anti-Magic Barrier" has taken effect, avoiding a magic attack!

—System Prompt: Your "Secret Archer" units have been annihilated by Hell Fireball Technique!

—System Prompt: The Unicorn's "Anti-Magic Barrier" has taken effect, avoiding a magic attack!

In that instant, the entire stadium was engulfed in great flames! Such a spectacular Fireball Technique and thousands of self-detonations left audiences worldwide unable to refrain from exclaiming loudly in their seats! At this moment, the people in the Supernova Command Center regarded this battle as the key to victory—6 main and vice heroes casting Fireball Techniques along with the charge and self-detonation of 2000 Horned Demons. How could Da Fei's remaining forces hold out?

In the fleeting moment of the blazing flames blooming, the stadium system prompt sounded!

—Stadium Information: Congratulations! The China Region player "Da Fei" successfully defeated North America's United States player "SAWSAW," achieving victory in the competition!

The world erupted again after a brief silence! Da Fei! The victor was him; it seemed only natural, but the victory's process was unbelievable! What on earth happened in that sea of flames? How did Da Fei achieve victory?

At this moment, in the video conference room of the Supernova Command Center, everyone's jaws dropped in shock!

Igarashi exclaimed, "What on earth just happened? I think I saw Da Fei's blonde female hero also cast a Fireball Technique?"

George VIII coughed and said, "How come Da Fei's meager forces could withstand SAWSAW's concentrated and ferocious firepower attack?"

Howell immediately said, "It's the Unicorn's Anti-Magic Barrier. The barrier's glow flashed twice, blocking two fireballs for Da Fei!"

Igarashi said in astonishment, "If I remember correctly, isn't the chance of Anti-Magic Barrier pretty low, only 15%?"

Howell laughed, "Who knows, maybe the boss's strength is different."

SAWSAW's failure was indeed not good news, so as the Hell Captain, Howell naturally emphasized the role of the Unicorn to avoid responsibility.

Actually, the influence of the Unicorn was also considered in SAWSAW's calculations. SAWSAW didn't expect one round of concentrated fire to kill Da Fei, but it should at least wipe out Da Fei's covering forces. Then SAWSAW could play to his Great Demon heritage, instantly teleporting to Da Fei and decapitating him—that would be the true final battle!

Unexpectedly, SAWSAW was directly killed by Da Fei's fireball, without even a chance to reach the final battle. If any fault lay, it was in the decision to have those 2000 Horned Demons self-detonate, leaving no cannon fodder to absorb magic damage, thus being instantly killed by the Human Cannon's Fireball Technique.

At this moment, Fortson said darkly, "SAWSAW performed excellently; it's just that Da Fei is too strong. Our technical department will collect and analyze this match's data. I will share the data with all friends here. I believe that once everyone further understands Da Fei's strength, we can feel a greater sense of urgency. This is the solid foundation of our alliance. Let's struggle together!"

Igarashi immediately supported, "We've Japan Region will follow in the Captain's footsteps!"

George VIII sighed, "It seems we need to accelerate our high-end developments. I'll reach out to Lance right away."

At this time, Da Fei's guild channel was filled with cheers and celebrations.

Da Fei looked at his almost depleted health and sparse troops, wiping off a cold sweat that had just trickled down his forehead. It had to be said, the opponent's strategy of having all vice heroes cast Fireball was extremely sneaky. If it weren't for the Unicorn's special skill activation, if it weren't for Elena's more powerful fire, I would have nearly been finished by the Americans!

Ultimately, I'm not actually invincible. This world is full of experts, not to mention players like SAWSAW, who became famous early with significant early advantages.

Suddenly, a sense of crisis welled up in Da Fei's heart. Overall, he wasn't high-end enough.

Leaving the arena, the fifth competition match would be at 8 PM. With plenty of time, he had to quickly complete the Nightmare Space. The rewards for killing a BOSS in the arena also arrived in his mailbox as promised.

Da Fei eagerly took out the equipment for a look and immediately smiled!

—Nightmare Horn: S-grade strategic treasure, accessory, enemy morale -1, luck -1. Using the horn will summon a powerful Nightmare Beast to fight for you. Note: it can only summon in special scenes like Nightmare Space, Jade Dream, God of Wine Mysterious Realm, and Dream Mystery Realm.

Goodness! It's just like offering a pillow when you're sleepy or toilet paper when you need it; I'm right in the middle of the Nightmare Space now! I'll get to see how this Nightmare fights for me.

As for the other chess-like box, Da Fei was puzzled. This was the first time Da Fei had seen a BOSS drop a treasure meant for auction gifts, or not the first time—he had picked up some antiques from the Vortex Sea Demon's great mouth!

In general, things like this are usually used to give to high-level NPCs to increase friendliness in the future. I'll gift it when I meet a high-level beauty.

Chapter 675: Cultivating a Nightmare Monster

Certain Garden Villa.

Tang Yan took off her gaming helmet, shook her long hair, and let out a long sigh of relief. Yang Qian, who was watching the battle, laughed and said, "Congratulations to the young miss on your successful promotion!"

Tang Yan smiled bitterly, "So tiring. Running around nearly a hundred times in a five-minute battle, it seems my casual tactics have reached their end."

Yang Qian chuckled, "It's about time to recruit some Vice Heroes. The forums are exploding—now it's the era of high firepower Mage Vice Heroes. You're going to be OUT."

Tang Yan responded, "Oh? All I heard was your shouting just now. What, did you see Da Fei's secret hero in action?"

Yang Qian shook her head seriously, "It's not just about Vice Heroes. You ran to exhaustion, but Da Fei was AFK for a few minutes at the start of the match and only took one action that turned the tide of battle. It was truly masterful, beyond professional level. It's best you don't watch the video; it might only upset you."

Tang Yan said with a touch of irritation, "Why would I be upset? But you're right, it's time to find some Vice Heroes. It's just a pity that the typical tavern heroes aren't appealing."

Yang Qian laughed, "Isn't that simple? We could just join Da Fei's Guild and ask him how he got his heroes, right?"

Tang Yan smiled, "So you really want to join Da Fei's Guild that much?"

Yang Qian chuckled, shaking her head, "I just want to see what this world's most advanced guild, as touted by our 'tall, poor, and handsome' classmate, is like, and by the way, see how well he's doing in the guild."

Tang Yan laughed, "Alright, if you want to look, go ahead. I support you."

Yang Qian grinned, "Let's go together!"

Tang Yan laughed out loud, "I've been betrayed by Deng Jiayi already, and now I'm a big-name person in the China Region. It's not convenient for me to just join any guild."

Yang Qian looked at her scornfully and then suddenly exclaimed, "Speaking of which, I'm a celebrity too, huh? It might be a bit inconvenient. Maybe they should earnestly invite me to join using the three visits to the thatched cottage strategy? Right, tomorrow I'll find our 'tall, poor, and handsome' classmate and have him beg for me to join the guild. Wahaha!"

Tang Yan could only shake her head and laugh, "What kind of people are these..."

...

Meanwhile, Da Fei impatiently sent away the few big shots and beauties congratulating him on his friends list and was waiting for his Angels' Stamina and Mana to recover while figuring out how to use the Nightmare Horn.

It seemed that the usage conditions for this Nightmare Horn were quite restrictive; a regular player wouldn't encounter things like Nightmare Spaces or the Wine God Mysterious Realm. Basically, it could only be used as an accessory to reduce the opponent's Morale by one point. However, an accessory that could reduce Morale by one was indeed rather impressive. After all, a common C-grade accessory like the Courage Medal increased Morale by one, and the Clover increased luck by one.

And as per the game's nature, the equipment with stricter usage restrictions tended to be more powerful. Without a doubt, the Nightmare, which could only appear in Nightmare Spaces, must have a home field advantage unmatched by any other type of unit.

Finally, when the Angels' Mana and Stamina were fully restored, Da Fei eagerly and impatiently used the horn.

—System Prompt: You have used the Nightmare Horn to summon a Nightmare. You are in a Nightmare Space, and the summoning is successful!

With a dull horn sound, a jet of pitch-black smoke surged out of the horn and quickly coalesced into the shape of a black horse engulfed in billowing smoke. Is this the Nightmare?

Just then, the Nightmare spoke, "I have awakened from nightmares to heed my master's call!"

It can talk? This equipment is truly high-end. Even better! Da Fei hurriedly asked, "What abilities do you have? How do you fight?"

Nightmare replied, "My ability is possession and devouring. I can possess the bodies of some monsters within the Nightmare Space to battle, and those monsters I kill will have their power devoured by me. Please, Master, select a target for me to possess."

Possessing the body of a monster? I see! Based on the previous battle scene and Ror's introduction of Nightmare, it seems that Nightmare can only enter the Nightmare Space as a spiritual entity, and as a spiritual entity, it either has to transform or possess one of the monsters in the Nightmare Space. Indeed, this Nightmare is highly specific in this scenario.

So, Da Fei floated high above the Nightmare Space, looking down at the teeming masses on the chessboard below, searching for the most suitable prey. Soon, a fearsome, gigantic Fuzzy Bear toy caught Da Fei's eye. Good, that one will do.

Nightmare muttered, "That won't work, the target is too powerful. I need to devour enough nightmare power before I can possess it."

Da Fei was taken aback! Dammit, do I really need to level up this Nightmare? Players are desperately trying to break out of the Nightmare Space, who has time to level it up?

But with the floating chessboard base under my feet, and waiting for the Thunder Angel to wake up, I actually do have the time to do this tedious task. So, if the Nightmare is strong enough, even the king card that I think is unbeatable could be possessed? Fine, let's train it.

Da Fei then selected several targets to possess, all of which were rejected by Nightmare!

Damn it, not even various little bears or kittens can be possessed, and you can't even possess the weakest pawn in a chess game, how weak are you exactly?

Out of impatience, Da Fei pointed to one of the seemingly weakest Diamond 3 from the sky-full of poker cards, "Will this one do?"

This time, Nightmare didn't disappoint Da Fei, "No problem! I need to get closer!"

Well then, no need to say more, let's fight! Da Fei waved his hand grandly and led the Angel Army swooping down. Then, Nightmare turned into black mist and pounced on that Diamond 3, and in that instant, the poker card with the red dot on the display turned green.

— System Prompt: Nightmare Poker Diamond 3 has joined your troops!

Now, Da Fei's Angel Army had a new member, a Poker Monster Diamond 3 wielding a long spear!

Da Fei couldn't help laughing and hurriedly checked the attributes of this Poker Monster:

— Nightmare Poker Diamond 3: Nightmare Creature, Attack 30, Defense 30, Damage 50, Attack Speed 8, Health 5000, Command Value 0, Special Skill: Flying Creature, Poker Army.

Da Fei's jaw dropped in astonishment, who said that Diamond 3 was weak? These attack and defense stats are exactly that of a regular Level 7 Angel, but the health points have more than tenfold, a real BOSS! It appears weak precisely because it's facing an army of Elite Angels led by Da Fei who is armed with powerful Divine Artifacts!

Nightmare! This kind of monster truly deserves to be something that can only appear in nightmares, and stronger monsters are everywhere, this is the strength of Divine Beast Level Nightmare! With this in mind, it's even more necessary to plan for the long term and not rush things. Now that Diamond 3 has five thousand health, its survivability is truly perverse, which makes training it even more reassuring.

Now, Da Fei's Angel Army continued to fight and collect poker cards, and during the battle, Diamond 3 also grew rapidly, leveling up to Club 3, Heart 3, Spade 3, and then to Diamond 4!

So this is the growth of Nightmare? Is it similar to leveling up a Vice Hero in an instance? Alright, clean and straightforward, not frustrating. For a moment, Da Fei fought even more spiritedly and tirelessly.

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Time passed by minute by minute, the Angel Army's Stamina was nearly depleted, they needed to rest. By now, Da Fei had collected a total of 1000 poker cards, enough to form 20 full sets of poker cards, but the sky-full of poker remained endless, still no sign of the kings!

Da Fei's mood began to grow irritable; could it be that the Divine Beast turned king card is hiding clipped in some corner book? Fortunately, the consolation is that Nightmare is becoming more powerful in battle, now rapidly growing into a Spade 10 with over ten thousand health, just a step away from becoming a face card.

Seeing this, Da Fei's heart skipped a beat; could it be that my Nightmare will ultimately grow into the king card? But he quickly dismissed this unreliable thought; after all, the Nightmare Horn was acquired by accident through a match and was not part of the factor to break the situation.

So where exactly is the pair of kings? It seems Thunder Angel was right, it's time to change direction.

That's right, I was just leveling up Nightmare before, this time the target should be—At this moment, Da Fei saw quite a few books flying in the sky, and his heart skipped a beat again. Could it be that the kings really are being used as bookmarks, clamped inside the books?

Chapter 676: Angel Hero Elda

Unwarranted speculations are clearly not the style of an expert. While his forces took another rest, Da Fei decided to have a detailed chat with this Poker Nightmare to understand more about the Nightmare Space. After all, compared to the somewhat clueless Thunder Angel and Ror, the Nightmare was the local specialist.

Da Fei asked, "How long does the existence of the Nightmare Space last? What's the key to breaking out of it?"

Poker Nightmare replied, "The Nightmare Space has always existed. It's essentially no different from the various spaces in the world, but usually, only Nightmares can open the gateway to it. If the master is forcefully transported into the Nightmare Space by a powerful Nightmare, one cannot leave unless the Nightmare is defeated or the Source of Nightmare is resolved. Of course, death is also a way out."

Da Fei's eyebrows twitched. Who would have thought, a creature summoned from a mere accessory knew so much! If it's this level of equipment, it might well surpass the category of S-class items, and it wouldn't be an exaggeration to call it a Divine Artifact if not for its narrow use scope.

Da Fei hastily asked, "What is the Source of Nightmare?"

Poker Nightmare continued, "The Source of Nightmare is the wellspring that continuously provides power to the Nightmare Space. It's typically the nightmares of humans with strong spiritual power. Some persistently experience the same nightmare; these individuals are usually the targets of Nightmares, the sources of Nightmares. Nightmares trap a part of their souls forever within the Nightmare Space. Every item the master sees in the space could be a vessel imprisoning a soul, and the master could try to rescue these trapped souls."

— System Prompt: You have obtained information about the Nightmare Space.

Suddenly, Da Fei had an epiphany! If players don't know the situation and simply kill monsters indiscriminately—okay, even now that the situation is understood, it seems the only option is still to kill indiscriminately, but theoretical-guided killing and blind killing are completely different moods, aren't they?

Da Fei then asked, "Then, how long have you existed?"

Nightmare answered, "As long as I am not defeated, or the master doesn't leave, I will continue to exist in the Nightmare Space, growing stronger and stronger."

So that's how it is!

Now Da Fei knew exactly what to do — keep killing. The difference now was that before obtaining the Nightmare Horn, killing countless creatures didn't yield a single point of experience. But now, it's different. Now Da Fei's own Nightmare kept growing and could very likely become the key to breaking the situation!

This Nightmare Horn really was a Divine Artifact within the Nightmare Space! What a gem he found in this game! And to think that in just a match, defeating a boss dropped such impressive equipment. Last game, it was an incredibly powerful Sandworm Mining Car. Who knows what other professional experts would get after defeating bosses? What kind of power would the high-end equipment in the hands of the experts unleash?

And once again thinking about how the recent match almost turned sour because of SAWSAW, Da Fei felt his leading advantage slipping away, and a sense of urgency gripped his heart.

In any case, as soon as the Angel state was restored, Da Fei couldn't wait to dive back into slaying poker cards! Yes, continue to level up my Nightmare; mwahahaha!

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In the British Royal Ark Team Command Center, Prince George, who had just finished a video conference, was feeling heavy-hearted.

For the Royal Ark Team, ever since the game's launch when Lancelot successfully took up Noah's Ark's Epic Quest based on the public test strategies, the team had laid the foundation for a high-end approach. From repairing Noah's Ark to progressing into the Crusader in the Divine Punishment City, and recruiting high-level Angel Sailors for the Ark, the team's strategy was high stakes from the onset.

George never doubted the European, even the world lead of the Royal Ark Team, not even shaken by Da Fei owning a large ship from the start. On the contrary, George used players like Da Fei as motivation for his team members.

But since Da Fei defeated Bedville, George's confidence wavered. The past game might have been chaotic, but anyone with eyes could tell that Da Fei's Mage had firepower surpassing the entire

SAWSAW group of Mages. That was the secret weapon with which Da Fei defeated Bedivere last game and coincidentally blew up the Six-headed Snake.

Da Fei, whether it's his heroes, BOSS troops, battleships, or Divine Artifacts, is just too advanced and high-end. Facing Da Fei's snowballing growth, Prince George is becoming increasingly anxious, and is starting to take Fortson's warning about strengthening alliances seriously.

But the problem now can't be solved by simply increasing online time. How should he motivate the team members? But the coach is already at his wits' end, the only thing left to rely on is the players' individual abilities. So at this time, George quietly came up behind Lancelot to check on his public relations progress.

Church City, Beinlun Castle, a fortress city located on the edge of high mountains and desert. Compared to the barren desert outside where not even birds would lay eggs, the streets inside the fortress were just as desolate and dull. The city exists not because of trade routes or solely as a military stronghold, but because of the believers' faith. This was once the place where the Saint Heir preached for a hundred days. Even so, this small city, not much larger than a village, was not a place ordinary players could reach.

At this time, Lancelot was in the dilapidated bar of the city, playing cards and betting drinks with a barmaid named Elda. An internationally renowned Card Master invited by the e-sports team was giving instructions to Lancelot through a chat window on how to play his cards.

Lancelot's strategy target was this plain-looking barmaid with freckles! Her true identity was an Angel punished to fall to the mortal realm, an Angel Hero with a hidden Hero Aura!

The discovery of her was purely accidental during the public beta. One player from the public beta team went back to the tavern to restock and unexpectedly found that the usual hollering barmaid claimed that today was her weekly day off and invited him to play cards. He also discovered that the barmaid's card skills were frighteningly good, instantly attracting the team's attention.

So the team specifically invited an international Card Master to play against her, winning a few games and getting her tipsy with a few glasses of beer, and when she was drunk, she mentioned that she would soon be going to the place of exile for a position.

The team instantly found a breakthrough. The place of exile is the Red Name Village! And isn't the NPC serving in the Red Name Village a One-Winged Angel? Does this mean her identity is that of an Angel?

After digging deeper into the weekly card games, the team finally uncovered her Angel Hero identity. It was an ultra high-end status. Recruiting her was far more difficult than recruiting those so-called Epic Heroes of mortals. Therefore, even by the end of the public beta, the British Royal Ark Team was unable to recruit her.

But no matter, the way to increase favorability had been mastered by the Royal Ark Team, which was to win at cards every time. Angels do not follow mortals who lack wisdom. And with her card skills, it was indeed not something ordinary people could best. Even international Card Masters could barely maintain a 50% win rate. So the Royal Ark Team didn't worry about general gaming experts coming to steal her away.

As long as the card-playing skills were solid, then it would be time to demonstrate the player's valor. And the valor that ordinary mortals boast of is not something an Angel would appreciate or get involved with. That's why places like Divine Punishment City, a high-end and intense Divine War battlefield, became very important. Now, the only problem was that Lancelot's bravery is still not enough. But no matter, it's best to take care of the favorability work first.

At that moment, under the guidance of the Card Master, Lancelot stylishly played his final card and said with a faint smile, "Miss Elda, I've won again!"

Elda responded with an indifferent smile, "Wow, impressive, it's my round then!"

And right as Elda was raising her glass, Lancelot firmly grasped her wrist and spoke earnestly, "Miss Elda, stop drinking. You can't keep falling like this. Come with me. You know my race. We are kin. Let's head to Divine Punishment City to build our Merit, that's where you can atone for your past!"

At that moment, Prince George clenched his fists tightly. As long as these words were spoken, it would trigger the Angel recruitment quest. Once Elda's recruitment quest was initiated, it would come with a time limit. If the player failed to meet her requirements, she would leave and disappear, most likely to the legendary Red Name Village.

Elda was startled, then smiled lightly, "Alright, I've been bored staying here for a long time. I can go play with you."

"Oh yeah! Come On! Baby!" Cheers erupted in the entire command center of the team!

Prince George also let out a big sigh of relief, "The first step is successful, we have to secure the next steps!"

"Yes Sir!!!"

Chapter 677: Hero Poker

Nightmare Space, Da Fei's Angel Army was engaging in fierce combat amidst a pile of poker cards, with Da Fei's explosive fireworks continuously blooming in the sky.

Despite still not encountering the Little and Big Wang, nor obtaining anything beyond poker cards, seeing his own Nightmare evolve and level up into a Diamond A with over thirty thousand health points gave Da Fei immense peace of mind.

Maybe if he couldn't break this game, he could still upgrade his Nightmare to a Little or Big Wang and break the game? He refused to believe that he couldn't collect a complete deck of cards! He had been entangled in this Divine Beast game for nearly an hour. He wasn't asking for much; since S-class equipment were the spoils of war in competition games, let this game drop a Divine Artifact then, wahahaha!

Just when Da Fei was in the heat of excitement, his Nightmare spoke, "Master, a massive force is about to enter the Nightmare Space, please be cautious in dealing with it."

Da Fei, surprised, said: "Where is this force coming from?"

The Nightmare answered: "Of course, it's from the children who have started to have nightmares again while sleeping. This is the most dangerous time, but it's also the easiest to find the Source of Nightmare."

So that was it! Da Fei instantly understood; he'd been fighting here for nearly an hour, and half a day had passed in the game, meaning it was the time when NPCs would go to sleep at night. To be safe, Da Fei immediately ordered the troops back to the chessboard to rest and recuperate, observing the unusual changes in the space from an elevated position.

Soon, a whirlwind swept through the space, and the fiery red space suddenly darkened. The chessboard beneath Da Fei's feet also shook violently, and the floating movement speed increased, or to be precise, the flight speed of the various toy poker cards floating in the entire space all increased.

And it was at this moment that a dazzling red dot suddenly appeared on Da Fei's radar. Da Fei looked closely and was shocked to his core!

There it was, the ace he had been searching so desperately for! What shocked Da Fei was that this flashy Poker had a ring of aura wrapped around its body, a Hero Aura?! My goodness, even a Poker can become a Hero; has this bloody thing cultivated into a demon?

Da Fei hastily asked the Nightmare, "How can this Poker be a Hero?"

The Nightmare replied somberly, "Because this card has trapped a part of a hero's soul within it, this card is a Source of Nightmare. If you defeat it, I believe you'll achieve a major breakthrough."

Ror, surprised, said: "A part of the trapped soul is still a hero, so just how powerful is the hero who is having this dream?"

The Nightmare responded gravely, "I do not know, but it's a reasonable fact that the spiritual power of a powerful hero can sustain such a vast Nightmare Space."

Da Fei felt a tightness in his heart upon hearing this. After all, whether it was the Skeleton Captain Renior or Deirdre's bargain teacher Siriel, they had lost their hero status when severely injured, which could simply be understood as being due to soul energy damage. And now, this mere "part" of a soul trapped in a dream had directly reached a heroic state that even Renior's ghost form couldn't achieve; this hero must be extraordinarily powerful.

What Da Fei feared the most was battling against unknown NPC heroes. A hero's strength is not something ordinary bosses can compare with. No matter how strong a boss's attribute skills are, they're still just a commander with no troops. While a hero possesses the power to turn decay into miraculous strength, allowing weak Second-level Soldiers to have their combat power increased by several times or even more than ten times, not to mention that the forces of this Poker Hero were not weaklings but Poker Monsters with thousands of health points!

This meant that the hero's health points were also at least in the tens of thousands! This way, the only shortcoming of a hero compared to a boss monster, being their health points, was completely overcome!

Da Fei hurriedly asked, "Now that the opponent's hero has appeared, can we still use cards to deal with their forces?"

The Nightmare replied, "The hero can strengthen his forces, but it is not enough to modify the rules of Nightmare Space; so, Master, you can still use your cards against them."

So that's how it is. As long as the rules don't change, my "Fight the Landlord" bombs can still blast them away; after all, these cards weren't relying on their forces to hack and slash when they weren't led by a hero. Well then, no more Mr. Nice Guy, after killing for more than an hour, I've amassed two thousand cards, nearly two hundred decks of bombs; I refuse to believe I can't take them down.

Da Fei confirmed there were no other formidable enemies below and decisively launched his attack!

As Da Fei swooped down, the ace excitedly let out a shrill scream, "Finally, someone to play with William!"

In an instant, a skyful of poker cards, like a whirlwind, swooped down towards Da Fei, their speed incomparable to that of a moment before. Holy crap, Da Fei was scared pissless in an instant!

Without time to think, the first thing to do was to activate the Blood Eagle Petrification Aura to slow them down!

But even with the enemy slowed down, the dense flurry of cards still made Da Fei's eyes swim, unable to make out what hands were coming. Perhaps this level of game conflict has exceeded the coping limit of Da Fei, this amateur player. Now the only thing Da Fei could do was to recklessly throw bombs!

— System Prompt: You have successfully obliterated the target hand by using "Bomb" with four 5s. You lost the bomb!

— System Prompt: You have successfully obliterated the target hand by using "Bomb" with four 9s. You lost the bomb!

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Each bomb dropped was like a firework bursting in the sky. Amidst Da Fei's bombardment, the sky seemed to celebrate like a festival, with the booming sounds echoing throughout the Nightmare Space! The bombing continued for a full minute; Da Fei was so thrilled that he couldn't stop!

And just when Da Fei was having a blast, he suddenly found his ammunition was running out. Yes, his bombs were launched but failed to collect the fallen cards! The profitable trade of swapping bombs for planes did not happen again!

Da Fei was startled. Is this the hero's special skill? No, this is a common setup for heroes! Of course, you must completely defeat the enemy to gain the spoils of war; that's the major difference from fighting wild monsters. This means that for every hand played, one less is left; this battle is about ammunition!

Realizing this, Da Fei broke into a cold sweat on the spot. With the current speed of these poker cards, even with the Blood Eagle Petrification, it was hard to ensure that his troops could escape, not to mention whether these pokers would chase to the death. In short, once out of ammunition, there would be no choice but to slug it out with these poker cards with tens of thousands of HP, even without a hero leading them, they couldn't be easily felled, let alone now with a hero at their helm!

Fortunately, after Da Fei's intensive bombardment, the poker horde in the sky thinned out a bit, and the wind wasn't as fierce as when the battle started. With the aid of Petrification Slowdown, Da Fei could finally see clearly.

Da Fei couldn't help but breathe a sigh of relief. After all, his preparation work with ample ammunition was excellent! The previously nearly limitless number of poker cards had decreased, indicating that the rules of the game had indeed changed, i.e., when a hero appeared, their numbers became limited. Of course, they had to be limited; otherwise, players couldn't cope.

In any case, he couldn't throw bombs around anymore. He had to make sure to capture the big ones and let go of the small ones, meaning blasting all the long straights and plans, and let his Angel Army hard resist those small pairs, single random cards, freeing himself up to bomb the smaller hands with big cards.

As time went by in the intense bombing, although the sky was still full of poker cards, only single ones floated around, no long straights or plans to be seen. And Da Fei still had two bomb sets reserved for the final battle, along with less than 300 random cards. It must be said, dealing out 2000 cards in just a few minutes, Da Fei felt a strong sense of cramping in his hands.

Even better, through the previous frenzy of bombardment, Da Fei's Nightmare Poker leveled up rapidly, unwittingly reaching the 2 of Spades, just one step away from the advance to Little Wang!

In any case, Da Fei believed there was a huge chance to win if the situation continued like this! After all, aside from the initial blustering might of the hero poker, it wasn't really that big of a deal, right? After all, it was only a hero "in a partial soul state"; being able to blow a gale force wind at the start was pretty awesome, and if it weren't for Da Fei's Divine Skill of Petrification Aura, any ordinary person might have been flattened right then and there!

Hahaha, in the end, my last two bombs are reserved exclusively for you, I really want to see what equipment this Poker Hero will drop!

And just when Da Fei was brimming with confidence, the Poker Hero suddenly let out a sinister chuckle, "Do you think you can win? Then let me show you the reason why a king is called a king!"

Chapter 678: Cheating with Poker

As the Hero Poker let out a sinister laugh, the sky once again was whipped into a frenzied storm, causing the remaining dozens of poker cards to start spinning rapidly in the whirlwind.

So this Poker Hero still had a trump card up his sleeve! Da Fei felt his heart tighten and hurriedly ordered his team to close ranks defensively, waiting to see what would happen.

The wind suddenly ceased, and those poker cards transformed in a magnificent turn. It was at that moment that Da Fei was left dumbfounded!

Kings, everywhere, dozens of cards all transformed into Kings! After an hour of effort, he hadn't seen a single King, and now they appeared en masse! The issue was, these were clearly ordinary cards—how did a gust of wind turn them into trump cards?

At this moment, the Hero Poker's sinister laughter resonated throughout the space, "A King is a King because a King will not lose when he doesn't want to! Forcing me to use this move, you can die without regrets, ha ha ha ha!"

Just then, Nightmare prompted, "He's using cheating tools, he's cheating!"

Da Fei's eyelid twitched in shock, "Cheating in a game? Are you kidding me!"

Hero Poker laughed wildly, "No mistake! Rules are always the privilege of a King. Do you, a mere commoner, think you can defeat me with game rules? That's a belief only innocent children have, ha ha ha ha!"

—Ah, poof! Da Fei spat out a mouthful of old blood in rage! Caught red-handed cheating and yet utterly shameless, does he have no shame?

What to do now? If the two Kings teamed up, they would be unbeatable. Even if these trumps were separate cards, they were invincible except against bombs, and I only had two sets of bombs left. How could I deal with so many cards? Was I really at the end, forced to rely on my troops for a head-on fight?

In the end, it seemed a head-on fight was unavoidable. I had over thirty Angels in my Angel Army compared to their forty or fifty cards. In terms of blood and defense, we weren't on the same level, but my stats are strong! I couldn't believe my godly attack and defense bonuses wouldn't outmatch the dream-filled hero's soul!

More importantly, my Angel Army could heal each other, giving me the edge to outmaneuver him!

How to outmaneuver? Of course, by commanding one of Da Fei's frontline Angels to retreat when she was at low health, and then have the other Angels collectively heal her, then send her back once she was full health. This was a simple and well-known strategy, but in grand army battles, where soldiers drop like flies and get jumbled together, only professional players with quick reflexes knew how to rotate their forces. So amateur players just resigned themselves to waiting for post-battle resurrection.

But now things were different. Da Fei's troops were all large-sized, elite Angels with high Blood Defense, slower health decline, and a large aerial fighting space, eliminating the problem of being bunched up. More importantly, there were only about thirty of them and they were equipped with Little Fei's Petrification Aura that slowed down the opponent. Not to mention, as top-tier Bright Alliance units, they were immune to many negative special skills. This really was a standard beginner's operation tutorial battle. If I couldn't manage this, I might as well cut off my hands.

So after feeling indignant, Da Fei immediately made up his mind, fighting back!

Hero Poker seemed more than willing to oblige, and soon the troops were tangled in an aerial battle. At that very moment, vast swathes of three-digit damage values appeared above both sides. The difference was, Da Fei's Angel Army took three-digit damage in the form of "-100!" "-106!", while the opponent's cards took three-digit damage of "-700!" "-800!"

Da Fei laughed in amazement, realizing that it's not about knowing the quality but comparing it. It seemed my godly stats triumphed!

Indeed, the hero's strategic offense and defense stats meant nothing if not compared to how much higher or lower they were than the opponent's. According to the damage calculation formula, when Attack is lower than Defense, the final damage equals Basic Killing divided by $(1 + \frac{\text{offensive-defenseive difference}}{20})$; in other words, when Attack is ten points lower than Defense, the Damage Value would be reduced to $\frac{2}{3}$.

In other words, even if a hero thought highly of themselves with an Attack of 1000 thinking it could instantly kill everything, but just happened to be ten points lower in Attack compared to the opponent's Defense, despite how trivial those ten points were to their enormous stats, they would face the harsh reality of a one-third damage reduction, which is enough to decide the outcome of a battle!

At this point, Da Fei didn't bother calculating how much more his Defense was compared to the opponent's Attack. Regardless of it being over ten or twenty points, with a mere 100-point damage drainage rate, even if each Angel was simultaneously besieged by two trump cards, Da Fei could handle it effortlessly.

The battle continued, with both sides slashing at each other, and the Angels constantly rotating their positions for healing. The garrison officer Ror's overall combat capability was beyond imagination. Her shield could even frequently stun the Poker, something not noticeable when she was instantly killing weaker Poker cards, but now it was apparent that her strong control had as much tactical impact as Blood Eagle's Petrification Aura.

Of course, the subordinates' impressive special skills were thanks to Da Fei being an extraordinary hero. After all, Da Fei's God-level Luck Skill with a sub-skill of Fortune could increase the probability of triggering their special skills by 10%!

Finally, the first little Joker was chopped into pieces by Da Fei's army and flew away in the sky.

At that moment, Da Fei's Nightmare Black Light flashed, and the Nightmare officially ranked up to a little Joker!

The scales of victory gradually tipped in Da Fei's favor, prompting him to burst into triumphant laughter!

In the end, the final showdown still depended on the player's real strength. From this perspective, the Hero Poker couldn't really be called a cheat. After all, given the system's disposition, it wouldn't let players use a large collection of early-stage Poker cards to knock out a hero like landowners, would it?

In short, knocking down one meant more would follow. As the scales of victory kept tilting towards Da Fei, the opposition was like a ship with a hole, sinking faster and faster. The numbers on both sides went from equal to Da Fei gaining an absolute numerical advantage!

At this moment, the Hero Poker shrieked in disbelief, "How could this be! Me, losing to a mere commoner?"

Da Fei laughed proudly, "I've already beaten you 30 to 0, hand over your Divine Artifact and die like a lamb, wa ha ha ha!"

Hero Poker shouted angrily, "You don't really think you can defeat me, do you? Keep dreaming, I won't give you the chance!"

With that, another gale of wind rose, and in the wind, this Hero Poker made a flamboyant turn!

At this moment, Nightmare hurriedly chimed in, "Master, he plans to escape!"

Darn it! I had reserved two sets of bombs for him! Without a word, Da Fei fired the final sets of Kings and Queens, fireworks blooming in the air!

Amidst the fireworks, the airborne Royal Playing Cards transformed back into ordinary poker cards with a flash of black light. Da Fei's eyebrows twitched, did I not catch him in time? Just as he was pondering, the System Prompt flooded the screen!

—System Prompt: Congratulations! The enemy hero escaped, awarding you victory! You gained 1.35 million Experience, a special item "Magic Poker," 26 "Exquisite Poker" toys, and the "Toy Store Blueprint."

—System Prompt: Congratulations! You achieved victory in the 15th battle, granting you Command Power +10.

—System Prompt: Congratulations! You achieved victory in the 9th glorious battle, granting you Command Power +20 and Personal Life +20.

Da Fei's eyebrows jumped in surprise, crap, he really escaped? Did the Source of Nightmare actually flee? Are there heroes this cowardly? But why are these drops so strange?

Da Fei eagerly checked the drops:

—Magic Poker: Gambling tool, toy, art treasure. Extremely expensive materials, superb workmanship, and incredibly luxurious artwork for a magic poker deck. Allows the user to transform any card's suit and number at will, suitable for casino cheating. (Warning: When using cheating functions in casinos, or tavern gambling, if discovered, will result in serious unknown consequences.)

—Exquisite Poker: Toy, gambling tool, art treasure. Entertainment tools commonly used by children, soldiers, and sailors. A gift of finely crafted artistic poker.

—Toy Store Blueprint: Possessing this blueprint allows you to open a toy store in your territory or in a major city with a business license. Cultural evaluation +5 points.

Da Fei's jaw dropped in shock!

Goodness! There really is a cheating Poker deck? No wonder it was the drop of this cheating hero! It can arbitrarily change, this is practically a Divine Artifact, right? Unless I drew a card that directly clashed with an opponent's, wouldn't it be hard to be discovered? Does this mean I could have a go with my old gambling god buddy Buffett?

Absolutely, I'd gamble away everything he's got, then recruit him as my sidekick! Wa ha ha ha! Well, it seems he mastered the Knight of Misfortune, where anyone near him meets with bad luck. What use is recruiting him? Winning more money off him would be more realistic.

Then there are these 26 sets of exquisite Poker cards, meaning that by collecting so many Poker cards and defeating so many Royals in the last battle, I finally reaped formal rewards. This is the most fruitful item acquisition I've had since the Vortex Sea Demon.

In short, it seems like Poker's greatest use will be as gifts, right?

Finally, look at this Toy Store Blueprint. I have to say, it's truly bizarre, huh? Da Fei has heard of florists, pharmacies, and bookstores in public test strategies but has never seen such an odd store? In short, a rare commodity is treasured, it must have some intrinsic value.

At this moment, Da Fei's Nightmare reported again, "Master, I can now confirm that the recent storm wasn't from this hero's power. Instead, it was the power of a Nightmare hidden in the Nightmare Space.

It awakened and covered the Source of Nightmare's escape. I believe there will be new enemies appearing."

Da Fei furrowed his brow, darn it, does this never end? But looking at the sky now, it's suddenly clear and open—the Poker cards really are all gone!

Chapter 679: The Final Battle with the Chess Monster

Although the Divine Beast Boss was causing trouble in secret, the disappearance of the poker cards in the sky means significant progress has been made in breaking the situation. So, the next step is most likely to clear the chess pieces and the likes of dolls, right?

Okay, Brother Fei is leading the charge, so let's start with the chess pieces. And after the fierce battle just now, the Nightmare Poker has advanced to a king, which made Da Fei's eyebrows twitch. The speed of this nightmare's evolution is really fast!

He had been too busy to check its attributes, but now that he had some time, he decided to take a look.

——Nightmare Poker Red JOKER: Nightmare Creature, Attack 60, Defense 60, Damage 200, Attack Speed 13, Health 35000, Command Value 0, Special Skills: Nightmare Creature, Flying Creature, Poker Army, King's Strike.

——Nightmare Creature: Special creatures that can only exist in the Dream Space.

——Poker Army: This Nightmare Creature can form teams according to poker rules, gaining substantial attribute bonuses. However, it will suffer significant extra damage when encountering card types that counter it.

——King's Strike: This creature can deal extra fixed damage that ignores the enemy's defense and is also unaffected by hero bonuses.

Da Fei was so startled that his eyebrows twitched. These are the attributes of an ace!

The health is indeed an exaggerated 35,000, with average attack and defense, but the damage of 200 greatly exceeds the range of troops players can command. After all, Da Fei's Earth Element Boss has only about 80 damage, and the former Douglas seemed only to have just over 100. These Elite Angels have tens of thousands of health, but their damage has not broken 100. And to think this ace has a weird fixed damage with the King's Strike!

It must be said, this ace is really strong. If it weren't for the weak hero leading it, unable to break through Brother Fei's defense akin to that of a level 2 wall, encountering such a force would probably lead to a typical player being harvested directly, right?

Da Fei pondered for a moment and then asked, "What's your advice for dealing with those chess pieces after I've rested?"

The Nightmare Poker replied, "My current poker form is not suitable for dealing with chess pieces, and my power has reached the limit in poker. I will reincarnate in a chess piece to develop anew, leaving behind this ace poker card for Master. Next time Master appears in this Nightmare Space, you can summon this ace poker card to battle for you as you summoned me."

Da Fei's eyebrows twitched, "So you're saying my Nightmare Horn is like having an extra Poker Soldier?"

The Nightmare replied, "Yes, Master. However, I am immortal. If this Poker Soldier dies, Master will lose it, so use it carefully."

Da Fei quickly asked, "If you incarnate in a chess piece, does that mean my Nightmare Horn will have an additional Chess Soldier?"

The Nightmare replied, "Yes, Master! The more creatures I reincarnate in, the more warriors Master can summon. However, I need to accumulate and consume a lot of the power of nightmares to reincarnate again, so I can't do it frequently."

Da Fei oh-ed and nodded in understanding, "So I can't just mass-produce them."

Catherine sighed, "Captain, it said you can summon these warriors the next time you come to this space, but are you sure you'll have the chance to come here again?"

Da Fei came back to his senses and couldn't help but smile bitterly, "Indeed, I'd be lucky to get out, let alone come back."

Ror shook his head, "Not necessarily! The Nightmare Space is a space where mortals' souls can reach in their dreams. In this sense, the Nightmare Space and the Heavenly Netherworld have similarities. Such places should not be controlled by demons. If it's within the capability of our military forces, it's not impossible to take over here."

Catherine exclaimed, "Angel, what's the point of angels taking over the Nightmare Space?"

Da Fei also said, "I have the same question!"

Ror smiled and said, "Of course, it is to transform the Nightmare Space into a Dream Space! Aren't Druids among mortals specifically researching the Jade Dream?"

Da Fei and Catherine were shocked: "Can it be done like that?"

The Nightmare spoke in a deep voice: "Remodeling won't be that easy, and even if it could be done, it would be a loss-making deal that no one wants to undertake."

Ror shook his head and smiled faintly: "Whether others do it or not is not important. What matters is that as long as we clear out this Nightmare Space or even kill that demon, I can report to the higher-ups, and it will be a great achievement for our Divine Punishment City's garrison."

Everyone then understood. After all, when it comes down to it, all that talk of love and justice from the angels is nonsense. With such a strict hierarchical system, what they are truly after is merit and status, no different from mortals.

In any case, the battle has just ended, the troops' mana and stamina have been greatly depleted, and it's crucial to take the time to recuperate. And now, during a night prone to long dreams, one cannot be too careful.

Just then, a ding-dong from the World Channel's system prompt.

——China Region Announcement: The international knockout stage of the fifth round of the "Hero World Cup" individual competition will begin at 8 o'clock sharp. Contestants, please prepare for the competition.

Then, the Guild channel erupted once more: "Brother Fei, give it your all! Brother Fei, stay steady!"

Da Fei was taken aback, the competition is happening again so soon? If it was a quest that involved running around, this one hour would feel like half a day, but if it's constantly killing monsters, it really flies by in an instant. Sigh, so busy on both ends, it's a headache.

Anyway, there's nothing much to say. I've even brought out the Unicorn and Earth Element BOSS, who else should I be afraid of? Let's continue with the same team. If we meet someone annoying, we'll hold our ground and let them fight for over ten minutes; if not, the entire army will rush and automatically fight until they drown. Right, I wonder if I revealed Elena's power with that strike in the last match? Professional players will check the data, so it must have been exposed. No more mystery then, let them get struck by lightning and call it a day.

While Da Fei was pondering, a violent wind arose again in the Nightmare Space, and those numerous chess pieces floating in the air suddenly sped up and flew toward the chessboard in the sky!

Da Fei was startled. Has my resting spot been discovered? Without further thought, Da Fei quickly organized the still resting troops to meet the battle.

The Nightmare Poker hastily said: "Master, I'll take the lead. Try not to let the chess pieces land on the chessboard for ground combat; intercept them in the air as much as possible!"

After speaking, the Nightmare Poker flashed with black light and once again turned into a black mist, pouncing toward a chess piece in the air!

——System Prompt: Nightmare Chess Pawns have joined your forces!

Possession of the pawn was successful! Da Fei hurriedly checked the pawn's attributes:

——Nightmare Chess Pawn: Nightmare Creature, Construct Creature. Attack 30, Defense 300, Damage 100, Attack Speed 7, Magic Resistance 90%, Health 10000, Command Value 0, Special Skill: Charge Trample, Master-level Defense Skill, Siege Attack.

Da Fei sprayed out a mouthful of saliva in shock. What the hell, is this a construct creature? It's the same existence with the same attributes as my Ancient Tree Fortress Anemone King!

Bloody hell, 300 defense, 10,000 health! This damn thing is an authentic fortress wall. My Elite Angels with nearly 150 attack bonus only have just over 200 attack, that's 100 less than it! With 100 less attack, my damage will be reduced by 83%, and the remaining damage will then be reduced by another 50% by its own Master-level Defense Skill! Then what's the point in attacking?

Wait! It only has 30 attack itself. In the face of my Elite Angels with insane defense bonuses, it's at least 200 less! 200 less means reducing damage by 91%, and then reduced by another 50% by my Master-level Defense Skill, so its 100 damage would only deal 5 damage in the end? Who's really not hurting whom?

No, that can't be right. The system's tendency is to weaken monsters once they are marshaled by players. However, resisting their damage shouldn't be a problem for me. Their attacks shouldn't be higher than Poker's, but if the enemy insists on wearing me down with their thick skin and occupying the chessboard so I have nowhere to land, that'll be troublesome!

In any case, these Chess Pawns wobbling about clearly aren't adept at flying, so as the Nightmare suggested, intercept them in the air, and ideally knock them straight into the Lava Sea below.

And just as Da Fei was about to act, a dazzling large red dot suddenly appeared on the radar minimap. Da Fei's eyelids twitched in alarm—it was a hero, an Emperor Chess piece shrouded in a Hero Aura! Damn it, going straight into a decisive battle the moment I step out, not even giving me a chance to collect items like playing cards?

Chapter 680: The Tactics to Defeat the Chess Army

Looking at the dazzling golden chess piece hero below leading a massive, dark swarm of chess pieces hurtling towards him, Da Fei was shocked on the spot!

You can't play like that, can you? If it was the game of poker just now, you could still collect poker items in advance and use the rules of poker to weaken the enemy's forces. But this is chess. In chess rules, pieces only differ in mobility; there is no strength or weakness. Even a pawn can checkmate a horse or a chariot - there's no such thing as a cheating chess piece; it could be said to be the fairest game.

What now?

Once so many chess pieces storm the board, I'll have nowhere to stand, and the Thunder Angel will be trapped. So I can't back down; I can only fight to the death. But a fight to the death, with this sort of attack and defense on both sides, is just a stamina-draining slaughter. Outnumbered, my biggest fear is to be worn down by the enemy's stamina. Is there really no other way but to cut them off in the air before they land, as Nightmare mentioned? But there are so many of them; it's impossible for my limited forces to cut them off in the air, right?

It has to be said, although these chess pieces don't fly fast, their speed is probably comparable to the level 2 Stone-statue Ghost nicknamed "Shake" from Court College, but they are on a direct assault to my vital stronghold - do I really have no solution?

As Da Fei was anxiously worrying, the System Prompt dinged again:

----China Region Announcement: "Hero World Cup" individual international knockout round 5 is starting, wishing all contestants a smooth competition.

----System Prompt: Congratulations! You have successfully logged into the World Battle Network System.

----System Prompt: Your current comprehensive military strength is as follows. Please select the forces you will bring into battle...

My goodness, why bring that up now? I'm in the thick of it, can't I get some peace and fight a satisfying battle? Can't I enjoy the game anymore?

Alright, it's all my own doing! Nothing to say, the same forces that fought against the American will head out again!

----System Prompt: Your heroes and troops selection for battle has been completed. You will now be connected to the World Battle Network competition site; scene is changing, please wait patiently...

As Da Fei was busily arranging his forces, a violent gust of wind rose in the Nightmare Space, and the chessboard below Da Fei shook once more, speeding up the Chess Army even further.

----System Prompt: Chess Hero Emperor has launched an attack on you, you've entered combat!

Damn it! They're starting the battle from this distance? This chess piece hero can't fly fast, but the way they pull people into battle is really something else. Are they afraid I'll run away? No, it should be that my Nightmare Chess pieces are closest to them, so they've grabbed them. Anyway, now Da Fei can't run even if he wants to.

According to the game's combat settings, once a field battle breaks out, the side that actively flees will have reduced morale and stamina, and also lose a small number of low-level troops. The more times you flee in a short period, the greater the reduction in morale and the higher the number of lowest-level troops lost, and there's also a chance of losing higher-level troops. This is an effective counter to the hit-and-run tactics of level 2 Centaur Archers from the Beastman during the public test. However, this rule does not apply to battles on ships, as ships themselves are moving fortresses, which are not considered "field" battles.

That is to say, under this rule, if Da Fei flees, he might lose Elite Angels — that's an unacceptable loss! In other words, the enemy has also thwarted Da Fei's strategy of outmaneuvering them with quick strikes.

----System Prompt: You've entered the competition site the Great Prairie, your opponent is "Kemal" from the European Union Zone of Turkey!

----System Prompt: You've acquired the competition gear achievement "MVP Terminator" bonus, your troops' Attack +5, Defense +5, Life +5, Damage +1, Personal Life +100, Morale +1, Luck +1.

At this moment, Da Fei is sweating profusely, completely unable to pay attention to the competition scene anymore.

Am I going to lose? Have I really gotten ahead of myself too much? Impossible! I didn't screw up when fighting the Divine Beast Hydra, not to mention the system has granted me so many Elite Angels, how could I lose to these chess pieces?

The fierce wind strikes again, and Da Fei's chessboard sways once more!

Da Fei's heart leaps, the board has been shaking since the Poker Hero blew wind on it, right?

Then, in that instant, a light bulb goes off in Da Fei's mind — I can still run!

Da Fei hastily instructs Ror: "Everyone push this chessboard together, don't let these chess pieces catch up!"

Indeed, if these Elite Angels could lift an unflightworthy Thunder Angel into the sky, then they must possess a cooperative skill. This means they should also be able to move this chessboard.

Ror exclaimed in surprise, "Where to push it?"

Oh yeah! Her question meant it could be pushed! Da Fei's thoughts became even clearer as he hurriedly said, "Push with the wind. I see these chess pieces struggle to fly, so we have to make it even harder for them!"

Ror nodded: "Got it!"

In a moment, more than thirty Elite Angels immediately flew to the edge of the chessboard and, facing the direction of the gale, they flapped their wings in unison, suddenly setting the chessboard, large as a soccer field, into motion. And it was moving at a surprising speed, quickly increasing the distance from the Chess Army!

Da Fei was thrilled, it worked! Others might escape the monk but not the temple; brother here might not escape the monk but surely the temple! Does this chessboard now resemble a boat? The more ferocious the gale, the faster brother's chessboard will fly. I want to see just how long you can keep up the wind! I want to see to what extent these pieces can chase! Right, it would be a joke if these chess pieces really couldn't catch up.

And at that very moment, Da Fei vividly recalled the chessboard battlefield from the beginning of the match. He hadn't really paid much attention then, but thinking back, his forces had an unusually smooth experience in breaking through and surrounding the Emperor. Brother had been prepared to sacrifice cannon fodder to the pursuers, yet the pursuers were blocked by their own pieces and failed to come to the rescue on time. After all, it was because the mobility gap in the chess pieces was huge; the high-speed pieces got stuck behind the slower pawns!

This meant that the same situation might occur here. Right now, the enemy hero was likely slowing down due to the overall advance, being dragged down by pawns and the like. Once they realize they can't keep up with a collective advance, they'll undoubtedly dispatch high-speed pieces like Rooks, Bishops, and the Queen as vanguards. If that happens, brother can slaughter the isolated troops, breaking them one by one!

At this moment, Da Fei finally had a complete set of tactical responses ready. He felt a sudden relief in his heart, and it was then that Da Fei remembered—hadn't the competition already been going on for quite a while? Brother doesn't even know who the opponent in the scene is. Doesn't matter, what's half a minute more to brother!

Da Fei quickly switched to the live competition scene. A wide expanse of lush green prairie, and across it was a vast spread of white—Crossbow Archers! There had to be over two thousand of them, all densely packed!

Damn it, it's a sea of Demon Children meeting an archery sea! During public beta, it had been hotly debated which was the most mindlessly powerful setup, and in the end, the Demon Child Sea, which left opponents out of mana, was rated as invincible in the late game, while the archery sea was unbeatable before level 50. Anyway, it was the archery sea that was considered the most no-brainer and effective. Thus it became the go-to tactic for a wide range of Human Race players, and as a result, the prices of any strategic treasures that added ranged damage skyrocketed on the market.

But now, there was no time for Da Fei to think about it any further—with the prairie yet again and the opponent being ranged, there was only one thing to do: order a full charge for the entire group!

Under Da Fei's damage and life bonuses, the life and damage of these level 1 Demon Child soldiers had already been boosted to that of level 3 Soldiers, not to mention that Da Fei had now advanced to Great Crusader and his strategic defense had reached a terrifying 180 points. This Demon Child Sea could fully withstand the enemy's barrage and charge forth.

At the same time, as expected, new developments arose in Nightmare Space. Dozens of chess pieces, some long and thin, others cylindrical, suddenly accelerated like rockets and surged past the others. Those pieces were clearly the Rooks that traversed the board and the diagonally-moving Bishops—high-speed pieces had indeed been sent out by the opponent!

But with so many high-speed pieces, could brother annihilate them all before the main force arrives? In any case, such advantageous conditions had been created, and they must be quickly annihilated no matter what.

...

While Da Fei's attention was partially diverted from the competition, there were actually 400,000 viewers around the world who couldn't take their eyes off this match.

Kemal, an important historical figure in Turkish history, was just an unknown player in the European Union Zone in this game. Of course, making it to the fifth round of the international knockout matches, it's hard not to become famous now.

He was facing the world-renowned Da Fei, with two large BOSS, a staggering sea of Demon Children, and Da Fei's widely acknowledged abnormally high attack and defense. All the viewers had already written off the chances of this newcomer, and what probably concerned them was how long Da Fei would take to crush an archery sea.

Now, Da Fei's troops rushed forth like a tide of red, ushering the Earth Element Unicorn BOSS with a cacophony across the hillsides. Crude and disorderly, apparently, it was clear that Da Fei was using auto-battle, completely disregarding Kemal.

Kemal's eyebrows furrowed. Perhaps his competitive journey was about to end here, but he would not exit the stage sullenly. Da Fei's arrogant underestimation might just give him the chance to strike a

devastating blow. Therefore, at this moment, Kemal decided to deploy his secret weapon—victory or defeat aside, he would become famous before players worldwide with this one battle.

Closer now, under the watchful eyes of 400,000 players across the globe, Da Fei's Red Army didn't flank or detour but proceeded directly into the firing range of the archery sea, a cardinal sin for Chargers and a delight for archers! How confident was Da Fei in his power? All viewers couldn't help but excitedly wanted to see what would happen next in the clash between the Demon Children and the archers.

At that very moment, suddenly, in the midst of Kemal's array of Crossbow Archers, two thousand torches intended for illumination were uniformly raised, turning the prairie ablaze with red light. Then the archers lit their arrowheads with the torches, binding oil-filled bags to the arrows.

At this moment, the viewing players worldwide let out a collective gasp of astonishment! These had to be special arrows that ignored defense, such as Flame Explosion Arrows!

Kemal certainly did not disappoint the audience; the next moment, thousands of flaming arrows woven into a massive curtain of roaring fire fell upon Da Fei's legions. Bursts of light, a cloud of green smoke instantly engulfed Da Fei's army!

This was undoubtedly flame combined with Poison Fog damage! Such sophisticated and rare weapons caused the entire arena's viewers to be filled with dread! And at that time, Da Fei was busy dealing with the pursuers and didn't know yet that his invincible army had suffered heavy damage.