Governor 531

Chapter 531, First Battle of the Battle Cruiser

The blue and white-painted ‘Furyflame’, using the brilliant star of Yuehe VII as a backdrop, slowly glided through the void.

A series of high-speed drifting space debris was pushed aside by the Void Shield, gradually recharging and returning to its normal color. Those moving slowly were destroyed by an occasional cannon shot, exploding into ashes. The smaller and even slower debris simply brushed past, leaving mere scratches on the armor.

This space debris was all created by the ‘Furyflame’ and its smaller ships over the past five hours.

Originally, they belonged to various space vessels, the jewels of the Princess Star Domain.

And now, five hours later, they all turned into space debris.

The ‘Furyflame’ traversed this debris field, its long, elegant silhouette of the Sacred Chalice class, flanked by dozens of small ships of various levels, appeared menacing, as if patrolling its battle achievements.

This was indeed a swift and fruitful surprise attack.

Furyflame was brought by Yan Fangxu. They arrived in the northern Menghe Star Domain ahead of the main force and joined Perbov’s forces, who were desperately resisting the southward assault of Furyflame in the area.

Perbov was the frontline Commander, Yan Fangxu was the highest-ranking general of the Alliance Army, and this sortie was given high authority by Gu Hang. The two had the right to judge the situation and decide how to fight the battle.

After analyzing the situation in several war-torn Star Sectors, they quickly devised a plan with a naval focus.

Being generals from the Alliance Army, they couldn't themselves develop a complete naval strategy. Their identities now were not merely confined to the army. Although in terms of rank, one was an Army General, the other an Army Admiral, they led a war zone with the identity of Army Generals. Navy Generals under the same war zone had to follow their orders.

This was very different from the Empire's rules. In the Empire, the Star Realm Army and the Imperial Navy are two distinct systems, with no subordinate relationship. Sometimes, the Imperial Navy even refused to carry the Star Realm Army for combat, forcing the Star Realm Army to find alternative ways to ferry troops to the battlefield.

Even in better cooperative conditions, it was just cooperation.

Since it was cooperation, there was no mandatory order completion. Help if they could, and if unwilling, there wasn't much the other side could do except argue, but it didn't resolve the problem.

Even if the Empire dispatched a senior general or someone special to oversee as a Theater Commander, whether they could effectively command both the Star Realm Army and the Imperial Navy nominally under them depended on their personal ability and relationship depth.

After all, this kind of temporary subordination was not lasting and was quite doubtful in terms of enforcement.

These issues, however, did not exist in the Alliance.

In the Alliance, there was a clear hierarchical relationship. For a large war zone, once the war zone leader was set, whether from the Navy or the Army, the participating troops transferred under them must unconditionally obey orders. Those violating orders would be dealt with by military law.

Political commissars were watching.

For a small temporary battlefield, if the war zone commander appointed someone, that person would take charge. If not appointed, the parties would consult; if unresolved, they would report upwards until a superior or Theater Commander was engaged.

The war zone commander here, previously Perbov, was now Yan Fangxu on his arrival. The strategic decisions made by the two had to be executed by the Alliance Navy.

Of course, it wasn't that the two Army generals simply charged ahead recklessly. The Command Center had Navy-specialized officers among its staff who would devise the specific operational targets.

Once targets were set, the Navy's captains and staff would develop detailed action plans in line with the Command Center's goals before reporting back.

Once the Command Center approved the action plan, it could be executed.

This was a complete process.

Of course, unexpected events happened frequently in war, so it wasn't always possible to complete the entire process. In emergencies, one must adapt spontaneously.

As for the present situation, it certainly wasn't an emergency.

After completing the process, the Furyflame's captain, a Navy Major General, evaluated the situation, participated in the planning, and took personal action.

The 'Furyflame' set out with three cruisers, twenty-nine small and medium-sized ships, accompanying a transport fleet.

They disguised themselves as part of the transport fleet and faked an exposure of their Star Language information.

As they passed through the Star Realm Tunnel of Yuehe VII, the enemy took the bait.

A few of the Princess's destroyers, thinking they had caught their prey, pounced.

Then, they were horrified to see the ‘Furyflame’s’ long, graceful silhouette.

The Princess’s ships, scared out of their wits, turned and fled.

But with the prey hooked, the Furyflame’s maiden appearance was entirely unwilling to let go.

A typical battleship might not have caught an enemy intent on fleeing.

But the high-speed Sacred Chalice-class battlecruiser was certainly not among the clumsy types.

Chapter 531, First Battle of the Cruiser_2

The swift pursuit, precise artillery fire, and oversized artillery’s deadly power against small to medium-sized ships…

When these features combine, it means slaughter for the enemy.

Five ‘Doomsday’ light spears, five Wrath of Loyalty, firing in relay, had already made those few rebel destroyers flash with red light, energy shields quickly overloaded; the X-class ‘Heaven’s Punishment’ light spear could destroy the enemy upon a single hit!

The few destroyers that came for the hunt were counter-hunted, and the rebel fleet near the orbit of Yuehe VII.3 also learned of the happenings at the transition point.

They were quite shocked at the moment.

They had already received information that the Alliance Army had set out. But it was supposed that the main force of the Alliance would take at least two more months to reach the main battlefield in the northern Menghe Star Domain.

Yet, there are new ships arriving now?

And it’s a Chalice-class, that’s a battlecruiser…

In the southward offensive of the Fury Flame Battle Group, there are bigger main force ships. The combat ship of the Fury Flame Battle Group is equivalent to a battleship level; concurrently, a proper Retribution-class Battleship is also participating.

But they are not in Yuehe VII.

The strongest ships of the rebel fleet in this Star System are only two cruisers.

After receiving news of the arrival of Wrath Owl and the loss of several destroyers on their side, the rebel ships slowly moved out of the orbit of Yuehe VII, intending to exit this star system.

Staying was purely courting death.

Yet, even wanting to run now was already a bit late.

Wrath Owl was advancing at full speed, not heading toward Yuehe VII.3 but instead blocking directly at the transition point where the enemy was escaping north.

In terms of distance, Wrath Owl was definitely farther, but under a full-speed pursuit, Wrath Owl managed to catch up with the rebel ships before they could transition.

The two Lunar-Class Cruisers were too slow.

Of course, Wrath Owl, moving at full speed, also effectively abandoned its accompanying ships. Those three Lunar-Class Cruisers definitely couldn’t keep up.

Only a few Crazy Shark-class Destroyers, pushing their engines to the max, could barely follow.

The enemy ships were clearly quite surprised too.

The Chalice-class is indeed rare within the Empire.

Battlecruisers themselves are already uncommon, and places capable of building battlecruisers often prefer to grit their teeth a little more and get a proper battleship.

And among the rare battlecruisers, the more common ones are the Dragon Serpent-class, the kind constructed on Jindi Star. The Chalice-class is even rarer among battlecruisers.

It's known that battlecruisers are fast, but no one expected the Chalice-class to be the fastest of the fast.

The rebel fleet, which failed to escape due to miscalculation, was confused for a moment.

Leave ships to cover the retreat, and forcibly transition the other ships?

Scatter and run, and whoever gets caught is unlucky?

Or… fight head-on?

No matter what kind of dilemma they face, when Wrath Owl appeared before them, it was already the moment they had to make a decision.

And their choice, it seems, was to fight desperately.

It's an understandable choice too.

No matter what level a ship is, it's ultimately a part of war, a part of the fleet. Battlecruisers are fast and pack a punch, but they also have the drawback of being fragile, just like how battleships have super strong head-to-head combat ability but face issues with inflexibility.

A single ship's shortcoming doesn't necessarily have to be covered by itself. That cost would be very high.

Since it's fleet action, just fulfill your duty well, leave what you are not good at to other specialized ships.

And right now, this Alliance battlecruiser, in order to rapidly pursue, has become disconnected from its fleet, with only a few destroyers following, so it seems not unbeatable.

By risking some losses, if they can take down this Alliance battlecruiser, it would be quite a significant achievement!

Led by two Lunar-Class Cruisers, over thirty ships assaulted Wrath Owl.

Wrath Owl sidestepped its body, not charging directly into the enemy fleet, but skimming past sideways at a certain distance.

'Heaven's Punishment' light spear fired first, directly annihilating an enemy escort ship.

Immediately thereafter, 12 L-class specification heavy artillery, 24 M-class specification cannons, all began firing in succession.

The firepower of this one ship was almost equivalent to the entire enemy fleet!

The enemy's two Lunar-Class Cruisers, combined, only had six L-class artillery pieces.

Of course, this level of firepower can indeed pose a threat to Wrath Owl.

After all, battlecruisers are thin-skinned and cannot withstand much more than standard cruisers.

But its extremely high speed and agility cause the enemy's firepower to miss a lot.

Conversely, Lunar-Class Cruisers find it almost impossible to actively evade Wrath Owl's strikes.

Certainly, the combat distance between the two sides is actually quite far, and the hit rate itself would naturally suffer.

This naval battle lasted about an hour.

The sixth rebel ship destroyed by Wrath Owl was one of the enemy's two Lunar-Class Cruisers. The other one's Void Shield had already turned red, as it had been hit by a Heaven's Punishment earlier on.

To this extent, the enemy fleet had already lost their courage entirely.

They began to retreat.

Not daring to forcibly transition from the jump point, as at that moment the Void Shield, the energy shield would be off, making them sitting ducks before they can complete transition, unsure how much they'd get blown off.

They could only scatter in over twenty directions, up, down, left, right, and escape.

Wrath Owl, no matter how fast, could only pursue in one direction.

So naturally, they picked the biggest one to chase.

First, they chased and hunted down the remaining Lunar-Class Cruiser, then turned the ship around to change direction, relying on superior speed and agility, they caught three more ships before the enemy disappeared entirely.

Two of them were blasted to pieces by Wrath Owl. The last escort ship chose to surrender.

Turning off the energy shields, turning off all weapon systems, letting Wrath Owl's cannons aim at it.

Navy Marine Corps boarded the ship and took control.

…

In this naval battle at Yuehe VII, the Alliance won decisively.

This was also Wrath Owl's debut battle, as well as the first battle of the Chalice-class battlecruiser built by the Alliance.

Although the intensity of the fight wasn't high, mostly targeting 'small fry', it demonstrated the character of a battlecruiser: a bully of lesser opponents.

If it were a battleship or a battle carrier instead, it wouldn't have achieved such results, afraid even if they were chased, they'd have all run away.

Over twenty enemy ships still disappeared into the vast space of the Star System. Even if the Star Language Tower on the ships kept scanning for signals, it would occasionally catch some information, but soon it would disappear again.

Pursuing and hunting based on this information might yield some results.

But playing this hide and seek game would undoubtedly be a lengthy process.

Wrath Owl didn't have time for this.

Those three Lunar-Class Cruisers that couldn't keep up went directly to the orbit of Yuehe VII.3 and successfully contacted the ground forces.

Under the guidance of ground forces, over twenty Alliance ships conducted a three-day orbital strike on the surface.

The Princess's Rebel Army's ground forces couldn't withstand this kind of orbital bombardment at all.

The remaining space stations in orbit wouldn't intercept the bombardment and threat the ships; the orbital cannons they captured after occupying the surface were indeed there, but only a few in number, hardly posing any impact.

With the aerospace threat removed, the Alliance Army on the ground became active again. After the orbital bombardment, they swiftly carried out the final cleanup of the enemy's viable forces.

The Alliance Army launched a counterattack on a global scale.

In this planet, the total number of Alliance Army and Pact Army exceeded fifty million; the Princess's Rebel Army numbered over seventy million.

These seventy million rebels could never be wiped out cleanly in a short time, but their losses must have been significant.

Worse yet for them, to avoid orbital bombardment, they had to semi-voluntarily abandon their formations.

Once an army breaks formation, the loss of combat effectiveness would be grave.

In just three days, the situation on the ground had been completely reversed.

Chapter 532, Getting Messy

The battle situation in Yuehe VII was completely reversed.

Before this, over ten million Alliance Army along with forty million Pact Army were resisting the fierce assault of over seventy million Princess's Rebel Army, while also facing the threat of orbital bombardment from above… the fight was extremely arduous and brutal.

And now, they finally turned the tide and took control.

A large number of the Princess's Rebel Army's forces were bombed to death in these three days; then in the following week, due to their structure being scattered, they suffered strong clearance operations from the Alliance ground forces, resulting in huge losses.

In just these ten days or so, over ten million traitors of the Princess Legion died in Yuehe VII.

This loss amount is almost equivalent to the losses the Princess Legion suffered while attacking various fortresses across the entire planet in the past three months.

If they could have more time, say a year or half a year more, the Alliance might have a chance to execute a large-scale annihilation operation in Yuehe VII, where seventy million Princess's rebels would all die here.

However, that's not possible.

The Fury Flame Battle Group has already reacted.

They also cannot accept losing so heavily in Yuehe VII.

Seventy million Princess Legion! This is not the Defense Army! This is the legitimate Princess Legion, reformed from the former Battle Group Auxiliary Army!

This is the Iron Fury Stone's core force aside from the Interstellar Warriors, the Princess Legion, this is their Star Realm Army. In the southward Fury Flame Battle Group, the total number of troops amounts to several hundred million, possibly even over a billion. However, even within that, the Princess Legion only accounts for half, at most two to three hundred million.

To lose seventy million just like that is unacceptable.

Moreover, it's not that there's no rescue.

The predicament in Yuehe VII was mainly caused by the attackers losing orbital cover. And this was all caused by just one sudden attack from the Raging Owl.

Although surprised by the unexpected battlefield dominance displayed by the rare Holy Grail-class battlecruiser, the Fury Flame still has two battleship-class large ships.

There are already reports that those two large ships are heading for Yuehe VII.

In a direct confrontation, the Raging Owl cannot withstand either of them, let alone two at once.

By then, the battle situation on planet Yuehe VII.3 may very well revert to how it was before.

Or even worse.

But the Alliance does not intend to give up this planet.

If they lose Yuehe VII, the other planets won't have such good defensive conditions.

The Alliance Vanguard Command, with its two commanders, believes that Yuehe VII is very likely to become a focal area in the next period of time. Both sides will probably repeatedly contest this place. The massive investment of troops, including naval power, will turn this place into a meat grinder until one side can no longer bear the cost and a result emerges.

Thus, this sudden attack on Yuehe VII by the Raging Owl, while boosting morale, does not actually have a particularly substantial impact on the overall situation.

However, it still holds significance.

The lives of over ten million elite from the Princess Legion, along with taking down two Rose Cruisers, is significant in itself!

The war between the Alliance and the Iron Fury Stone is foreseeable to become incredibly expansive in the future. Even these current skirmishes, which can mostly be considered mutual probes and vanguard clashes, involve several Star Sectors and dozens of planets.

At this scale, war is no longer about gains and losses of a single city or place, but a comprehensive confrontation of the national strengths of both sides. Both are creating and losing manpower, and the consumption of viable forces is crucial.

At this time, eliminating more enemies at a relatively lower cost can ease the pressure when facing future challenges.

Moreover, the space created by this victory allows the Alliance to accomplish many things.

During these ten days, the navy bombarded the enemies on the surface, and the ground forces cleared active enemy forces, while the Alliance's logistics troops were not idle either.

One after another, large transport ships, carrying scarce supplies, equipment, and personnel for surface troops, descended to the ground, replenishing the forces.

If they wait until the enemy's battleships arrive and lose orbital advantage, it won't be as convenient to transport supplies inside, as it would involve taking significant risks and losses.

Instead of risking transport later, it is better to seize this opportunity to transport as much as possible now.

At the same time, some units no longer suitable for continued battle are to be withdrawn during this opportunity.

The 5th Army Group and the 311th Skeleton Division are among them.

That includes Xiong Lei's unit.

Although they suffered orbital bombardment, he did not die.

Even though he didn't die, his unit was almost entirely wiped out.

After the orbital bombardment, among the three divisions stationed in the fortress, possibly only two thousand to five thousand survived. The remaining tens of thousands were almost all killed in the intense bombardments in a few hours or were eliminated by the Princess's Rebel Army that followed the attack into the fortress.

The fortunately surviving Xiong Lei had to flee with the remnants of his troops, and under constant pursuit, only less than a thousand ultimately reached true safety.

This is what's left of a Skeleton Division plus two large infantry divisions after a single battle.

Clearly, this is what is called 'being annihilated as a unit.'

To such an extent, Xiong Lei's unit doesn't even hold value for personnel replenishment.

What he needs is not replenishment.

He and the few hundred survivors of his unit boarded a transport ship that had unloaded its cargo and left Yuehe VII in silence.

The war here is not over yet, but for Xiong Lei, the war has ended.

Chapter 532, Got Messy_2

Recalling the familiar faces that startled him awake time and again in the dim cabins of the transport ships, he often felt how wonderful it would have been if he had died alongside his brothers on Yuehe VII.

That way, he wouldn't have to endure the current torment.

The transport ship sent him to a rear world known as 'Ramilo'.

Here, it could be considered a large logistics base. A large quantity of war materials and personnel gathered here, ready to board ships and be sent to where the front lines needed them.

Instead, those like Xiong Lei, who withdrew from the front lines, were in the minority.

Once on the ground, he went into the military hospital, and after staying for two days, a political commissar wearing a red hat found him.

"Colonel Xiong Lei?"

"That's me." Xiong Lei's voice was deeply somber.

He lifted his head, inspecting the person in front of him.

It was quite a youthful face, with a vigor unscarred by hardships, exuberantly radiating from his face in a somewhat glaring manner.

The insignia of two vertical bars and a star denoted his rank of major. The red trim on his epaulettes signified his status as a political commissar.

The red-hatted one saluted, then introduced himself: "I am Zhan Weidong, here by order to assist you in rebuilding the 311th Division of the 5th Army Group!"

"Rebuilding?" Xiong Lei's gaze was somewhat bewildered, "I thought it would be disbanded."

“How could that be?” Zhan Weidong said with a smile, “The 311th Division is a unit of merit.”

“A merit unit that has been completely wiped out, you mean?”

Zhan Weidong put away his smile and said seriously: “You seem a bit desolate, I can understand the feeling after losing your troops.”

“What the hell do you know? Fresh off the military academy…”

Before he could finish, Zhan Weidong shouted back in an even louder voice: “It’s even more unbecoming for you to be like this!”

“Get it together, Colonel Xiong Lei, it’s not just the 311th Division, there are also two other divisions the same way. Heroes sacrificed their lives in the war, their spirit remains with the living.”

Seeing Xiong Lei remain silent, Zhan Weidong’s tone softened a bit.

He spoke about specific tasks: “The army brothers coming from the rear, apart from the seven army groups brought by General Yan, there are also more than thirty million unassigned troops pulled from new recruit camps. Additionally, another thirty million were selected from various Native Defense Forces in the Menghe Star Domain. These reserve troops are to fill the frontline combat units, supplement personnel, and be used for the rebuilding of depleted formations.”

“I will be your partner.”

“Although you might miss your previous partner, I trust I can exhibit enough professionalism to earn your satisfaction.”

“I’ve reviewed your record; I believe you are worthy of being called an Alliance hero. I also hope you can demonstrate enough professionalism. Otherwise, I would regrettably have to report to the higher-ups that you are no longer fit to lead the troops. You wouldn’t want the 311th Division to be commanded by someone else in the future, would you?”

After a moment of silence, Xiong Lei said: “Are the new political commissars graduating from the Loyal Heir Academy as eloquent as you?”

“Maybe I am indeed the special one.”

“Phew…” Xiong Lei let out a long breath, then asked: “How much time do we have?”

“Five months,” Zhan Weidong replied, “The soldiers from the Dragonhawk Star Domain are all coming from Alliance training camps, no need to worry about their level; the locally recruited ones from the Menghe Star Domain, though a bit uneven, have at least been selected from various Planetary Defense Forces, so there’s some level of assurance. Both sides’ personnel will be mixed in a 5:5 ratio to form our new troops. We have five months to reorganize the troops and develop combat capability. After five months, the Command Center could order us back to the battlefield at any time.”

Xiong Lei smiled wryly: “The ones who’ve had their blood replaced, can it still be called the 311th Division?”

“That depends on you. I believe, with you here, the spirit of the 311th Division can be passed on.” Zhan Weidong said, with the same kind of vivacious smile reappearing on his face.

He reached out his hand to Xiong Lei.

Xiong Lei gave him a deep look: “I hope your professional level is as strong as your talking level.”

In his words, he also reached out his hand and clasped firmly with his new political commissar.

…

Formations like the 311th Division, units of division and brigade level that were utterly annihilated and devastated, would all be rebuilt in a similar manner.

Actually, Xiong Lei's situation was already considered fortunate. After all, as the division commander, the highest military officer of the unit, he survived the brutal combat.

Most divisions requiring rebuilding had in fact lost their commanders.

For example, the 077 and 240 divisions that previously fought alongside the 311 Skeleton Division. The highest rank among those who survived was merely a major battalion commander.

At this time, the situation of rapid promotion in war reoccurred.

That major battalion commander was directly field-promoted to a new rank of lieutenant colonel and, like Xiong Lei, began reorganizing his 077 Division as provisional commander. Another 240 Division without even a regimental-level officer had a lieutenant colonel transferred from another unit to serve as commander and take on the task of rebuilding.

Their organizational sequences still belong to the 5th Army Group and will return to the battlefield once reorganization is complete.

As Zhan Weidong mentioned, these sixty million reserve troops, and the increasingly numerous reserves arriving with subsequent major forces, will be supplementing understaffed frontline units or entirely rebuilding designations in a similar manner.

The Alliance will ensure that the order of battle for each frontline combat unit does not shrink too drastically through this method.

Continuous transfusion is the only way to maintain combat effectiveness.

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As for the frontline battle, when two battleships of the Furyflame reached Yuehe VII, the Furyhawk had no choice but to retreat.

However, it did not leave the star system, but rather prowled around the outer orbit, eyeing the two vessels larger than itself like a tiger.

Relying on the fact that those two battleships couldn't catch it, the Furyhawk was bold enough to frequently launch attacks.

Popping up, firing two shots, then running away before the battleships could react.

Alternatively, it would lead raids on the subsequent logistics fleet coming from the warp point to deliver supplies to the ground, forcing one of the two Furyflame's large ships to shift from providing orbital support to escort duties. Otherwise, without a battleship on site, the Furyhawk's raids on Furyflame's transport fleet were nearly guaranteed to succeed.

The battlecruiser showcased its function.

Its capabilities are hard to ignore.

Furyflame's two battleships were pulled to exhaustion.

If it had been an ordinary fast cruiser, the battleships wouldn't even have glanced at it.

But not with a battlecruiser; leave it unchecked, and it could freely stir chaos and even deal a distant 'Divine Punishment' shot which is a significant threat to battleships, given it's an X-class Light Spear Array, not to be underestimated.

Yet going after it couldn't contain it. The Holy Grail-class ran too fast, slippery as an eel.

With its pull, Yuehe VII star system indeed had two enemy battleships, but the orbital threats encountered by the surface Alliance forces were almost the same as before!

After all, with supplies just replenished and even having the time to rearrange and strengthen a few orbital cannon fort positions on the planet, there was inherently a robust defensive capability.

Conversely, the Princess's Rebel Army on the ground, though no longer needing to fear bombardment, required time to reorganize the units previously scattered, giving the Alliance troops an opportunity.

Seeing Yuehe VII turning into a protracted meat grinder battlefield of mutual attrition, it's crucial to seize the chance to eliminate some active forces while the enemy's disorder had yet to conclude.

Eliminating one more enemy now might mean one less of our own dying later.

But at this juncture, the Alliance discovered these traitors from the Empire's north had fled!

Large numbers of the Princess's Rebel Army, after restoring their formations and organization, moved into a region cleared of orbital cannons, boarded transport ships, and evacuated from the ground.

The entire evacuation operation lasted a month. The vast majority of the Princess's Rebel Army withdrew from the surface and, under the escort of battleships, left Yuehe VII.

They abandoned this star system.

Chapter 533

On the flagship of the Fury Flame Battle Group, the battle barge 'Fire of Triumph', an Interstellar Warrior with a bronze lower body and an upper body painted in bright orange, strode forward under the protection of a group of guards, heading straight for the command bridge.

The Mortal Auxiliary Army attempted to stop him, but were forcefully pushed aside by his guards.

He personally took charge, rudely pushing open the door to the bridge.

Wang Mengsong entered with large strides, followed by his guards.

The Fury Flame Warriors guarding the bridge had already heard the commotion outside.

Even though the ally's arrival was expected, such a discourteous manner prompted them to place their hands on their weapons.

However, it was unlikely to escalate unless the 'New World Torch' warriors intended to make a move.

Wang Mengsong didn't spare a glance at the tense Fury Flame Interstellar Warriors.

He was the Battle Group Leader of the 'New World Torch', boasting three hundred years of combat experience and essentially the first of the New World Torch warriors.

In reality, their entire warband was relatively young, having been established only three hundred years ago.

The military formation action three hundred years ago was named the 'Faro Reconstruction'.

In the 'Faro Reconstruction', nine new battle groups were established to cope with the ever-growing regional threats in the Faro Domain within the Empire's Southern Borderlands. After their formation, the nine were urgently dispatched to the Faro Domain to tackle the intermittent rebellions, invasions by two Orc Clans, and the expanding chaos from simultaneous outbreaks on multiple planets.

After a century of fierce battles, the situation in the Faro Domain gradually stabilized.

The tasks were completed, and it was time to claim their rewards. Logically, these newly established warbands should have settled in the region where they fought. A planet should have been allocated as the Warband's Homeworld, with a Recruitment World, allowing the warband to securely guard a region.

However, the Faro Domain already had seven warbands, and all nine newly arrived ones couldn't be settled down.

Naturally, this 'impossible' wasn't due to the lack of worlds. Indeed, a domain under one jurisdiction usually holds from a few thousand to upwards of ten thousand worlds. Allocating nine worlds to arrange for these warbands, is that a difficult task?

It actually was a difficult task.

Allocating nine worlds isn't difficult in itself. Even though the allocation does result in the loss of the Imperial Tax revenue from these worlds, it's acceptable when compared to the massive scale of the entire domain.

Moreover, there's no necessity for the allocated worlds to be particularly developed or wealthy planets.

Many renowned Interstellar Warrior Battle Groups have homeworlds that are quite barren, and whose environmental conditions are considered harsh and brutal.

Yet, this can be beneficial.

The people honed in harsh and brutal natural environments tend to be more spiritually resilient, physically robust, and culturally aligned with the needs of their battle group.

Regarding impoverished planets without sufficient material wealth foundations… for many battle groups, this isn't an issue.

Maintaining and developing a battle group certainly requires a significant amount of wealth, but who says it must come from the homeworld?

Furthermore, typically, a battle group comprising a thousand Interstellar Warriors, a substantial Auxiliary Army, and a Battle Group Fleet cannot be supplied with the financial resources of just a single planet.

Every battle group has its own means to meet these wealth demands.

Working for the Sect of Mechanics, some work for the National Church, some work for the high lords on Holy Terra, work for the Tribunal, or for particularly powerful Empire Commerce Guilds…

This can be termed as the ‘working faction’.

The various ‘working’ situations are quite different. Some are independent, or purely collaborative, with consistent interests; while others are purely employment relationships, doing what’s paid for; and some are heavily dependent, though rare, but not nonexistent.

Some warbands rely on waging war to sustain themselves. This is more common among ship-based warbands, lacking a fixed domain, relying mainly on wartime loot to sustain and even expand their warband. They often respond to calls from various Empire forces, planets, star sectors, and star domains, participating in various battles and collecting their loot, along with rewards.

The most famous among this category is the Black Cross Legion.

Regardless, these two categories of warbands are relatively few. Among Interstellar Warrior Battle Groups, the most numerous have territories.

They leverage their homeworld as a core, extending their influence over the surrounding star domain or even across star domains. The exalted status, identity, and powerful combat ability of Interstellar Warriors indeed allow their influence to expand to such extents.

While ensuring a region’s peace, each world in the region more or less contributes to the warband… under various names, but essentially it’s tribute.

Only on a star domain level can a fully-fledged warband be sustained.

The conflict within the Faro Starfield back then lay here.

The New World Torch and the other eight newly established warbands urgently needed rest and recuperation after the war. They had completed their warband’s inaugural war, earned some reputation, and achieved accomplishments. Next was rest, recuperation, and warband development.

However, the Faro Starfield had been divided up; the remaining territory could barely accommodate one or two more warbands; accommodating more meant everyone would struggle to sustain themselves.

Who doesn't need rest and development?

The New World Torch indeed secured a Recruitment Planet due to merit, but firstly, it was merely an ordinary planet, unable to sustain them, and secondly, they couldn't expand their influence like a normal warband, as two other forces crowded the same star domain.

After some competition, the New World Torch became a loser.

At that time, despite reaching a manpower around seven hundred, their Auxiliary Army was weak, they had few battleships, lacked a battle barge, and their flagship was merely a Strike Cruiser, heavily damaged in the war.

They didn't even have money to repair their ship!

Meanwhile, the warband frequently had to respond to summons, engaging in battles everywhere. Most often, the war spoils balanced the expenses and even left a surplus, but just one unprofitable war resulting in more casualties or insufficient loot would break the fragile cycle.

During the seventy years after acquiring a homeworld, the New World Torch struggled constantly. Their numbers slowly dwindled, and overall strength became increasingly frail.

Certainly, they didn't face a crisis that would annihilate the entire warband instantly, but the chronic attrition and impending destruction, coupled with helplessness, was truly distressing.

Moreover, friction and entanglements with various local forces within the star domain, like the Star Domain Government and nearby warbands, left them mentally exhausted.

Under such circumstances, Wang Mengsong received an invitation from Humphrey Paolo one hundred twenty years ago.

After some clandestine negotiations, Wang Mengsong made a decision: relocation!

Relocation isn't simply up to a warband's will.

The Recruitment World had been designated, how could it easily be changed?

But one hundred twenty years ago, Humphrey Paolo assured them it was possible. A star system in the Spiderweb Domain could be provided for their stationing, entirely devoid of Interstellar Warrior presence.

He invited Wang Mengsong over and assured him that the change of Recruitment Planet could soon be arranged.

Wang Mengsong trusted Humphrey Paolo's assurance.

Ultimately, Paulo succeeded in accomplishing this task.

When they declared their intention to relocate, the Central Empire initially reprimanded them in writing; however, soon after, the Central Empire's stance shifted. They silently designated a planet in the star domain specified by Humphrey Paolo as their new Recruitment World.

From then on, the New World Torch naturally thrived in peace and contentment.

Soon after, the Great Bougainvillea Rebellion occurred.

Wang Mengsong hesitated initially.

Should they side with Iron Armor?

It’s hard to remain aloof after receiving benefits from Humphrey Paolo; they couldn’t just ignore the situation.

But, getting involved seemed unwise. The New World Torch had just relocated and settled, the warband hadn’t even had time to amass wealth, and now they were expected to first fight for Iron Armor and potentially offend the Central Empire?

Although, Wang Mengsong harbored no favorable opinion of the Central Empire.

Humphrey Paolo kindly informed them to stay put and remain as they were.

Then, Wang Mengsong witnessed the Great Bougainvillea Rebellion being effortlessly resolved. Three warbands met a tragic fate, as Iron Armor, along with Fury Flame and Bedrock Shield, experienced a century of rapid development.

Throughout, Wang Mengsong felt uneasy yet envious of the Iron-Fury-Shield trio.

Unease stemmed from their actions seeming… somewhat disloyal?

Yet envy arose from observing, even without knowing details, the palpable strengthening of those three warbands’ capabilities.

Not only did they hold a firm grip over the Princess Star Domain, but they also continuously siphoned resources from the Empire. The substantial income bolstered their capabilities; with enhanced strength, they not only managed the persistent Void Insect Species threats within the Princess Star Domain but also expanded their influence across many adjacent star domains, even reaching the southern Eastern Cosmos Domain.

In secrecy, he too commenced some… non-compliant actions. For instance, exceeding the prescribed limit of the warband’s numbers; or concealing income and controlling star sector governments on some planets heavily under their sway, underreporting taxes…

He considered his actions minor compared to Iron-Fury-Shield, merely small maneuvers.

However, he was ultimately discovered and received a serious warning from the Central Empire.

This prompted him to retract his overreaching ambitions.

Simultaneously, it deepened his dissatisfaction and even resentment towards the Central Empire.

He began more closely aligning with Iron-Fury-Shield in private, aiming to become ‘Iron-Fury-Shield Torch’.

Humphrey Paolo, a long-standing friend, welcomed this, but expressed hopes for the New World Torch to first wait. Resource support could be provided upfront, but the New World Torch didn’t need to immediately take a clear stance in favor of Iron-Fury-Shield, they should continue to remain quiet.

This waiting period extended until Iron-Fury-Shield officially raised the flag of rebellion.

NNaturally, as the Interstellar Warrior Battle Group situated locally in the Spiderweb Domain, the New World Torch merged with the Heretic Tribunal, forming a suppressive force, participating in the restraint of Iron-Fury-Shield.

Subsequently, naturally, they turned traitor, delivering a backstab, entrapping an entire Loyalist Warband, tens of thousands of combat-ready Battle Nuns of the Blood Rose Sorority, and many elite members of the Heretic Tribunal, all on the battlefield of Tianyuan VI.

Upon rendering significant contributions, the New World Torch officially became a part of Iron-Fury-Shield.

Chapter 534, Give Me an Explanation

The New World Torch Station has been very proactive since siding with Iron Fury.

During the battle of Tianyuan VI, they betrayed as traitors.

This is not exactly a glorious affair. The Empire has scorned them as despicable and shameless, without any sense of honor, and even within their own camp, there were many criticisms and secret mockeries.

No one likes a traitor, even if they defect to your side.

Interests are one thing, and moral stains another; the two do not conflict.

Even within the New World Torch Battle Group, there are some voices. Some warriors, unable to bear the mental torment, defected in squad-size groups, trying to return to the Empire.

The fate of these people… was rather tragic.

Some were intercepted by Wang Mengsong himself and secretly executed on the spot; others managed to flee back to the Empire, only to be arrested, detained, and tried by the Heretic Tribunal.

The atmosphere within the whole battle group took a nosedive.

In such circumstances, Wang Mengsong neither would nor dared stop the battle group.

He began actively participating in Iron Fury's operations within the Spiderweb Domain, leading his group to one battlefield after another at a high frequency.

The fatigue of war left the warriors within the group no time to think about other matters; the undeniable war results quelled many rumors within their own camp.

Victory can cover many problems.

The premise is that the momentum of victory cannot be interrupted.

But actually, there's nothing much to worry about.

Over the past four years, the Iron Fury family has been winning continuously. Small setbacks in the middle couldn't alter the overall trend of victory.

Even if there is the Phoenix in the west and the Black Cross Army with the Bat Corps and Infinite Corps in the north, what does it matter?

When needed, they are firmly blocked; when needed, they are countered.

In Wang Mengsong's view, the southern battlefield was the same.

Even though the Fury Flame Battle Group suffered a major loss in the Dragonhawk Star Domain in the south. But Wang Mengsong believed this was mainly because the Fury Flame Battle Group didn't adequately gather intelligence on the Phoenix Battle Group and recklessly stepped into a trap.

He admitted it was indeed surprising that the Phoenix Battle Group had so many experts. However, the Phoenix's overall strength is evident, totaling a thousand people; they are a loyalist warband and have no special permits that allow them to exceed this limit. They even don't have a battle group fleet yet. Their navy strength relies on the so-called Alliance, and their army also relies on the Alliance army.

Although the intelligence also mentioned that the Alliance's army is quite capable, even if viewed as on par with the Princess Legion, that's all there is to it.

In terms of scale, the gap between the two sides is significant.

Now, Iron Fury's enterprise has spread across the entire Spiderweb Domain. The power of an entire domain can be harnessed for my purpose, while the southern Alliance is merely based on a single star domain; what's there to fear?

With this belief, when he received the order to join forces with the Fury Flame Battle Group and advance southwards to deal with the Alliance, he was full of confidence.

Fury Flame had almost deployed their entire force; though four years ago they suffered huge losses in the Dragonhawk Star Domain, losing many high-ranking, elite, and core personnel, their overall strength still remained: nearly three thousand interstellar warriors and the Fury Fleet, a formidable force not to be underestimated.

In addition to their own New World Torch, which has fifteen hundred men, and their fleet and auxiliary army.

After their combined southward advance, they should at least proceed smoothly, if not like a hot knife through butter.

But reality struck Wang Mengsong hard.

In the northern part of the Menghe Star Domain, the Alliance's vanguard was stationed here, fortifying the surrounding planets into fortresses, posing significant obstacles to their advance.

The Alliance managed the area well, with wise and resilient strategies.

Their strategy, typically excelling at engaging in a decisive battle to swiftly intimidate an entire star sector's enemy into submission and losing the will to resist, failed here.

The Alliance's soldiers were like nails, rooted in those heavily fortified worlds.

To advance, each target had to be tackled one by one.

Even if in some star systems, the Alliance's fleet had long been driven away, leaving the army on the ground without orbital control or external supplies, they stubbornly resisted on the surface, their morale terrifyingly tenacious.

What's the point?

We're not aliens or Chaos cultists, so why not surrender?

Despite this, Wang Mengsong actually didn't feel that the situation would change drastically.

They possess absolute strength; even though the enemy's will to resist is more stubborn than anticipated, as long as they dare to commit and are willing to invest, the ultimate victory must still be theirs.

Therefore, Wang Mengsong consistently advocated for the warriors of the Fury Flame and New World Torch to be deployed en masse and intensely into frontline battles. Those hard-to-crack tough nuts needed to be relentlessly tackled one by one, ensuring that the overall war situation could advance rapidly.

However, the commander-in-chief of this southern campaign was not him.

The leader of the Fury Flame Battle Group, Adler Politos, was.

Within the command structure, he had to follow Adler Politos's orders.

But obeying orders doesn't mean that he, Wang Mengsong, as a distinguished battle group leader, couldn't offer suggestions.

Chapter 534, Give Me an Explanation_2

He had many disputes with Adler Politos over specific tactical strategies.

However, he was unable to sway Politos' decision.

Ironfury also reformed the military structure under its rule. The indigenous Imperial model of independent forces did not work in the Spiderweb Domain. Humphrey Paolo established a complete and unified military structure using both soft and hard approaches.

Despite Wang Mengsong's dissatisfaction, he could only hold back.

Then, he watched as his own legion spent time on these Fortress Worlds in the Northern Menghe Star Domain.

Indeed, the Interstellar Warriors, as the most core and valuable force, were invested minimally, resulting in minimal losses. The Princess Legion, and even the recruited ordinary Defense Army, showed quite significant effectiveness.

They clearly suppressed the momentum of the Alliance Vanguard Army, and were removing one thorn after another.

Although slow, the momentum was stable.

If things continued this way, Wang Mengsong could endure it.

However, after he and Politos, with two battleships, drove away the newly arrived enemy battlecruiser reinforcements at Yuehe VII and regained control of the planetary orbit, Politos ordered the troops to withdraw from Yuehe VII!

What was more critical was that such an important decision was made by Politos without any consultation with him!

This was absolutely intolerable for him!

It was for this reason that he rushed, with full force, to the flagship of the Fury Flame Battle Group, the ‘Fire of Triumph’ battle barge.

He needed an explanation.

“Why retreat?”

Wang Mengsong strode into the bridge area, his first words were a direct question: “We sacrificed so much at Yuehe VII, millions of casualties over the past few months, plus naval losses, so much investment, why give up just like that?”

After finishing, he emphasized again: “At least fifteen of you Fury Flames died in there, and I lost five warriors too!”

Adler Politos’ gaze turned from the star map to Wang Mengsong:

“Just execute the decision.”

Wang Mengsong calmed down.

“Are you speaking to me in your capacity as the South Front Commander?”

“Yes.”

“Heh.” Wang Mengsong let out a cold laugh.

The two then fell into silence.

Wang Mengsong spoke again: “You are the commander, it’s your call, but that’s definitely no excuse for making such a mistake freely! Nor should you have made such a decision without consulting me!”

“Consultation? Does consulting you have any meaning?” Politos countered, “I’ve explained my intentions to you countless times, but each time it just resulted in arguments.”

“That’s because you’re cowardly!” Wang Mengsong raised his voice: “Four years ago your Fury Flame Battle Group had its spine broken on Dragonhawk Star, right? Now you’re soft like a puddle of mush! If you’d listened to me earlier, we could have flattened this mire a long time ago!”

Hit at the most painful moment in the battle group's history, Adler Politos' gaze went cold immediately.

"And sacrifice countless warriors in a totally non-essential region, right? I'm not like you, needing to use the sacrifice of my people to wash away the guilt of betraying allied forces."

This sentence also pierced through Wang Mengsong's defense.

The two of them, using each other's sore spots, tore each other's lungs out.

On edge, it wasn't just the two of them, it also included the warriors on both sides.

The Glory Guards of both Battle Group Leaders had already drawn their weapons.

Given this situation, it was like a minor disagreement could lead to an internal conflict on their own ships.

But fortunately, the leaders of both sides still retained their rationality.

Without an apology, Adler Politos still gave Wang Mengsong an explanation:

"Our strength isn't enough to counter the Alliance's main forces. The strategy to capture the North Meng River defensive line has failed, we must now contract our line."

"The failure to capture the North Meng River defensive line is all due to your cowardly strategy earlier!"

"If we sacrifice too much strength at the North Meng River, once the Alliance's main forces arrive, whatever we've taken will have to be spat back out, and we won't even be able to retreat to Proudclaw!"

"If we'd struck earlier, we could leverage the North Meng River defensive line against the Alliance's main forces!"

“All shifting to a defensive stance, why sacrifice so much living force to guard a broken line? Retreating to Proudclaw, using the lines we’ve built over several years to defend, the forces would be more abundant!”

“How long do we have to defend then?”

“Until the Regent King sends reinforcements.”

Their speech was rapid, the atmosphere still far from calm, still arguing with each other.

But at least they tacitly avoided mentioning each other’s black history, sticking to the topic.

At this point, Politos was finally unwilling to be entangled with Wang Mengsong anymore.

Without waiting for the New World’s Torch Battle Group Leader to speak again, he firmly ended the topic: “Let’s leave it at that, Battle Group Leader Wang Mengsong, I don’t want to explain these already overly explained strategies to you anymore. I am the overall in charge of the southern front, I’ve made my decision on this matter, please execute the order. Even if you have any objections, keep them to yourself.”

“I will raise objections with the Regent King, just wait for your command to be dismissed!”

“Try if you can.”

The ‘Regent King’ mentioned by them was Humphrey Paolo. Last year, this Battle Group Leader of the Iron Armor Battle Group gave himself such a title, claiming to be the one carrying out the Emperor’s command to punish the disobedient on Holy Terra.

This stirred even greater turmoil across the Empire.

This would clearly place even greater external pressure on their revolutionary group. But since they had already risen, adding such a description didn't make much difference.

Simultaneously, having this title internally allowed for better consolidating forces. In subsequent wars, it also forced some planets and groups that had suffered losses to join their side.

Humphrey Paolo's prestige among rebellious forces in the Spiderweb Domain rose once again.

As for resolving the schism between the two Interstellar Warrior Battle Group Leaders on the southern front once and for all, only this 'Regent King' had the capability.

But for now, since Adler Politos was the overall in charge of the southern front, the battlefield situations would still proceed according to his will.

After the two parted on bad terms, a large-scale withdrawal was being carried out on Yuehe VII and across this entire frontline, on dozens of engaged planets, according to Politos' orders.

…

"They ran."

A month later, arriving with the Alliance Main Fleet at the North Meng River, Gu Hang sighed.

"The Governor's renown is known by all. As soon as you arrived, those traitors fled like dogs with their tails between their legs, gone without a trace!" Perbov laughed, not in the usual manner towards subordinates.

Yan Fangxu, beside him, cleared his throat lightly and directly reported the situation: "We also attempted to pursue, but it wasn't very effective. Their two battleship-class vessels guarded the retreating ships closely. To be safe, we didn't risk launching particularly aggressive pursuits."

"A prudent choice." Gu Hang acknowledged.

Yan Fangxu continued, “Our forces have already set out, aiming to reclaim the entire northern Menghe Star Domain. The enemy has completely withdrawn from this area, leaving behind very sparse resistance. However, according to reconnaissance, the enemy still holds a final stronghold in the Menghe Star Domain.”

“That’s Shangdong Star. This planet serves as a key passage between the Menghe Star Domain and the Proudclaw Star Domain. From here, one jump can reach Proudclaw Star Domain – Guangtai Sector – Guangfeng Star.”

“They have set up extremely strong defenses on Shangdong Star and Guangfeng Star.”

Gu Hang asked, “So now, is it our turn to bite at the opponent’s line of defense?”

Yan Fangxu looked grim, “I’m afraid so.”

Chapter 535, The True Fortress World

In the year 235 of the tenth millennium, November, the Alliance had largely reclaimed the northern part of the Menghe Star Domain and began an attack on the last world, which also served as the critical planet connecting North Meng River and the Proudclaw Cosmos—Shangdong Star.

No one likes to gnaw on a fortress-like hard bone.

But sometimes, you have no choice but to gnaw.

The Shangdong Star System is the only passageway from the Menghe Star Domain to the Proudclaw Cosmos, there’s just this one path, no other route to take.

At the same time, the fortification of this planet had reached a very exaggerated extent.

Orbiting the planet were eight large Star Fortresses. Each Star Fortress’s armor thickness surpassed that of a battleship—after all, it only needed to orbit the planet, requiring very minimal propulsion, at most

adjusting its angle or speed. These Star Fortresses needed only to be sturdy enough and filled with cannons inside.

These eight Star Fortresses circle the planet's orbit, coupled with a large fortified Starport and thousands of Armed Space Stations… any attack on the planet's surface or towards the Starport must break through this dense orbital defense.

This defense system of space stations and Star Fortresses is like a stationary fleet parked in orbit.

Saying it doesn't move is an exaggeration; they orbit along with the planet and have minimal propulsion to adjust orbital velocity and angle.

The key point is, though their flexibility is nearly zero, their firepower is not false, and their sturdiness is even better than conventional fleets.

On the surface, there are more than six thousand fortress groups situated across the planet.

The surface cannon groups are not only zero in flexibility, they could almost be termed negative. After all, the orbital Star Fortresses can still rely on changing orbit velocity and switching orbital paths to simulate movement and concentration effects. The surface cannon groups don't have this ability; the space area they can cover is minimal.

However, in terms of sturdiness, the surface cannon groups surpass the Star Fortresses and Armed Space Stations.

On the seas, on the lands, among the mountains, and in the valleys… human military architects, utilizing the planet's terrain, cleverly designed fortress groups. Multiple orbit cannons hidden within can easily shoot projectiles into space; yet when facing bombardment, they can use terrain cover, visual camouflage, and interference equipment to make the Starship's firepower harder to hit directly.

Even if they hit, the super thick reinforced concrete structures are formidable defenses.

If the Starship's heavy guns, subject to layer upon layer of interception, were to hit the orbit cannon's location directly, then it goes without saying—you're formidable;

But even with the slightest deviation, the fortress defense capabilities can minimize the threat of bombardment to the orbit cannon and its operators.

This is what a genuinely fortified planet's comprehensive defense capability looks like.

A prickly shell that seems impossible to attack.

However, this is not even its ultimate form.

The Shangdong Star has been under Iron Anger Stone's control for only about twenty years. Although, as a crucial transport hub, its defenses were strong initially, it's not Iron Anger Stone's core territory.

The opposing Guangfeng Star, that's the more terrifying place. Aside from even more layered surface cannon and orbital Star Fortress firepower points, Guangfeng Star also possesses another top-tier defensive device: planet-grade Void Shields.

As the name implies, this thing is essentially the same as the Void Shield equipped on Starships, just much larger in scale.

Multiple Void Shield Generators are deployed worldwide, each as large as a city. Once activated, though the energy cost is astronomical, the effect is also solid.

With the Void Shield active, a fortress world with integrated defense facilities presents as an immobile planet-class battleship in a space battle. Its firepower is invincibly fierce, against which no human-made fleet can contend; its defense is impenetrable, even extinction-level weapons are ineffective. Not to mention interception issues, nothing can penetrate the Void Shield.

Moreover, the defenders aren't entirely devoid of naval power. Two battleships can also hide within the orbit, enjoying firepower cover while capable of maneuverable and proactive strikes.

Compared to Shangdong Star and Guangfeng Star, these two fortress worlds armed to the teeth, the defensive strength of any single planet from the defense ring previously constructed by Perbov in the northern Menghe Star Domain falls far short.

Even the latter could provide significant assistance to the defending side in war, let alone the former.

To take down Shangdong Star and Guangfeng Star, these fortress worlds armed to the teeth, the cost to be paid would be incredibly dreadful.

Under these circumstances, the Alliance, after a few probing attacks on Shangdong Star, did not invest any more forces.

Clearly, the Alliance did not want to pay such a price just to take these two planets.

No matter how strategically important their locations and value were.

As Gu Hang said to his generals:

“Do not forcefully attack these two places; I know you can take them down. I have immense faith in my generals, my warriors; you would conquer even hell for the Alliance.”

“However, we must be rational. Even Adler Politos knows when to retreat if something can’t be done; do we not know?”

Chapter 535, The True Fortress World_2

“Paying such a huge sacrifice to conquer these two planets, and then what? This process is truly too prolonged, and if we delay further, our enemy will reinforce as well. Ultimately, this will turn into a war of attrition; are we going to bleed against them on a battlefield they have chosen?”

At this point, Gu Hang shook his head and continued to express his opinion:

“No, we shouldn’t do this. The precious blood of the Alliance Warriors, the Starships built with great effort by the Alliance workers and engineers, shouldn’t be wasted this way.”

“We should leverage our superior naval forces to break the rebel blockade of the jump points in the two star systems and bring the war into the enemy’s territory. Do not fight in the battlefield preset by the enemy.”

Gu Hang’s words clarified the strategic direction—completely disregarding the two Fortress Worlds, Shangdong and Guangfeng, and advancing directly into the Proudclaw Cosmos.

Of course, this entails taking risks.

Ignoring the two Fortress Worlds, the armies, orbital cannon arrays, and Star Fortress System on them naturally cannot threaten the Alliance’s maneuvering ships directly shuttling between the two jump points. However, the Alliance’s grand army also cannot utilize these two worlds. The Alliance’s supply line will be stretched longer.

To avoid the threat of the Star Fortress System of the two Fortress Worlds, a rather large detour in space must be made.

More crucially, the enemy’s naval forces are still present. If we cannot conquer the orbital defense systems of these two planets, the enemy’s navy will seize the opportunity to strike.

While the Alliance Main Fleet remains, their two battleships along with their smaller ships are unlikely to dare to cause trouble; however, once the Alliance’s forces point towards the Proudclaw Cosmos and pierce deep within, the supply line behind will be at risk.

Even if the Alliance attempts to hunt and besiege the enemy navy, they have two Fortress Worlds as pivots, able to retreat at any time, leaving the Alliance unable to pursue.

Currently, intelligence indicates that the enemy’s main fleet is likely patrolling in the Shangdong Star System.

Regardless, since the Governor set the strategy, execution is a must.

A short but fierce naval battle erupted at the jump point in the Shangdong Star System.

In this battle, the Alliance Main Fleet deployed entirely, with three hundred warships of various classes, alongside eight main warships, engaging two nearby Star Fortresses, hundreds of Armed Space Stations, and two enemy main battleships.

Gu Hang personally participated in this operation and attempted to directly capture and tear apart the battleship's Void Shield.

If we can directly destroy an enemy main ship in this war, that would be great.

Unfortunately, it was unsuccessful.

The Fury Fleet's stance remained very cautious. They concealed themselves within the defense system of the jump point, firing from a distance under the cover of Star Fortresses and Space Stations.

The Alliance also found it challenging to charge under heavy fire.

The enemy's firepower was still fierce; losing a large ship on the charge would be quite painful.

And the effect of Gu Hang's Spiritual Energy attempt was not very successful due to the long distance. The think-tank team in the Fury Flame Battle Group guarded closely, and the battleship's Void Shield was still too large and robust, resulting in Gu Hang's spiritual energy not achieving good results.

But this battle ultimately concluded with a victory for the Alliance.

The Fury Fleet, after losing three cruisers and more than twenty ships of various classes, chose to activate jump and retreat.

During this process, the Alliance also suffered losses, even slightly larger than the enemy's. Three Lunar-class ships exploded, and the loss of other warships exceeded thirty ships.

Furthermore, the Alliance Fleet couldn't prevent the enemy's jump.

After all, it's not fleeing into nothingness; they still had the cover of the existing jump point defense system.

However, the Fury Fleet fled, leaving behind the jump point defense system that couldn't run.

These Star Fortresses and Armed Space Stations floating in the void could not budge. Unlike their counterparts on planetary orbits, the space stations on planetary orbits could at least connect to the planet's surface. But the Star Fortresses and Space Stations near jump points, without external ship transport and supplies, were completely isolated and helpless.

Of course, the Alliance did not rely solely on siege to solve the opponent here.

It's not impossible, but it's too time-consuming.

After negotiations, heavy attacks, destruction of some Armed Space Stations, more negotiations… in roughly a week of combined fighting and talking, they successfully dealt with the jump point's garrison.

In this process, one Star Fortress was destroyed, and over a hundred Space Stations were destroyed.

The remaining Star Fortress and still over a hundred Space Stations chose to surrender in the end.

The Alliance completely took over these space defense facilities, and the garrison inside was all captured and sent to POW camps established in the rear worlds.

But this does not mean the Alliance has cleared the path to the Proudclaw Cosmos.

On the other side of the jump point, the enemy is likely also on high alert. The Alliance will certainly face the blockade of ships, Star Fortresses, and Space Stations.

Furthermore, this battle will be more challenging.

Ships just completing a jump will be quite vulnerable. It takes time for their speed to ramp up, and it also takes time for the Void Shield to activate.

Although this time won't be too long, it's enough for the enemy to inflict considerable damage.

But what can be done?

Only one path up the Mount Hua.

Only charge.

In times like this, there can be no cowardice.

Of course, charging requires strategy.

In some battle cases, faced with this situation, some Navy Generals choose to press all forces up, jumping simultaneously, arriving together, and stuffing the entire large fleet all at once. In the other's perspective, after the jump point flashes, the entire massive fleet is in close proximity.

Indeed, all ships would be in danger for the moment, but the enemy's firepower during this time is also limited. Once the jumping fleet accelerates, activates the Void Shield, and the entire force, arriving simultaneously, naturally can exert their full strength.

However, some battles show that rashly jumping over might encounter an opposite force more powerful than initially estimated, or the initial damage to our side might be too great, leading to insufficient subsequent combat strength and consequently falling into a disadvantage.

That would result in a disastrous outcome.

After all, jumping to the other side, if at a disadvantage, there's nowhere to retreat; only fighting to the end, making entire annihilation highly likely.

The Alliance Fleet decided to adopt a more conventional strategy.

The jumping fleet will be divided into batches.

The first to arrive would be some small patrol ships.

Six days later, over twenty Blackfish-class Rapid Patrol Vessels passed through the Star Realm Tunnel and arrived at the Guangfeng Star System jump point in the Proudclaw Cosmos.

During a Star Realm jump, hiding is very difficult. Even if the enemy can't know exactly how many ships are coming, or what they are, crossing this Star Realm Tunnel, they can detect a large fleet approaching through the Star Realm Tunnel's fluctuations. If there's an excellent Star Speaker, they can even calculate the arrival time quite accurately.

Upon emergence, twenty Alliance Blackfish ships were immediately fully locked onto.

The most dangerous time has come!

They themselves were well aware of this.

Once out of the Star Realm Tunnel, they exerted all effort to squeeze the performance of the ship's engines, attempting to escape as much as possible during the brief window when the enemy was locking on and preparing to fire.

Even activating the energy shield was secondary.

With the size of the Blackfish, getting hit by cannon fire would cause an explosion; opening the shield meant little.

Their mission was to trigger the enemy's ambush, scout the situation, draw fire, and rely on their small, fast, nimble characteristics to survive as much as possible.

This, of course, is the most dangerous job.

But that's how it is in the navy.

Small ships serve the big ships.

When it's time to take the hit, they must roll up; not to mention such mine-probing operations.

Fifteen minutes later, only six Blackfish remained.

And at this time, the second batch of Alliance ships had arrived.

This wave included big ships.

The 'Firebath Nova' was among them.

Chapter 536, Guangfeng Star Sea Battle

The firepower information detected by the patrol ship was transmitted to the Firebath Nova five minutes ago.

The enemy's firepower blockade, the deployment of space mines around the warp point… In short, it was to inform the main ships of which warp point locations might be relatively safe to choose from.

Of course, this information wouldn't be perfect, even quite rudimentary.

Completing the warp, the twenty patrol ships on the other side of the Star Realm Tunnel only had ten minutes of reconnaissance time there, so not much could be expected.

At the same time, the decision-making time for the Firebath Nova was very short. After receiving the information, they would exit the Star Realm Tunnel in just five minutes and arrive in the real universe.

They didn't have the luxury to carefully choose the optimal solution; they could only pick a location that wasn't locked based on existing intelligence in very limited time as the landing point.

Post-warp landing control cannot be perfectly precise; there will always be some degree of deviation.

That's the risk.

But luck wasn't too bad this time.

The number of space mines here wasn't many, only a few, detonating nearby. One escort ship was significantly affected; the Firebath Nova also took three mines, but they were all triggered by detecting the starship target at some distance, posing little threat.

And the enemy's main artillery was not aimed here. To target the Firebath Nova, they needed to re-lock the target.

The Firebath Nova didn't need to prioritize engaging its engines fully.

It couldn't execute overly complex or agile maneuvers either.

Priority had to be given to activating the Void Shield.

The Void Shield of the battleship was quite top-notch.

Next, it was the firepower system.

The artillery was not affected by the Star Realm warp, poised to fire before the warp was completed.

At the moment the warp finished, the firepower system immediately started searching for enemies, locking onto targets, and preparing to fire.

Meanwhile, the ship's self-defense interception system was also ready to operate at full capacity to meet the challenge.

Accompanying this Retribution-class Battleship were over fifteen escort ships, all deploying energy shields and fully operating intercept fire.

A few minutes later, the enemy's first wave of fire arrived.

It was somewhat less than expected.

The sacrifice of the blackfish played its role. A considerable part of the firepower that could have been locked on immediately was disrupted by the blackfish, pursuing them instead, with limited speed in switching targets.

Our intercepting firepower fired furiously, with 'Reflectors' and 'Defenders' firing vigorously, intercepting as much of the enemy's sparse firepower as possible before it reached us.

But despite this, three escort ships that hadn't deployed energy shields in time were blown apart.

Even if it's relatively lesser firepower, the opposing three Star Fortresses, hundreds of space stations, two battleships, and over four hundred ships of all classes were all blocking the way here. Even reduced firepower was still plentiful.

The Firebath Nova took three to four hits, but the battleship's armor was thick enough, taking no severe damage.

However, before the next round of fire arrived, these dozen escort ships and the Firebath Nova had all deployed Void Shields. At the same time, their firepower had locked on and let out a fierce roar.

Several enemy space stations were also blown up.

Hold the position, engage in combat.

With just one battleship and over a dozen escort ships, there was no way to defeat the adversary. In just twenty minutes, four more escort ships turned to space debris, and even the Firebath Nova took three heavy artillery hits of X-class specifications, causing its Void Shield to glow red.

Nevertheless, the sacrifice of the escort ships and the risks borne by the battleship allowed them to achieve one goal: to pave a smooth 'landing ground' for the subsequent ships!

Five battlecruisers named after various planets in the Dragonhawk Star Domain, an aircraft carrier, and over five hundred cruisers, escort ships, and destroyers as the main force instantly descended on the battlefield.

Meanwhile, the enemy's firepower was all concentrated on the Firebath Nova and the escort ships it brought.

This Alliance Fleet flagship perfectly played the role of a damage absorber, successfully creating space that the Alliance Fleet desired.

The various Alliance ships that appeared could relatively safely pass through the dangers of the initial warp moment.

Reactivating shields and Void Shields, switching to conventional engines, were all arranged.

Meanwhile, the firepower that had been primed since before the warp locked onto targets instantaneously upon revealing themselves.

As the enemy's firepower came surging, the Alliance's return fire hit back.

The targets of the Alliance's firepower were also the enemy's ships.

Ships are inevitably more fragile than Star Fortresses.

Additionally, the initiative in this battle, to be honest, still lay with the adversary. Unless the Fury Fleet was determined to fight to the death with the Alliance here—something Gu Hang would gladly take—otherwise, when the Alliance Fleet demonstrated combat power, causing casualties and pain to the enemy, the Fury Fleet, whose combat morale wasn't particularly firm, might very well withdraw on their own.

And once driven away, the immobile space defense group left behind would be easy to deal with.

Whether engaging in a fleet battle with the adversary or driving the Fury Fleet away first, either way, the focus was on bombarding the enemy fleet.

Chapter 536, Guangfeng Star Sea Battle_2

The pressure suddenly came from the other side.

Moreover, this pressure was continuously increasing. When the six battlecruisers fully demonstrated their influence, their firepower in battleship duels was considered as effective as three battleships; the Alliance's 'Eagle Horse' carrier was not to be underestimated either. The Dragon Elephant war machines it suddenly deployed swarmed and destroyed a cruiser from the Fury Fleet.

That cruiser took a few hits in the front, shattering its Void Shield. Under normal circumstances, it could have retreated in time, operated within the fleet, and survived with cover from other Escort Ships. Fortunately, its Void Shield was merely overloaded, and the generator inside was not damaged. Given about half an hour, the Void Shield could recharge and become active again.

However, under the attack of the 'Eagle Horse', the possibility of survival vanished.

Eighteen war machines launched in its face seized the opportunity of the shattered Void Shield, blasting away without needing to risk a slow approach.

They swarmed around the Starship like a hive, fiercely attacking the exposed turrets on the Starship.

At the cost of eight war machines, they destroyed many of the exposed turrets on the cruiser, reducing its ability to perform firepower interception.

Among these eight war machines, five even managed to launch their mounted missiles before perishing.

Some missiles were intercepted by ’Reflectors’ and ’Defenders’ mid-air, but still, one-third of them hit the target.

There was one Scorching East Wind and four Sky-splitting Axes.

These five heavy anti-ship missiles caused severe damage to that cruiser. The Starship visibly caught fire, observable from the outside.

This still wasn’t considered destruction. The cruiser was still moving, with Escort Ships rushing in. If it retreated, the damage control team might salvage it through repairs, preventing further damage and maintaining the ship’s survival. Once repaired, it could fight another day.

But the remaining war machines wouldn’t give it a chance.

The two surviving Dragon Elephants unleashed their six Scorching East Winds. Meanwhile, eleven Kirins also launched twenty Sky-splitting Axe missiles.

The heavily damaged cruiser was powerless to intercept; other Escort Ships could destroy war machines but intercepting missiles launched by war machines at close range towards the cruiser was unrealistic.

In the end, more than half of this firepower hit the cruiser.

The cruiser exploded into space debris.

The surviving war machines then began to withdraw.

They pulled back at full speed, stopped firing, and activated their stealth.

In complete silence, the size of war machines in space is rather insignificant. In the intense battlefield, the enemy had too many things to deal with, making it difficult to spare efforts to scan the entire space area to locate and destroy the war machines.

Moreover, even a big war machine like the Dragon Elephant, without missiles, no longer posed a significant threat. At most, it had some cannons that might be useful against smaller ships, but against large warships, it was like scratching an itch.

And these silent war machines still had a considerable chance of quietly retreating back to their carrier.

The distance between the warring sides was still a bit too far; it would take a long time to fly back.

However, if this naval battle continued for several hours, or even over ten hours, those returning war machines might catch up with the second wave of attack, reloaded with missiles, and launched again.

Moreover, the Alliance's Zhuge-class carrier deployed not only them.

Multiple cruisers and even the Fury Fleet's flagship, 'Triumphal Fire' combat barge, were being targeted.

The carrier was adept at hunting down these large warships within the fleet.

The deployed war machines weren't particularly effective against Escort Ships, destroyers, and other medium to small ships. The interception firepower on these ships was formidable, making the cost of taking them down high, yet their value was low.

Conversely, attacking those large ships might be slightly more challenging, but the rewards were substantial.

The L-size Scorching East Wind missiles mounted on Dragon Elephant war machines presented a significant threat even to battleship-class warships.

The powerful strength of the Alliance, composed of eight main battleships and forty-one cruisers, was turning the tide of this naval battle.

…

“Retreat.” Politos once again made the obvious decision.

And this, of course, once again sparked fierce opposition from Wang Mengsong.

“Why retreat again? We clearly have the advantage now!” Wang Mengsong’s voice rang out in the command channel once more.

He saw, of course, that the Alliance Fleet was regaining the upper hand.

But precisely because of this, shouldn’t they press harder to secure the victory?

He even mobilized his battle group, ready for a boarding action.

Yet again, he heard Politos’ order to retreat.

He was beyond furious.

But because they were at a critical moment, he knew he couldn’t quarrel with Politos, the supreme commander. So, regardless of how furious he was, he stifled his emotions, persuading earnestly:

“The Alliance main fleet made a big mistake this time, recklessly warping their entire force into our home ground. Using the Star Fortress, leveraging our constructed warp point defense system, we have a chance to annihilate the enemy fleet here!”

“Even if we can’t annihilate them completely, we can at least severely damage them!”

“Miss this opportunity, and given our naval strength with only two battleship-class warships, there’s almost no chance of delivering a devastating blow to the Alliance Fleet in naval combat again!”

“Opportunity is not to be missed!”

Nonetheless, all he received was Politos’ retreat order.

Politos even ordered the Star Speaker to block Wang Mengsong’s ability to send messages to the entire command system, preventing this battle group leader of significant standing from disrupting the whole command system.

Of course, he didn’t want to provoke Wang Mengsong too much. If this hothead acted impulsively, launched a rogue strike, and dragged the entire unit into it, that would be quite troublesome.

So, he left Wang Mengsong a line to communicate directly with him.

Wang Mengsong soon realized he couldn’t contact other ships, and angrily cursed at Politos:

“You spineless cur! You’re not fit to lead the army! I pity you! Your enemies are right before you, yet you don’t even dare to seek revenge!”

After the last heated argument, Politos reflected. He wouldn’t engage in these meaningless arguments with Wang Mengsong anymore. He ignored the insults from the New World Torch Battle Group Commander and continued to orderly issue various commands.

It wasn’t until the whole fleet began moving as he ordered that he found a bit of time.

Taking this chance, he said to Wang Mengsong: “Didn’t your think tank tell you the pressure they are now under?”

“What?”

Wang Mengsong hadn’t received a reply.

It wasn’t his problem.

The think tanks of both battle groups and the psychic units among mortals had already been consolidated for use, directly answering to Politos.

A think tank member had been left with Wang Mengsong, in theory, they should report information to him.

But… Wang Mengsong realized he hadn’t received any updates for quite a while.

“It seems the pressure is even greater than reported, that your embedded think tank crew didn’t even have time to explain the situation to you.” Politos explained briefly.

Then he pondered: “Gu Hang from the Alliance… he might be the most powerful Psychic I’ve encountered in my centuries of career. Is that truly a level mortals can achieve?”

Chapter 537: Too Bad the Enemy Ran Away Fast

Watching the Fury Fleet disengage from battle, Gu Hang, aboard the “Eagle Horse,” felt a bit of regret.

Weren’t they going to fight to the end?

Keep fighting!

Your spiritual energy team is about to be blown up.

In fact, from the moment the “Eagle Horse” that Gu Hang was on descended into this airspace, Gu Hang and the “Storm Mage Corps” he led had already begun rigorous operations.

Now, the Storm Mage Corps has over ten thousand psychics of various levels available.

According to the system’s standards for enlightening and training psychics, Gu Hang spent one million gift points on it.

Of course, training personnel cannot rely solely on consuming gift points.

In fact, as the alliance’s scale expands, things like military training, administrative officer training, and psychic training, which used to heavily depend on the acceleration of gift points, are now less dependent on the system.

This is not because Gu Hang has reduced his investment. On the contrary, investing in human resources development is the second-largest expense for Gu Hang’s gift points—the largest being technology lotteries. He has consistently increased his expenditure in this area.

However, with the expansion in scale, the size of the army and administration has wildly inflated, and it is no longer possible to process everything through the system.

Breaking away from system dependency is an inevitable trend. Gu Hang accepts this, and starts placing talents acquired through consuming gift points at the core positions.

The spiritual energy team is an example of this. Among the members of the Storm Mage Corps, 80% were trained by Gu Hang using gift points.

In addition, by strongly integrating the various Mage Academies established by the alliance with the Psychic Cultivator's Associations in the original Dragonhawk Star Domain, tens of thousands more psychics have been trained.

However, unlike those directly trained by Gu Hang using gift points, those trained through the most conventional and orthodox means have somewhat unstable conditions.

Their abilities are unstable; some are quite useful, but a large proportion of psychics possess powers that are not very practical and are particularly niche.

Their states are also unstable, easily losing control, posing threats to both themselves and others, with the potential for self-destruction being quite hard to handle.

These unstable individuals need to be managed. They either continue studying at the Mage Academy, striving to control themselves, or if deemed lacking in such talents, they have to stay in the prisons of the Psychic Cultivator's Association.

Those who can control their spiritual energy are arranged to work in various sectors of society where they can utilize their abilities.

The main placements are in the military, secret services, police departments, and legal departments.

All units, including the Glory Guard Legion, welcome these psychics. Their abilities can provide great expansion effects.

As for the largest and most stable group of psychics, the Storm Mage Corps, they are a direct force under Gu Hang's command and have always followed his orders. Most of the time, they are distributed in various combat units, acting in squads or medium-sized groups.

Currently, Mr. Gu has gathered them all together.

With Gu Hang at the core, these members of the Storm Mage Corps can use their spiritual energy as "fuel" to enhance Gu Hang's power.

Leveraging this power, Gu Hang will become even stronger.

Incidentally, he is also attempting to tear open a subspace rift, to descend with more powerful forces into the real universe, used to rip apart the enemy ships' void shields.

In theory, tearing open the subspace and allowing the power of the Divine Realm to descend is not a difficult task for Gu Hang. With the assistance of the Storm Mage Corps numbering in the thousands and the power of the Storm God Kingdom, Gu Hang's fleet destruction capabilities will once again escalate to a huge level.

However, this time, the problem arose during the descent of the Divine Realm.

Gu Hang sensed a resistance that wasn't weak.

That resistance came from the psyker teams led by the think tanks of the Fury Flame Battle Group and the New World Torch Battle Group.

In Gu Hang's perception, there were about two thousand of them.

Their average level was about the same as the Storm Mage Corps.

However, there were over eighty think tank members in the two battle groups, much stronger than the average level inside the Storm Mage Corps. Among them, the Intelligence Directors of both battle groups had all reached A+ level. Additionally, there were five A-level psychics, with the rest being at least B-level.

The psychics awakened among the Interstellar Warriors are indeed much stronger than the average mortal's level.

Of course, that's the average; it's the lower limit that's high. As for the upper limit, it might be about the same.

This group of high-level think tanks, leading a number of psychics, is trying hard to obstruct the descent of the Storm God Kingdom.

The rift has been torn open, and Gu Hang's spiritual energy has indeed been strengthened. He also successfully used the power of spiritual energy to tear apart the void shields of three enemy ships and directed friendly fire to destroy them.

Then, his target turned to the "Fire of Triumph."

However, as a combat barge, the void shield strength of the "Fire of Triumph" is extremely strong, making it not so easy for Gu Hang to tear apart.

Moreover, there was the resistance from the enemy's psionic team.

After some maneuvering, Gu Hang was close to subduing those opposing psychics, and the rift to the Storm God Kingdom was being torn wider, allowing Gu Hang's abilities to become increasingly powerful.

Already, three to four hundred psychics had met their demise in the confrontation with Gu Hang. Among them, some merely fainted, while others suffered direct cerebral explosions.

At this moment, Politos chose to order a full retreat.

With about fifteen more minutes, Gu Hang could have crushed those opposing psychics, strengthened the descent of the Divine Realm, and then quickly torn through the void shield of "Fire of Triumph."

The launching systems aboard the "Eagle Horse" were poised to instantly eject several Dragon Elephant war machines and two patrol ships right in front of their faces. Combined with the targeting bombardment of friendly artillery, there was indeed hope to swiftly destroy such a giant ship.

Destroying an enemy's major capital ship would be a great help for subsequent battles.

Unfortunately, they retreated swiftly.

…

After the enemy's main fleet retreated, the alliance fleet was faced only with the combination of the Star Fortress and space stations.

Their sturdiness and firepower weren't weak either. A hard battle would definitely result in a victory for the alliance fleet, but at the cost of extra losses.

Since the opponents wouldn't move,

the alliance fleet could naturally keep their distance and adopt tactics of encircling, hunting, and stretching to engage.

This would prolong the battle but reduce losses.

A week later, the enemy's resistance was mostly crushed.

Chapter 538, 100 Days 20 Worlds

The result of the Guangfeng Star Sea battle, of course, was an Alliance victory.

But in reality, in terms of the damage suffered by both fleets, the Alliance didn't exactly gain much of an advantage, and it actually suffered greater losses.

Among the eight main battleships, the 'Firebath Nova' suffered the most damage. Its combat capability can basically be maintained, but it's best to pull it back for repairs. Otherwise, the damaged Void Shield Generator, compromised armor, and the internal linkage system damages… all of these could become hidden dangers. Later, if there is a high-intensity naval battle, any of these latent issues could become a fatal weakness.

Nevertheless, no ships were lost, which is good news. The current damage won't take too long to repair, and they might not even need to be dragged back to the dockyard. Subsequently, they can stop somewhere, and the onboard mechanics and technicians should be able to handle the necessary repairs and replacements.

However, damages to other ships were not insignificant either.

Primarily, losses occurred during the initial warp stage, bearing the brunt of enemy fire.

Once the Fury Fleet retreated, there wasn't much cost in dealing with the defending forces at the warp point.

And after the warp points along the Shangdong-Guangfeng line were cleared, the remaining resistance in this star system was the fortress-like Guangfeng Star itself.

Even the Fury Fleet didn't defend Guangfeng. They left some ships hiding in Guangfeng's orbit and Starport, while the main fleet withdrew non-stop back to a more central region in the Proudclaw Cosmos.

The Alliance didn't attempt to tackle Guangfeng, which was even stronger than the Shangdong Star Defense.

After a brief reorganization of the entire fleet, they headed to the next warp point.

On either side of the next set of Star Realm Tunnels, the defensive system was not as strong as the warp points between Shangdong and Guangfeng.

Powerful Star Fortresses are certainly cheaper than warships, but that's only in comparison to warships. Even at one-third or one-fifth of the cost, it's still a significant expense. Moreover, like warships, Star Fortresses and space stations require regular maintenance, which also costs money.

Additionally, their use is much more limited, only capable of defense, with no offensive capabilities.

Even if there was money, each planet would be more inclined to install these defense facilities in their own orbit. Firstly, this greatly reduces maintenance costs, as there's no need to move engineering ships to warp points for operations each time; secondly, interests are also at play. Protecting one's own planet instead of guarding or blocking a warp point is more direct. Moreover, placing defense systems like Star Fortresses in planetary orbit can be effectively linked with the ground's orbital cannon groups,

making most warp point defense systems quite lackluster. Having several Armed Space Stations for border checks is already considered sufficient. Only some warp points that need to guard against space pirates will have more Armed Space Stations, or perhaps a light Star Fortress.

Only major thoroughfares like Shangdong-Guangfeng, connecting two Star Domains, would have heavy Star Fortresses and numerous Armed Space Stations installed.

As such, when the Alliance fleet once again bypassed the difficult Guangfeng Star and continued advancing toward the Proudclaw Star Domain, their progress became swift and unstoppable.

In just four months, the Alliance captured two Star Sectors and over twenty worlds in the southern part of the Proudclaw Star Domain.

The primary reason for such achievements was the constant avoidance by the Fury Fleet.

Without fleet protection and with no ground defense setup by the Fury Flame Battle Group in the southernmost Star Sectors, the ground resistance relied on local Planetary Defense Forces, supplemented at most by the Princess Legion's military instructor groups. Such combat strength was no match for the Alliance's main forces.

To expand their gains, the Alliance's fleet was divided.

The battle cruiser 'Fury Owl,' the carrier 'Eagle Horse,' and the repaired battleship 'Firebath Nova,' these three main ships formed the main fleet, following the Fury Fleet's traces and pursuing them.

With two dreadnoughts and an assisting battle cruiser, the main battle strength of the fleet already slightly surpassed the Fury Fleet. Not to mention, the Fury had to consider Gu Hang within their fleet, along with his Storm Mage Corps.

In a fleet decisive battle, they would lose. Unless the Alliance fleet, after splitting, foolishly jumped into an area filled with Star Fortresses and Armed Space Stations to fight the Fury Fleet.

Ensuring that the main fleet could exert an overwhelming force over the Fury Fleet, four additional battle cruisers each led several detachment fleets, splitting into four directions for assault.

With the Fury Fleet's main force contained, there was no space power in the whole Proudclaw Cosmos that could contend with a detachment led by a single battle cruiser. And even if the Fury Fleet, under Gu Hang's nose, managed a trick to slip away and find a chance to attack an Alliance detachment, the battle cruiser's performance allowed it to evade even if it couldn't win.

Moreover, it's not easy for the Fury Fleet to slip away unnoticed right beneath Gu Hang's eyes.

Thanks to these factors, the Alliance could execute such rapid conquest operations in the Proudclaw Star Domain.

In about a hundred days, over twenty worlds were captured, averaging one every five to six days.

However, at this stage, the Alliance's offensive suddenly slowed down.

Gu Hang realized something was wrong.

Such rapid aggressive advances, although creating a huge breach in the southern front and reclaiming 20 Empire worlds, seemed to be the best achievement from the Empire side in recent years.

Yet, many hidden dangers were left behind.

First is that the enemy's main forces still exist and are merely avoiding battle, the Alliance had not achieved a decisive battle.

Therefore, the current gains by the Alliance are somewhat illusory. Subsequently, losing a single battle could mean losing everything they have gained.

Secondly, the Alliance had spread the breadth of the battle too wide too quickly.

These two Star Sectors and twenty worlds are not completely subdued. Many places are still resisting. In fact, some worlds with strong resistance couldn't even be entered by the Alliance's army. The navy cleared the orbit and controlled the Starport, ensuring the planet couldn't contribute to the cosmic battle, then symbolically shelled the surface a few times and counted it as captured.

But such a capture is very unstable.

The Alliance basically couldn't assimilate these twenty worlds to support them in the subsequent war.

Moreover, the unresolved Shangdong-Guangfeng planets were like two tumors in the throat of the Alliance's offensive path.

Chapter 539, Fortifying the Camp and Fighting a Protracted War

As the scope of the Alliance's offensive expands and the territories occupied grow larger, the risks previously buried become increasingly hard to ignore.

Resistance and non-cooperation on various planets; logistical difficulties after stretching the supply lines; the two tumors of Shangdong and Guangfeng growing at the throat; the ever-watchful Fury Fleet…

Even without considering these, Gu Hang must acknowledge one thing: the Alliance's current overall strength is still far inferior to the Iron Rage Stone, which controls an entire Cosmos Domain.

The main forces of Humphrey Paolo are still entangled in multiple battlefield directions.

But this does not mean their strength is gone.

It is possible to redeploy troops from the main battlefield or draw reinforcements from the original defensive forces in multiple Star Domains to provide support.

Even the naval fleet, with its long build cycle, could potentially be supplemented by the enemy at any moment.

Within the Spiderweb Domain, there are three Founding Worlds, all belonging to the Alfonso Sect. None of these Founding Worlds are smaller than Jindi Star.

In theory, since Iron Rage Stone has been labeled as an Imperial traitor, the Sect of Mechanics should be joining the Imperial forces to beat them up.

However, this has not happened.

The attitude of the Alfonso Sect is extremely ambiguous. They have issued several condemnations against Humphrey Paolo, but the wording is impotent, mostly due to various pressures to make a statement.

Moreover, they claim to have ceased all cooperation with Iron Rage Stone, but… now the entire Spiderweb Domain falls under the control of Humphrey Paolo. Communication is obstructed, so who can say for sure if the Alfonso Sect has truly severed ties as they claimed?

No, actually most analysts believe that they are merely paying lip service.

The Alfonso Sect established a rather intimate relationship with Humphrey Paolo long ago. Their cooperation has a history of several hundred years.

Their close cooperation persisted right up until Iron Rage Stone formally initiated its rebellion.

This indeed makes their attitude seem very untrustworthy.

Just consider this: if there was a true rupture, would Iron Rage Stone ignore the powerful industrial capabilities of the three Founding Worlds?

But in reality, the Alfonso Sect remained unharmed, and Humphrey Paolo seemingly has no intention of targeting them. Iron Rage Stone's sweeping military actions in the Spiderweb Domain entirely bypassed the influence sphere of the Alfonso Sect.

Moreover, on every battlefront, Imperial forces frequently encounter new types of equipment appearing on the battlefield. The combat power of the forces under Iron Rage Stone, bolstered by this equipment, does not seem at all like a place cut off by the Sect of Mechanics.

Indeed, the Iron Armor Battle Group's fleet sees a constant inflow of various new space warships!

At this point, it is basically confirmed. The Alfonso Sect not only failed to sever ties with Iron Rage Stone as it claimed, but is actively providing assistance to these traitors.

Focusing this situation on the southern front currently opened by the Alliance, Humphrey Paolo does not even need to redeploy forces from the main battlefield; as long as the next batch of warships from Alfonso's three Founding Worlds is sent southward, the combat power imbalance where the Fury Fleet is far inferior to the Alliance Fleet could change drastically.

Gu Hang believes that the new Battle Group Leader of the Fury Flame Battle Group is waiting for this.

At that time, as the Alliance's lines stretch and the opposition's forces are augmented enough to engage effectively, this current situation could very well become an opportunity for a significant offensive maneuver.

The Alliance must remain vigilant.

Consequently, after capturing two Star Sectors, the Alliance essentially halted its large-scale offensive.

But in reality, the objectives the Alliance sought in this war have already been achieved.

This war has taken on the nature of a political battle.

Now that the war has officially begun, the multitude of issues troubling the Alliance have all been resolved. Chairman Zuo Zhaofeng has ceased his reprimands, inquiries and orders from Holy Terra have stopped, and pressure from the Phoenix Warband of the Immortal Phoenix Matrigel on the western front has been alleviated.

Moreover, the Eastern Cosmic Realm Government, which had halted war funding for over two years, has resumed it.

There were 5 billion tax-funded resources on the way when the Alliance dispatched troops.

This amount is not substantial, but it is signal. Zuo Zhaofeng also mentioned there would be more to come.

After the Alliance marched into the Proudclaw Cosmos, 50 billion more in war supplies were loaded onto ships en route to the Alliance.

Compliments from Holy Terra were also received.

Galaraldo remarked to Gu Hang that since the Alliance deployed its forces, his life has also become somewhat easier.

Additionally, there were messages from other Central Empire departments lauding Gu Hang's efforts, hoping the Alliance can persevere and continue to advance bravely.

All perspectives expressed delight and encouragement for the Alliance's significant impact on the southern front within months.

They hope the Alliance can maintain this momentum.

Conquering two Star Sectors in four months is not fast enough. Based on this speed, drawing a line on the starmap, it would take capturing six more Star Sectors to penetrate the Proudclaw Cosmos.

And beyond Proudclaw to the northwest lies the Thistle Muster Star Field. Advancing through nine more Star Sectors from the Thistle and Mustard leads to the Princess Star Domain.

That is the true stronghold of Iron Rage Stone.

If the higher-ups had their way, they would wish for an even fiercer Alliance offensive.

Chapter 539: Building Fortifications and Fighting a Protracted Battle_2

Why must every entire Star Sector be occupied? Why bother with those heavily defended stubborn areas?

Quickly find the enemy's main force for a decisive battle! Head straight to the Princess Star Domain! Go and stab Humphrey Paolo in the behind!

Countless people urged like this, with different words but roughly the same meaning.

But Gu Hang just ignored these remarks.

Do they really expect that with the Alliance's current power, they can reach the heart of the enemy and topple the Iron Rage Stone?

Don't be ridiculous.

They only want Gu Hang to make the southern battles fiercer, depleting more of Iron Rage Stone's living forces, attracting more of its massive army to relieve pressure in other directions.

And Gu Hang?

He wouldn’t use his accumulated resources over the years for others’ benefit.

No matter if it benefits others, he wouldn’t risk everything on a single reckless gamble.

After securing two Star Sectors and facing the risk of a slightly stretched frontline, Gu Hang stopped.

The previous war outcomes were enough to ease the political pressure.

The Alliance’s main forces ceased advancing.

With them halting, it wouldn’t be long before the pressure resurfaces again.

But Gu Hang didn’t plan to listen to them.

Do I really care that much about the small amount of money the Eastern Cosmic Realm Government offers?

Five billion? Hundreds of billions later?

It’s indeed a large sum, but mainly it’s a variety of ordinary equipment, small Starships.

If that four or five hundred billion were converted to one battleship a year, Gu Hang might consider being more aggressive.

But as is?

Forget it.

Go at my own pace.

And what is the Alliance's rhythm?

They turned to digest those twenty conquered worlds.

Among these twenty worlds, some are poor while others are wealthy and developed.

Ignoring the poor places for now, it's important for the wealthy and developed ones, especially industrially,

to deploy ground forces and suppress planetary surface resistance, supported by political means, making the entire planet useful to us, is a significant task.

Once settled, it means directly drawing resources from these twenty worlds, locally resolving some regular supply issues.

Several of these worlds have good industrial capabilities, not to mention the consumption of ammunition and conventional weapons, even the resources needed by Starships, such as certain shells and fuel for Starships, that is energy crystals.

Even, there's a large Starport on one planet accompanied by a small shipyard.

The shipyard is not expected to produce anything new for use, but having a shipyard means that this planet's shipbuilding technology is still at a certain level, well-equipped, and the Alliance can have many of its ships damaged in previous combat well-maintained here.

Meanwhile, Alliance engineering ships, escorted by the Navy, arrived in batches at the Proudclaw Cosmos.

Along with them came transport ships carrying many orbital cannons, components for space stations, and even production lines, and also dragged along a few light and heavy Star Fortresses.

The long-range transportation deployment of Star Fortresses requires large transport ships for towing.

These Star Fortresses were placed at the Star Realm Tunnel jump points of hub paths, and in the orbit of key planets.

Simultaneously, those orbital cannons were assembled and deployed on the spot, leveraging some conquered local planets with good industrial capabilities.

Even the production lines brought were directly aimed at strengthening military production capabilities at the front line…

The Alliance clearly intended to fully digest these twenty worlds and fortify the four key worlds.

Star Fortresses were dragged over, orbital cannon clusters set up, and defenses at jump points built…

The Alliance's stance was obvious: set up strongholds and fight a slow battle.

First encircle these twenty worlds, then digest and fortify key areas, prudent against possible massive enemy army pressure.

If the opponents didn't act, then after digestion, continue advancing, consume dozens more worlds, digest, and fortify again…

Gradually encroach in the most stable manner and with minimal cost.

For this, the Alliance even turned to handle those two 'tumors'.

No main forces were dispatched there, still guarded against the Fury Fleet.

Only the 'Korolya' and 'Winged' two Holy Grail-class battlecruisers were sent.

Their mission was never to launch a strong attack.

No need.

Just keeping a distance and bombarding was enough.

This way of fighting certainly couldn't conquer. Long-range bombardment has questionable accuracy and insufficient intensity to quickly destroy the opponent's Star Fortress. Even if a few shots hit, the Star Fortress could fly to the planet's backside and park there temporarily, allowing engineers to quickly repair damages.

Who knows if this could deplete or exhaust the opponent after decades or centuries of such warfare.

Yet the current actions of the Alliance fleet essentially put pressure on Shangdong Star.

Star Fortresses are hard to capture, but with a bit of bad luck, an ordinary Armed Space Station could be blown up instantly by a battlecruiser's Light Spear Array shot.

Meanwhile, other tactics were in play.

With the whole planet under blockade, Alliance ships continually broadcast to Shangdong Star; with Shangdong Star's external star language communication blocked, making contact with the outside impossible, wasn't it Alliance's script then?

After over six months of siege, the Alliance attempted to dispatch diplomatic envoys and surprisingly, it was agreed.

A small ship, carrying a diplomat, arrived at the Starport, exchanging with the defenders.

No consensus was reached.

But it was already quite a positive signal.

A fortnight later, the Alliance sent emissaries again.

In the period following, nearly every week, the Alliance sent envoys to interact with the local defenders.

No major agreements were reached, but the Alliance at least sent in some luxurious goods and gifts; the other side agreed to release some civilians, reducing unnecessary sacrifices and losses of war.

Even in later stages, the defenders proposed some conditions for surrender.

It’s just that the conditions were quite harsh, and the Alliance didn’t agree.

Still, there’s room for negotiation, no hurry.

Moreover, before talks, the Alliance wasn’t without other methods.

The ship escorting the diplomatic envoy, though ’small’, is relatively speaking. Even the smallest travel ship could carry several hundred people at once.

Diplomatic envoys naturally needed escort, which was reasonable.

A hundred-man escort arriving at once, housed by the defenders in Starport, allowing leaders from both sides to negotiate, was normal too.

So far, no particularly large conflicts had erupted between the two sides.

However, the defenders failed to notice some special existences among these escorts.

A few people were always missing on the way back and forth.

After five or six such trips, three to four dozen special warriors from the Alliance infiltrated Shangdong Star's Starport.

And during the last visit of the diplomatic envoy to the Starport, the hundred-man escort still followed.

They moved steadily inside the Starport, advancing towards the usual place for talks.

Meanwhile, the Starport's defenders inspected onboard as usual.

But, those who boarded for inspection, once inside, never made any further sound.

Chapter 540, Surrender, Our Ships Surround You

Kalduce dragged a despondent general out from the command post.

Outside the door, the Alliance diplomat was waiting.

Looking down at this mortal, a trace of admiration flickered in Kalduce's eyes.

The young man had grit. With only a dozen bodyguards by his side, he remained steady in the face of danger, knowing what he had to do.

But his tone was not gentle: "It's up to you, you need to complete your mission."

After the diplomat saluted, he took the general to an office nearby and began the conversation.

As for Kalduce, he personally led his team into the fray.

The Phoenix Battle Group had originally been stationed on the Alliance's main fleet, ready at any moment to engage in combat with the Furyflame and New World Torch battle groups.

But as the enemy retreated, the Alliance's strategic objective in the Proudclaw Cosmos shifted to local consolidation and defense, reducing the need for Interstellar Warriors.

It was time to return to Shangdong Star and eliminate any fears from behind.

Despite multiple diplomatic communications, nothing had happened, and the progress in negotiations had caused some complacency among the garrison commander.

Actually, it wasn't exactly complacency.

The demand was for no more than a hundred guards, and the docking ship had to be the smallest Voyager class — what more could be asked?

That three hundred Interstellar Warriors appeared was indeed unexpected.

Kalduce personally led three hundred battle brothers, instantly crushing the garrison at the Starport docking area.

Then they rushed forward to rendezvous with the allied forces that had set out earlier.

The soldiers safeguarding the diplomat were, in fact, all elite members from the Alliance Honor Guard Legion.

However, to avoid alerting the enemy, the Glory Guards did not wear full Power Armor but opted for the more understated Exoskeleton Armor.

When the Phoenix charged out, the informed group of a hundred also initiated their action.

Their objective was to charge directly to the designated negotiation site, ideally capturing the enemy's highest commander who had been negotiating with the Alliance.

If that wasn't possible, their secondary task was to protect their diplomat and await the Interstellar Warriors' rescue.

The elite Glory Guards were formidable. Unfortunately, due to insufficient equipment, a lack of numbers, and an opponent that wasn't too poor of a match — being a product of the Princess Legion — they ultimately failed to capture the enemy directly.

Caught off guard, the Princess's Rebel Army was initially thrown into disarray by the elite Glory Guards. But they quickly regained their composure, mustering heavy forces to chase, intercept, and escort their general away.

Although the Glory Guards couldn't capture the target directly, they at least fought their way to the door of the designated conference hall and cut off the enemy general's escape route, blocking him behind the door.

Such a large conference hall, with windows and a back door, left the less than a hundred Glory Guards unable to completely seal it off with their losses along the way.

Even if other exits were dangerous, there was still a rooftop terrace allowing flying vehicles from within the Starport to come and extract people.

Sure, taking some risks was involved—who knew if those Alliance soldiers below had any anti-air weapons? Or if there was an ambush near the back door?

But overall, General Wang Ningyi, who was commanding the garrison at Shangdong Star, had a good chance of making a getaway.

However, he made a big mistake.

Perhaps feeling humiliated, or angered by the sudden invalidation of previous discussions, feeling deceived and betrayed, or simply thinking the sub-hundred Alliance battalion storming in wasn't a big deal…

In the end, he missed the optimal chance for evacuation.

Leading his trusted aides, he attempted to join forces with the external besieging troops to crush the hundred-man Glory Guards.

Wang Ningyi wanted to capture the Alliance diplomat personally and question whether he regretted his actions.

However, whether the opponent regretted it was unclear, but Wang Ningyi certainly did.

The combat power of the Glory Guards was certainly less compared to the Interstellar Warriors. Yet, they managed to hold their ground firmly under the concentrated assault from multiple times their number.

Furious, Wang Ningyi ordered more heavy weapons. Cannons, or heavy armored vehicles capable of traversing the Starport, must be brought in to crush these enemies.

However, another piece of news sobered him.

The three hundred Interstellar Warriors who had emerged from the Alliance's small ship had already broken through the hastily assembled defenses and were now not far from his current position.

Perhaps… it was better to retreat for now?

With this thought, he eventually decided that cowardice was the better strategy.

With his closest guards, he headed to the large terrace on the fourth floor of the conference hall. There, a hovercraft was waiting.

Simultaneously, the ground troops launched a ferocious assault on the Alliance forces.

The goal wasn't to take down the opponents, but at least to suppress them strongly enough to provide cover and assistance for General Wang Ningyi's retreat.

When General Wang Ningyi stepped onto the terrace, an ominous premonition suddenly arose in his heart.

Chapter 540, Surrender, Our Ships Surround You_2

He looked around and saw the floating vehicles quietly hovering in the air, with the guards around him nervously observing the surroundings, their weapons ready to fire at any moment.

However, just as he was about to step into the floating vehicle, a sharp whistling sound suddenly came through.

This sound was somewhat familiar—heavy explosive gun!

"Run!"

He heard someone shouting loudly.

He didn't dare hesitate for a second and turned around to run back.

This saved his life.

The heavy explosive gun tore through the fragile exterior armor of the floating vehicle, creating a series of craters. The guard and driver who got in ahead of him were torn apart.

If he had gotten in too, he probably would have lost his life.

Fortunately, he ran fast. The explosive also shattered the vehicle's engine and power compartment, which subsequently triggered an explosion.

Flames and smoke engulfed the floating vehicle, tearing it into countless pieces.

Wang Ningyi and his guards were knocked off balance by the blast wave, barely able to stand.

In the chaos, six interstellar warriors from the Phoenix Battle Group were already weaving through the battlefield like ghosts, donned in bright red power armor, wielding high-energy weapons, swiftly moving towards Wang Ningyi's position.

Wang Ningyi attempted to organize a counterattack, but his guards were already thrown into chaos by the sudden assault.

The interstellar warriors calmly and efficiently dealt with the resistant guards, quickly subduing the remaining ones.

Wang Ningyi was thus captured.

But he was still defiant.

In the subsequent communication with the Alliance diplomat, Hussepe, he still firmly refused to surrender.

"Capturing me is useless, the Princess Legion will never surrender!"

That's what he said, stubbornly courting death.

But Hussepe didn't really want his life, continuing to persuade him.

During their exchange, the battle outside never ceased.

Led personally by Kalduce, the six Phoenix interstellar warriors who arrived first helped finish the battle in the council hall and then continued aiding the remaining Glory Guards to fortify the defense lines.

At the same time, Kalduce communicated with other squads, keeping abreast of the mission's progress.

Capturing the enemy's chief commander was crucial, but other mission objectives couldn't be ignored.

The interstellar warriors, divided into tactical teams, were to control key areas, namely the weapon systems throughout the starport.

Shangdong was heavily fortified everywhere, so the largest space facility in the orbital area, the Shangdong Starport, was a place not to be missed.

Actually, the Shangdong Starport was the largest star fortress in the entire Shangdong orbital area. The other two heavy star fortresses didn't have defenses as tight as here.

If this place could be controlled, it would be of great significance.

The previously infiltrated Glory Guards also launched a surprise attack at a critical moment.

They, too, were divided into squads, lurking in various locations. Once the Phoenix interstellar warriors launched their assault, they would emerge from behind to catch the garrison off guard and lead the Phoenix warriors to truly critical locations.

The Shangdong Star's starport was massive, with a total population of over 600,000 living within. Apart from necessary engineers, logistics, and civilian units for infrastructure maintenance, 400,000 of them were actual soldiers.

Stationed throughout the starport, they were all alarmed at this moment.

It’s unrealistic for the Phoenix to kill all enemies inside the starport.

However, when it comes to capturing key areas, nothing can stop them.

The single combat capability of interstellar warriors was greatly demonstrated in this environment.

The garrison within the starport lacked things to counter the interstellar warriors both near and far. Heavy tanks couldn’t move in many places, and in places where they could, the interstellar warriors wouldn’t foolishly charge head-on; some sentry mechas and feedback-type power armor elites posed threats, but just threats.

The Phoenix warriors weren’t just simple interstellar warriors. Gu Hang, being cautious not to be compared with Iron Armor in this sensitive environment, was very disciplined while developing the Phoenix Battle Group.

He had the capability to exponentially expand the Phoenix, making it very large.

But doing so would raise questions about where the seeds came from, as it was claimed that Matins and others preserved the original genetic seed stock. This claim could only be debunked by four veteran soldiers who survived the century-long penitential expedition, but they obviously wouldn’t expose themselves.

Also, to avoid being labeled similarly to Iron Armor for overexpansion.

Despite the critical moment, the Empire relied on Gu Hang to fight against the Iron Armor Battle Group, likely not causing trouble on this issue, turning a blind eye. But clearly, these matters would be accounted for later as evidence for reckoning.

Fewer weaknesses aren’t a bad thing either.

Since it wasn’t feasible to increase the quantity, the focus was on quality.

The Phoenix Battle Group may not be all champions, but at least it's a group of elite veterans.

Referencing the Alliance Army's encounter at Yuehe VII, even a few ordinary interstellar warriors could cause havoc in a fortress guarded by tens of thousands, let alone the direct deployment of 300 elite veteran interstellar warriors at Shangdong Starport.

In just six hours, most of the firepower systems at Shangdong Starport were under the control of the interstellar warriors.

Ten members formed a tactical team, controlling over twenty firepoints; the rest guarded operational systems, ammunition depots, command centers, and other places.

Without a chief commander, the rebels were still well-organized. They launched wave after wave of fierce counterattacks, trying to reclaim these key areas.

However, in the hands of the Phoenix, these attempts all failed.

Meanwhile, under the control of the interstellar warriors, the orbital guns at Shangdong Starport slowly activated.

The gun barrel aimed at the rear of the outer star fortress.

Fire.

The star fortress collapsed.

The outer star fortress had received the message, but there was no way to avoid it. With the propulsion system equipped on the star fortress, it was impossible to perform such a high-difficulty maneuver.

Moreover, compared to the thickness of the front armor, the rear of the star fortress didn't have such strong protection.

The firepower equipped on the star fortress couldn't turn to attack its own starport either.

After hitting the star fortress, the starport's firepower, still under the control of the combat readiness units, turned to attack the remaining armed space stations.

…

"Look, just look." Hussepe, the Alliance diplomat, said with great anguish while bringing the bound General Wang Ningyi to the terrace, "Each explosion represents the sacrifice of countless brave warriors! These, these are all your mistakes!"

Wang Ningyi glared viciously at Hussepe, cursing continuously.

But in fact, he was the one truly pained at heart.

Why was he so foolish as to communicate with the Alliance diplomat? Why let Alliance ships in?

Even if he knew nothing about external information, so what?

Wasn't he instructed to hold out to the end when parting with Battle Group Leader Politos?

Why attempt to gather intelligence from the Alliance diplomatic exchange?

What good could that do?

Not a word from these people was true!

And he exposed weaknesses, getting caught off guard!

From this perspective, everything happening now was indeed his responsibility!

“I should have killed you when you first came!” he said to Hussepe.

“But you didn’t, did you?” Hussepe said, “Since you’ve already made the mistake, don’t continue making it. The main fleet of the Alliance is just outside, now the starport’s firepower is under our control, the two star fortresses have been destroyed, and countless space stations have been damaged. Surrender, General, so more lives can be spared. At this point, there’s no way you can resist any longer.”