Governor 851

Chapter 851: Devouring the Queen

In this tri-fleet sea battle, the Blood Shark brigade successfully caused the greatest anger with the weakest, smallest presence.

But making the enemy feel uncomfortable, feel troublesome, in itself proves the success of our side.

Like mischievous troublemakers, the Blood Sharks successfully completed the task Gu Hang assigned to them: hinder the Green Skins from eliminating the Queen, hinder the Queen's escape, and await the lead fleet's arrival to finish off.

Of course, they couldn't possibly hold the enemy infinitely. As time passes, the Queen fleet is ultimately moving towards defeat.

Even though the Queen has taken the most important and excellent biological ships during the escape, there aren't enough ships to flee swiftly.

The gap in overall combat power, even with the Human Fleet constantly disrupting beside them, ultimately cannot reverse the final outcome.

However, Gu Hang won't be perpetually late.

Suddenly, a Green Skin junk ship is penetrated by a dazzling beam of light, and it explodes entirely.

Then, a wave of salvo arrives!

These bombardments are mainly energy weaponry, and their power is generally immense.

In truth, the hit rate from this salvo isn't very high, but once it hits, it can cause massive damage.

At least four Beastman battleships were destroyed.

The Human lead fleet has finally arrived!

Even though they're still quite far, even though hitting accuracy remains a concern at this range, only energy weapons can be conveniently and quickly deployed from here, and it must be of immense power, at least cannon fire above L-level specifications... Due to this, L-level specifications, even X-level specifications, or even higher, Z-level heavy weaponry equipped on the Queen of Glory can cause massive damage.

Yet, this is just the beginning.

As the Human Fleet gets closer, their firepower will become fiercer and more terrifying.

Leading the charge are two Queen of Glories.

To ensure success in this operation, Gu Hang has no intention of dividing forces; the three thousand warships he can muster are all here.

Although the quantity might seem indistinguishable, the quality appears tremendously frightening.

Two Queen of Glories as the core, this is a strength in most circumstances even the Central Empire struggles to assemble. It at least requires the Empire to make efforts, mobilize two founding brigades to fully participate in combat.

Generally, even if the Central Empire entertains such a notion, it might not necessarily gather such a situation.

Besides the two Queen of Glories, over forty giant ships also form a formidable force. Typically, an Empire Navy Fleet the Star Domain Government can allocate has one or two ships — four dozen require efforts from three to four Cosmos Domains to assemble this quantity.

This naval power, if given a little more time to approach, will wield enough strength to destroy the fleets of both insects and beasts together.

Yet, right now is the time when Yeerma Youwin's spirit is most tense.

In fact, the Human Fleet is still a bit far; the previous salvo of light spears was rather forced.

If the enemy now, if both Insect and Beast break free and run separately, it truly turns troublesome.

He knows Gu Hang's main target is the Queen. If the enemy genuinely ceases fighting rapidly and flees apart, he must make choices, figure out ways in such a situation to intercept the Queen fleet.

His fleet, in terms of size, scale, and quality, bears a gap with the Queen fleet. Unlike before when Green Skins "helped," he only needed minor interception, Green Skin ships instantly follow, allowing his fleet to pull back.

Now, without Green Skins, Youwin must use his ships as obstacles, commit fully. When the enemy fully commits to a desperate escape, operating like this, it's unknown how vast the losses will be, possibly even unable to stop.

He's already prepared for great sacrifices.

However, the unfolding situation is indeed the best outcome: neither of the two can easily detach.

The Queen employs cold judgments with absolute rationality; all ships start changing operations, some blocking, some desperately fighting, all to ensure the biological ship carrying the Queen fully escapes far away.

However, those caught up in the frenzy among Green Skins struggle to achieve this.

Perhaps evacuation orders are issued, but at least half of the ships continue to fiercely attack the Insect Swarm Fleet.

The Queen fleet is entangled, barely managing to detach only with the small number of ships carrying the Queen.

Youwin feels assured!

He immediately directs the fleet to block them.

The Queen fleet fights desperately.

Biological cannons, Insect spiritual energy suppression, targeted subspace shadows... all employable methods fall into action.

In a very short time, the Blood Shark brigade sacrifices two Strike Cruisers. Energy shields abruptly extinguish, inner crew members are struck dead by spiritual energy, full-scale biological cannon bombardment...

These are quite powerful means. Losing two Strike Cruisers quickly, even the Blood Shark flagship ’Ghost Evil Shark’ receives several blows, damaging the hull.

The price is unquestionably great.

But he blocks the Queen back.

"Roar!"

Youwin almost hears the Queen’s unwilling roar.

This sound, as if tangible, sweeps across all present Human Fleets. Crew members suffer headaches, tinnitus, vomiting...

However, Interstellar Warriors possess far greater resistance to this power than ordinary crew. Think Tank members of the brigade, Storm Mages borrowed into warships, also strive fully to negate the pressure.

Youwin himself feels slightly uncomfortable, marveling at the Queen's strength.

Yet, his heart feels relieved.

Observing the Queen fleet being re-entangled by those fierce Beastman junk ships, observing the fully approaching Human Ships already bringing the enemy into a conventional firepower strike range, he knows his task is already perfectly completed.

Next, he sees the large Human fleet driven under the leadership of two Queen of Glories catching up. Strong firepower, one shot after another, rapidly while simultaneously reducing the spaceship count of both Insect Beast fleets.

That Queen still intends defiantly resisting till the end.

The sway of spiritual energy continues, but after Gu Hang's intervention, it is easily shattered.

Then again she tries calling upon subspace shadows to counter-shield Gu Hang's spiritual energy.

But subspace shadows essentially rely on the Insect Swarm's large numbers forming a soulless black hole, isolating subspace. Now, the units the Queen can control are far from enough.

Shielding some ordinary Psychics might suffice. But for Gu Hang, it's utterly irrelevant.

When all Green Skin ships fail to escape, all biological ships are destroyed, leaving only the final, heavily damaged giant ship containing the Queen, Gu Hang ruthlessly issues the command.

A thousand cannons blaze, the biological ship thoroughly obliterated.

Following that, Gu Hang’s spiritual energy rush forth.

He catches a "little thing."

At this point, the Queen hasn’t lost hope of survival, casting everything aside, compressing the most crucial information into a small piece of shell.

Yet Gu Hang, acquainted with dealing with the Queen, won’t easily be tricked.

He seizes the Queen with spiritual energy.

Then, ’consumes’ her.

Chapter 852: Even the Gods Must Retreat

To say ’eat’ is actually not entirely accurate; what Gu Hang did was to place the Queen into his Storm God Kingdom.

It’s not just the Queen, there’s also a Neuron Worm. This creature could be considered a bonus. Its contribution to Gu Hang’s power growth is actually small, but it’s still something to consume.

At least it’s better than a mosquito’s leg.

The true nourishment is from the Queen.

This Queen is far stronger than the one from the Iron Armor War period, not even on the same level.

The Queen from the Iron Armor War was captured and raised by the Iron Armor Battle Group and the Alfonso Sect, and then lost control. Objectively, she didn’t reach her full potential, even when connected to the Insect Nest will network, and a large number of Insect Nest Fleets were deployed from Reyadoces’ Void Black Hole under her control, the overall scale just barely reached the minimum level of a Tentacle Fleet.

In short, she was somewhat underdeveloped. Unless the plan of spreading parasites and collecting biomass across the Spiderweb Starfield succeeded, she might never rise to become a terrifying disaster that could threaten the entire Empire.

Unfortunately, her actions back then were directly interrupted by the Alliance-led Empire forces. Even in the heart of the outbreak, the Princess Star Domain, she only consumed a little over a third, and much of the biomass she consumed and digested wasn't transported back to her in time, wasn't hatched into Insect Race war beasts, and didn't provide sufficient nourishment.

But the Queen at Omeglia was different. She almost reached the pinnacle of the Queen class. The 'Tentacle' she commanded was also a powerful one, ranking the top among all recorded Tentacles of the Void Insect Species encountered by humans.

However, they also faced the top tier Green Skin Orcs.

The Beastman Tribe Empire that originally occupied an entire star domain at Omeglia, having developed for decades, was strong but limited in strength. After the Queen arrived at Omeglia, the tribe was severely beaten.

Who knew that Bone Shards would arrive?!

This most renowned Beastman Leader in the known universe brought his elite troops to the battlefield, which led this powerful 'Tentacle' to be exhausted and had to cut its losses for survival, resulting in being captured by Gu Hang.

Yet this doesn't diminish the strength of this Queen.

When she was captured and taken into the Storm God Kingdom, tied to the altar at its center, and subjected to continuous, thunderous assault, the entire Kingdom received the nourishment it had long awaited.

Every strike shattered and peeled away fragments from the Queen's subspace essence. These fragments were absorbed and digested by the Storm God Kingdom, each time fundamentally enhancing the Kingdom.

The entire digestion process wouldn't last long.

It's estimated that in less than half a month, this Queen would be completely shattered, with all her subspace essence consumed by the Storm God Kingdom.

However, there is a danger in this process.

When Gu Hang first intervened in the battle at Omeglia, he sensed some malicious gazes in subspace, one of which was distant, somber, symbolizing deathly silence and coldness.

Gu Hang believed that it was the supreme will of the Void Insect Species manifesting in subspace.

The Void Will is presumably not a 'native' of subspace; in essence, it should be the collective will of countless Void Insect Species, which has grown so strong that it echoes within subspace, compelling entities of the level of the Four Gods and the Human Emperor to take notice, and even avoid confronting it to some extent.

The destruction of a powerful 'Tentacle,' with its representing Queen being 'eaten,' amounted to a significant loss for the Void Will.

Although it's not a subspace entity, making its influence in subspace not particularly convenient, Gu Hang had to guard against it.

What if?

What if a vast, terrifying subspace shadow directly enveloped his Storm God Kingdom, trying to crush him?

Fortunately, that didn’t happen.

As the Queen was captured and continuously digested, that cold gaze quietly retreated.

Gu Hang breathed a sigh of relief.

This signified that the Void Insect Species had entirely declared their withdrawal from the war.

In fact, this is the most normal outcome.

If the Void Will truly acted according to the worst-case scenario he imagined, desperately fighting, it would have been disastrous for him. Would it have been any better for the Void Will?

Not necessarily.

Gu Hang is no longer a ’small object’ easily crushed by a finger; he can withstand for a considerable period, and his counterattack could even injure the opponent.

During this process, wouldn’t other subspace powerhouses have thoughts? What price would the Void Will have to pay for this?

Moreover, would killing Gu Hang make any difference? The real universe battlefield at Omeglia has reached this state; the Insect Race has already failed. Just to save a Queen who had lost most of her troops...

Is it worth it?

So far, Gu Hang hasn’t even factored in the human Emperor, whose thoughts he couldn’t predict.

The retreat of the Void Will, its surrender, might be the most reasonable choice.

...

One of the two major enemies in the Omeglia Campaign, the Void Insect Species, has been resolved.

But this doesn't mean that humanity's challenges have been cut in half.

With the loss of the Queen, those Insect Race units on various planets fighting the Green Skin Orcs turned into mindless drones, effectively nonexistent.

Nevertheless, although the Queen was ultimately captured by Gu Hang, it is undeniable that the Green Skin Orcs are the victors of this war.

What transformative changes will such a large-scale victory bring to the Beastmen?

Gu Hang, located in the heart of the previous battle, the Ancache VIII star system, sees it all clearly!

The overwhelming Waaagh energy rages through the corresponding subspace, stirring a terrifying green storm!

Two Beastmen faces seem to flicker unpredictably within the subspace's waves, their cruel and sly laughter daunting even the most fearsome gods.

Chapter 853: The Stars and Universe Are Burning!

The green storm that even the gods avoid, with two Green Skin faces emerging and sneering within, represents the deities among the Orcs.

Their ecological niche among the gods is unique, and Gu Hang describes them as 'racial gods.'

The four most powerful ones, including the one he devoured early on, the particularly weak 'Primal Fury Owl' among the inferior deities, can all be considered 'conceptual gods.'

The difference between them is as their names suggest.

The Four Great Evil Gods, and the subspace represented by many evil gods, are reflections of the emotions and soul resting places of life forms in the real universe, representing certain types of emotions, thoughts, trends, soul essences...

A series of such illusory concepts form 'gods' in the subspace. Conversely, the gods themselves reinforce this concept, creating a positive cycle.

Faith in conceptual gods does not concern which race; any intelligent being can believe.

But there are exceptions, such as the Orcs.

The emotional fluctuations of the Orcs do not feed back to the evil gods of the subspace.

The rage of the Orcs charging with Waaagh won't earn them the appreciation of the Tyrant.

The Orcs indulging in feasts and revelry after a battle are not encouraged by the God of Lust.

The Orcs' incredible vitality does not enhance the decaying cycle of the Beneficent Father's life.

The Orcs are even unrelated to the Lord of All Changes, who dominates conspiracies and plots.

This is a racial characteristic of the Green Skin Orcs, which has given rise to the racial gods focused on the Orcs—they call them Mr. Mao and Mr. Mao.

This pair of Twin Gods protect the Orcs and merged with the racial characteristics of the Orcs themselves, making them almost immune to Chaos corruption. Additionally, with the power of the gods, they too can harness spiritual energy (Orc Shaman), and they bless powerful Orc Leaders as the source of the Orcs' increasing strength through victory.

Conversely, one could say that the Orcs already possessed such racial talents, which in turn gave rise to racial gods with such powers, and that would also be valid.

And Bone Shards, known as the most powerful Orc in the known universe, is called the Prophet of Mr. Mao and Mr. Mao, receiving divine messages and bearing the burden of leading the Orcs in the greatest Waagh in history!

It is only natural that he would garner attention from Mr. Mao and Mr. Mao.

And he did not disappoint, securing victory in the Omgeria War.

Even the twin gods of the Orcs 'personally' sent their congratulations!

The already immensely powerful Bone Shattering King, at this moment, will become even stronger.

And this is the opponent Gu Hang will face next.

Thinking of this, Gu Hang sighed.

The Bone Shattering King's strength itself is already daunting. He is probably the strongest opponent Gu Hang has ever faced, more formidable than even a Divine Sovereign Demon.

And aside from facing Bone Shards, what worries Gu Hang the most are those two laughing maniacally in the subspace, whom even the gods temporarily avoid.

To fight Bone Shards and lose is one thing; but even if they win, would those two shamelessly intervene themselves?

Who knows!

The rational and indifferent Void Insect mind calculates pros and cons coldly, making its actions more predictable.

But those two Green Skin brothers have no predictability at all.

Huge losses? Not worth it?

When they lose their temper, they don't care about any of that!

Moreover, a powerful Tentacle Fleet's Queen is just a Queen, lacking uniqueness. There is still a gap in status compared to Bone Shards, the known universe's strongest Orc and favorite of Mr. Mao and Mr. Mao.

The two racial gods of the Orcs indeed hold a nontrivial chance of showing up if Bone Shards faces a deadly threat.

This is what worries Gu Hang the most.

But as the saying goes, the arrow is on the string, and must be released.

...

In the endless starry sky of the Ancache VIII system, humans achieved the first victory of the great war.

The last fleet of the Void Insect Species was annihilated, with the Queen captured by Gu Hang, the pursuit fleet of the Green Skin Orcs mostly eliminated, and only a few escaped when the Human Fleet's main focus was on the biological ships.

On the human side, although less than twenty ships were lost, they were mostly small boats, negligible compared to the overall count of over three thousand.

The human army, having reformed the fleet formation, marched grandiosely towards Ancache VIII.

Soon, Gu Hang's army arrived near the planetary orbit.

No delays, no additional preparations, the human army immediately launched an assault.

The theory of the opportunity window period still stands; it's the best time now for a full-scale attack on the Green Skins.

They had just secured a victory, and from top to bottom, the surviving Green Skin units were all emboldened by an epic victory, a successful Waaagh, with morale and confidence soaring, and greatly enhanced strength. This was even reflected in their physique, expanding by a full circle.

This is a very intuitive expression. For the Orcs, green is beautiful, and size is power.

But ultimately, during the previous war with the Insect Swarm, they lost a substantial amount of troops. No matter how fast Green Skins replenish, can they be faster than the Insect Race? Even the Insect Race cannot replenish all war losses within a dozen days, let alone the Orcs.

They must wait for new mushrooms to grow to replenish their forces. Only the new mushrooms nurtured after such a great battle can inherit and absorb the fruits of victory, giving birth to greener and larger new lads.

Chapter 853: The Entire Galaxy Burns! (Part 2)

This all takes time.

But the window period Gu Hang wanted was to kill the Bone Shattering King before all of this came true.

There was no room for delay.

The first thing to do was to split the forces to completely blockade the jump points linking to Ancache VIII to prevent potential orc reinforcements from other star domains.

Gu Hang's main fleet, roughly less than a thousand warships, was dispatched for this task.

But that was not all.

The total number of ships from the western front main force of the Dark Side Expedition currently deployed in the Omegilia Star Realm already exceeds five thousand, approaching six thousand. Other sub-fleets, after completing tasks such as clearing worlds occupied by orcs on the outskirts, blocking orc supply lines, and executing Extinction Orders on worlds fully covered by green-skin ecologies, would also quickly head toward Ancache VIII to join the blockade mission for this star system.

In fact, these peripheral battles had already erupted at the first moment.

The Bone Shattering King could certainly perceive the threat from the human army.

He was unafraid.

If he were afraid of challenges, he wouldn't have been the boss respected and revered by green skins throughout the universe.

But fearlessness aside, proper preparation for war was still very necessary.

His summoning signal had been sent out when Gu Hang was still focused on chasing the Queen. The Omegilia Star Realm had already been set ablaze, with green-skin armies from various planets setting out with howls, stimulated by the call of the king, motivated by a great victory, and driven by the prospect of an epic battle, all aiming at Ancache VIII for a full-scale assault!

The human army before them was the first obstacle to be crushed.

Those shrimp blocking us from following the king into battle must die!

But the human army, also receiving orders from the Command Center to fully block the orcs, was absolutely unwilling to let the enemy slip away like this.

The Alliance Navy, Interstellar Warriors, and other battle groups that originally belonged to the Expeditionary Force series were undoubtedly the main force. Meanwhile, troops collected from five surrounding star domains were also quite numerous. For this grand battle, the human side also gave it their all, even mobilizing planetary defense armies whose overall level was not quite enough.

Their combat prowess and will to fight were very concerning. However, the significance of this war was too great.

Not just for the Alliance — with such a large Dark Side Expeditionary Force, winning this battle was crucial, but if they didn't win, they could regroup and fight again. After all, it was only the western front army; there were also northern and southern lines, and the alliance headquarters was continuously building forces, controlling four and a half Cosmos Domains, having plenty of war potential.

And what about the five major star domains? They were surrounding Omegilia Star Realm closely. If this battle were lost, the 'grandest waaagh in the universe', as the Bone Shattering King prophesied, would likely begin with them as its center. The first ones in danger were them.

Trickery, cowardice... such situations certainly existed. After all, with such a huge scale and such intense warfare, total avoidance was impossible.

But overall, these five star domains' forcibly conscripted units managed to show their worth.

Even the weakest Defense Armies played the role of cannon fodder. They sacrificed themselves to block the green skins, buy time for the main forces, and, in the most tragic, desperate scenarios, sacrifice themselves without any strategic value to gain a bit of green-skin casualties...

Furthermore, not all units in the five major star domains were weak. The National Church, Sect of Mechanics, Star Realm Army, guards of the Empire Commerce Guild, mercenaries... some exceptional units delivered commendable performances.

And these achievements, the Alliance would not forget. Rewards where due, records where warranted; there would be future recompense.

On the ground, in orbit, at the jump points, in the boundless deep space...

The fierce battle set the entire Omegilia Star Realm ablaze.

The closer to Ancache VIII, the fiercer the fighting.

And the fiercest place was naturally Ancache VIII itself!

With the outer defense and interception strategy largely executed, significantly reducing the number of green-skin reinforcements arriving to help, Gu Hang unhesitatingly ordered a full-scale assault on Ancache VIII.

The orbital layer of the Ancache VIII system boiled the moment the human fleet approached!

Two Queens of Glory, leading numerous battleships and battle cruisers, first formed a bombardment formation. All Light Spear Arrays synchronized, with blue-white beams piercing through the makeshift space junk defense line hastily erected by the orcs in recent times.

The green skins were also quite helpless.

In their previous brutal war against the Insect Swarm, the struggle over planetary orbit had also been intense. The established orbital defense systems were almost entirely destroyed. Now, the temporary junk space stations launched from the surface really were just junk.

The green-skin fleet tried to seize the window period before the human forces arrived, dragging some asteroids from the outer system to use as cover, ringing them around the planet’s orbit to erect orbital defense works, which were essentially useless.

For the green skins, they had already done everything possible in a short time and had done their utmost.

But useless junk remains junk.

The green-skin fleet hidden within the asteroid belt and the weapon platforms formed by hollowing out asteroids turned to slag in the first wave of attacks.

The firepower from the Queen of Glory and dozens of battleships was indeed too fierce!

But after the first wave of the green-skin fleet was destroyed, more orc gun turrets built from asteroids and meteors rose from behind the wreckage field, with spore torpedoes and crude laser beams weaving a chaotic but dense interception net.

The green skins wouldn't surrender so easily, and their technology, skills, and racial traits allowed them to quickly produce a bunch of 'junk' to join the battle.

Green-skin manufacturing is indeed rapid.

Don't ask if it's reliable; if you want quantity, they'll provide it liberally.

One must not recklessly persist against the green skins' 'junk' on the orbit.

But the good news is, junk is ultimately junk. These newly emerged items could at most bring the human fleet a bit of trouble, demonstrate a slight green-skin presence on the planetary orbit, and prevent the human fleet from wantonly bombarding the surface.

Beyond that, it's unrealistic to stop the human fleet from advancing to the next step.

This was expected.

An Alliance Vanguard Fleet, receiving orders, swiftly advanced to clear a path for the landing fleet.

Three assault groups, formed by cruisers, entered the battlefield in a wedge formation, while at this moment, numerous small modified green-skin ships surrounded them from all directions.

These things were more akin to one-time suicide attack weapons than actual ships.

Their purpose was solely offensive, with no concern for survival.

The engine was essentially a high-energy rocket launcher. This gadget had no control whatsoever; it couldn't stop until the fuel was depleted, unable to cease. If there was any control capability, it was merely slight steering functionality, beyond which there was nothing.

The biomaterial acid on the ship's surface corroded upon encountering shields or Void Shields, temporarily burning a small hole for entry.

With the rocket's thrust, it would explosively approach human ships like a rocket, driving the large drill head at the top into the human ship upon explosion.

The middle and aft sections of the ship would disintegrate in the explosion, exposing numerous small landing pods within, sticking like locusts to the cruiser's hull. The howling green-skin warriors would swarm out!

Chapter 854: The Stars Are Burning (Part 2)

The orbital battle over Ancache VIII had reached a fever pitch.

Even though the Beastmen were vastly inferior to humans in terms of overall orbital defense capabilities, and their anti-orbit cannons on the ground were severely lacking in number, they still did everything they could to contest the orbit against humans.

Alternatively, one could say they were simply resisting.

Even if they knew they couldn't win, they pushed themselves to the limit to cause as much trouble for humans as possible.

From the sacrifice ratio, the Green Skins were at a huge disadvantage.

But so what?

Gu Hang could tell that Bone Shattering King was trying to stall for time.

Simply put, time was indeed on the side of the Green Skins.

The longer they dragged it out, the more new Green Skin warriors would be born on the many planets occupied by the Green Skins in the Omgeria Star Realm. The losses they sustained in previous wars would quickly be replenished.

If the delay lasted for several months and Gu Hang failed to take Ancache VIII, then on this planet, and even throughout the Omgeria Star Domain, those Greenskins who couldn't be entirely eradicated would be joined by others able to enhance their individual strength with the Waaagh energy field and their awe-inspiring Green Skin technology, ultimately arming a more powerful Beastman Legion.

By then, the difficulty of capturing Ancache VIII would further escalate.

Meanwhile, it seemed feasible to completely block the whole star system for now, preventing reinforcements from other areas. But by that time, holding the blockade might no longer be possible.

Against this backdrop, Bone Shattering King had chosen an astute tactic: he wasn't shy about committing forces, even when at a disadvantage. Instead, he endured higher casualties and a larger exchange ratio to stubbornly contest the planet's orbit against the human forces, which had no advantage.

Even utilizing those suicidal rocket ships as a last resort.

The relentless attacks of those rocket ships, combined with their low cost and rapid production speed, indeed caused significant trouble for the human Vanguard Fleet.

The first wave of attack could almost be described as fruitless.

But Gu Hang, expressionless and without hesitation, instantly ordered the next assault.

There was no probing; he went all out at once.

Two Queen of Glory starships led the charge, followed by twelve Emperor-class and Retribution-class battleships, and over a thousand cruisers and escort ships. Instantly, a massive firepower array descended upon the orbit of Ancache VIII.

The distance was already perilous. The firepower of the human warships could be unleashed without restraint upon the ground, but similarly, ground-based firepower could also threaten the ships within orbital range.

Yet evidently, Gu Hang, who made this decision, feared nothing.

The Green Skins' trump cards had almost all been played.

The anti-orbit firepower fiercely launched from the surface was pitifully weak compared to the vast size of the human fleet; those suicidal rocket ships that repelled the first wave of human attacks buzzed like locusts, but the number of human warships was not that much less than a locust swarm.

Escort and destroyer firepower focused on eradicating those suicidal rockets and intercepting ground-based firepower.

While the cruisers and larger ships targeted ground strikes.

This included two Queen of Glory starships and the Extinction Order weapons launched from the starships.

If they could destroy Ancache VIII with Extinction Order weapons, it would be quite worthwhile—regardless of how many Extinction Orders were needed or the high manufacturing cost of the weapon, as long as they succeeded, the results would be profitable and strategically valuable.

Regrettably, the Extinction Order didn't work.

The Green Skins' interception means were few, but highly precise. The Extinction Orders were all accurately intercepted, and even those terrifying Z-level cannons fired from the Queen of Glory were mostly intercepted. After three rounds of bombardment, only one Z-level shell hit the ground.

This high interception efficiency suggested to Gu Hang that Bone Shattering King himself had intervened.

Gu Hang had no doubt he could identify the salvos that posed the greatest threat to the planet under the cover of the barrage of artillery. The anti-orbit cannons connected by Bone Shattering King were uncannily accurate.

It was something Gu Hang couldn't do much about.

A formidable opponent like Bone Shattering King had the power to single-handedly sway the course of an apocalyptic battle.

Just like Gu Hang himself, who also joined the fray.

Even if the most heavyweight firepower was intercepted, the remaining impacts still wreaked immense havoc, striking vital points on the Green Skin Orcs on the surface.

The precise interception orchestrated by Bone Shattering King was remarkable, but was not the human orbital bombardment accurate as well?

Under Gu Hang's enhancement, it was equally precise!

Moreover, the first sacrificial contribution came from Chen Yanqing.

His heroic spirit was summoned during the battle.

He stood there in the void, summoning the psychic beacons he had left in the planetary orbit and on the surface before his death.

And Gu Hang, leading numerous Storm Mages, utilized the observation links constructed before Chen Yanqing's death, penetrating the energy fluctuations surrounding the planet's surface. Psychic Vision pierced through the Waaagh energy field's green glow, compressing every seventeen minutes to the fortress's pinnacle, then radiating out in ring-shaped shockwaves—tangible proof of Bone Shattering King's personal augmentation of front line units—projecting countless Green Skin defensive structures from the planet's surface onto tactical screens of every starship involved in ground strikes.

The orbital strike command center adjusted the landing points for the Light Spear Array, Colossal Cannon Array, and missile bombardments, with an unending torrent of artillery crossing the atmosphere, accurately targeting marked strategic objectives.

Some locations were orc-constructed ground fortresses, guarding key transportation hubs; some were corpse recycling plants supplying nutrient material for ecological gardens; some were war equipment processing factories; some were vast waste dumps; others were Waaagh energy relays...

Most attention was paid to the Green Skins' anti-orbit firepower positions.

Bone Shattering King could intercept the most threatening Extinction Order weapons and Z-level cannons, but could he intercept so much L-level and M-level firepower?

Each of these Green Skin strategic objectives was destroyed under the bombardment.

The ferocious bombardment disrupted and disordered the Green Skin front line, spanning a vast region of thousands of kilometers.

And this was the optimal time for a landing.

Chapter 855: The Entire Star Domain Burns (Part 3)

Gu Hang personally led the Queen of Glory Battleship along with the main forces of many vessels in the Human Fleet to forcibly approach the planet's orbit and launch a fierce bombardment on the surface of Ancache VIII, creating an opportunity for landing operations. After that, the human landing operation began immediately.

The first batch of drop pods were ejected from carriers and light carriers.

Unlike transport planes and transport ships, these metal conical drop pods carried far less than transport ships and were not cheap, but their greatest value lay in their excellent breaching capability.

Whether in speed, stealth, or resistance to strikes, they were superior, making them most suitable for deploying the first wave of airborne troops.

Due to the critical task of 'beachhead landing' and carrying capacity being small, these troops often consisted of the most elite warriors.

These drop pods clashed intensely with the Beastman anti-aircraft fire as they descended through the atmosphere. Even after the frontline naval guns cleared the way, there was still a large amount of anti-aircraft firepower remaining.

Over 15% of the drop pods turned into fireballs before landing.

This was for drop pods.

If transport ships and planes were used, the interception rate would likely increase significantly.

The troops that successfully broke through the interception craters then leaped out of the pods, led by elite soldiers of the Glory Guard and Interstellar Warriors from various battle groups.

These heavily armed soldiers started constructing a circular formation under the instructions of the ground commander.

Wang Jun, the acting company commander of the Phoenix Ninth Company from the Phoenix Battle Group, shouted on the communication channel.

The originally planned commander was indeed the Ninth Company's commander, not Wang Jun. However, during the drop, the pod carrying the commander was destroyed. As the acting company commander by battlefield succession, he held the highest position among those who landed, making him the commander by default.

Beneath the rising dust on the horizon, thirty Beastman war machines assembled from Insect Race carapace and scrap metal rumbled forward. When their caterpillar tracks rolled over the ground, the splashed dust mixed with acid was enough to dissolve ceramic steel armor.

The Terminator Squad of the Phoenix Ninth Company launched a counter-charge on the right flank, melting the frontline war machines with thermite weapons, but more green-skinned heavy trucks surged from the breach, their rocket launchers on top blasting the newly-erected fortifications into ruins.

The ground battle reached a stalemate.

Although Wang Jun's troops were elite, their numbers were still too few.

The humans selected a specific drop zone for good reason. The drop pods landed accurately, aiming directly for a large anti-aircraft firepower position.

This area was of high importance, having already been covered by naval firepower. However, the heaviest artillery was intercepted, and lighter cannons were insufficient to destroy this position.

Not only were the fortifications strong, but they also had energy shields.

These energy shields were much more robust than those on starships.

Starships, regardless of size, had to accommodate weapons, personnel, engines, armor, and a series of essential facilities, so the remaining energy compartments had limitations.

On the ground, it was different.

Moreover, these green-skins' energy shields resembled a 'ground shield', capable of not only building warehouses with abundant energy reserves but also integrating energy stations to directly use geothermal, fusion, and other energies to power the shields.

They were sturdy indeed.

With both anti-aircraft and anti-orbit interception defenses alongside defensive energy shields, simple orbital bombardments proved difficult.

The initial landing party's original target was to quickly advance to that area after establishing a foothold, defeat the defending troops from the ground, and destroy the Energy Shield Generator. If possible, they would destroy the anti-aircraft position directly; if not, they would retreat, leaving the undefended anti-aircraft position to be targeted by orbital bombardments.

But now, it seemed a bit challenging.

After personally engaging in battle, Wang Jun realized the terror of these Beastmen.

The individual strength of these Beastmen was generally much higher than what Wang Jun had encountered before. Even the relatively low-grade green-skin brats had skulls that felt harder when he crushed their heads.

And the ground troops had failed to breach the defenses immediately, making follow-up breakthroughs quite challenging.

The Beastmen made use of their home-field advantage, continually deploying reserves, while humans relied on orbital bombardments that were continually intercepted by anti-aircraft fire to barely maintain the front line.

On Gu Hang's holographic tactical sand table, the deep red blocks representing the Beastman military forces grew rapidly. The green-skins were constantly dispatching troops to provide reinforcements.

Despite not achieving the desired results on the ground for the moment, Gu Hang still resolutely initiated the second phase of operations.

The primary reason was some changes happening in space combat.

The earlier fierce orbital bombardment had reduced the support efforts of the green-skins from the surface to the planet's orbit.

More warships were thus liberated. Five hundred warships quickly closed the distance, reaching a near-Earth orbit.

Presently, looking up from Ancache's surface, the human starships were more numerous than the stars, densely packed, almost covering the entire sky!

Then, another two rounds of powerful orbital bombardment descended.

The anti-aircraft firepower that the ground failed to eliminate intercepted many orbital bombs, and humans suffered greater losses than expected on the starships. But loss was loss, and the currently strong human military power could entirely withstand it.

Even during this phase, another batch of troops was deployed from carriers and light carriers.

Those were more than a dozen orbital drop divisions.

Orbital drop divisions were essentially special forces. They did not use drop pods but used transport ships, though not in a conventional transport ship manner.

Light carrier starships, generally over twelve kilometers long, opened their belly doors, launching transport ships carrying fully loaded drop divisions into the air at about 50,000 meters above the surface—already within Ancache VIII's atmosphere.

At this distance, the armor and speed of transport ships were relatively weak, and their survival time under anti-aircraft and anti-orbital fire attacks had to be counted in seconds. If soldiers were transported conventionally to the surface, more than half of the ships would likely be destroyed en route.

But since they are called drop divisions, they wouldn't be using conventional transport methods.

The custom-made transport ships simultaneously opened dozens of huge hatches at the belly and sides. Following that, fully armed drop divisions leaped out of the transport ships!

Orbital airdrop was a new tactic studied by the Marine Corps under the Alliance Navy.

Chapter 856: The Starfield Is Ablaze (4)

Soldiers belonging to the Navy Marine Corps conduct airborne operations from tens of thousands of meters above, targeting specific locations.

The specially designed wing suits are equipped with jet functions, allowing them to descend much faster than free fall, and their small target size significantly reduces the probability of being hit by anti-aircraft fire— even if hit, the damage is limited to a few people, compared to the catastrophic loss of a large transport ship with multi-layer honeycomb structure densely packed with thousands of people being taken out by a single shell.

The orbital drop troops have been researched by the Navy Marine Corps for some time, and theoretically, the series of technologies are quite mature. These airborne divisions have conducted tactical exercises in safe areas and even engaged in real combat on certain battlefields.

However, those real battles were essentially based in areas where victory was not highly crucial, making them more experimental in nature.

But now, they are tasked with supporting ground combat.

During the breakthrough phase, they performed exceptionally well, even stunningly so.

The transport aircraft carrying the paratroopers ultimately met their destruction. However, before being destroyed, the well-trained airborne troops had mostly already jumped out.

And the wing suits proved effective as expected. During the descent, the soldiers eliminated were generally in the minority.

In terms of casualty ratios, it was surprisingly comparable to using drop pods.

But drop pods are expensive, hold fewer people, so nothing beats the ’cheapness’ of direct airborne descent, right?

Just a life, after all.

However, the greatest risk of direct airborne descent lies in the landing phase.

Falling at speeds exceeding free fall poses a significant challenge to the human body. Moreover, the deceleration during landing is critical. At a certain height, they deploy parachutes to decelerate abruptly; simultaneously, the winged suit, being a disposable piece of equipment, serves its final role by releasing energy from the nozzles at the front to detach the suit and slow to a safe speed before landing.

The so-called safe speed is one at which a normal person would be killed upon impact. At this time, the exoskeletal structure beneath the wing suit provides the final protection for the soldiers. Ensuring that the legs absorb most of the kinetic energy upon landing protects them from injury and allows them to immediately engage in combat.

Of course, this is all under ideal conditions. Even in well-prepared exercises, people occasionally fell to their deaths, let alone in the far more complicated terrain and high-pressure conditions of actual combat.

This is the first risk point.

The second risk point arises when their speed decreases in the final approach to landing.

At this time, they become targets.

Especially in the current battle situation, the anti-aircraft fire of the Green Skins has not been completely removed. Even though the drop zones were set up in front of the elite Interstellar Warriors and Glory Guards, given the severe ground battle conditions, the drop zones couldn't guarantee safety.

This allowed the anti-aircraft fire from the Green Skins or even regular Beastman kids raising their guns to hit the soldiers descending rapidly.

Although the paratroopers can shoot back while in mid-air, without cover and having to manage their descent, they are obviously at a disadvantage.

The third risk point comes from the imprecise landing accuracy in single-soldier orbital drops, leaving paratroopers scattered upon landing, unable to maintain formation.

If it were a secure drop zone, even if the enemy was close by, just giving them enough time to regroup the well-trained warriors to reengage would help significantly.

But now, there is no such opportunity.

Even if they successfully land, they might have enemies within firing range.

They must pick up their guns and fight on the spot, at most forming temporary combat teams with nearby friendly units.

And this leads to a fourth risk point—the lack of heavy equipment in the airborne units.

Although there are some light armored vehicles and light tanks that have been specially modified for airborne support, and there are some Sentinel Mecha present, they're vastly different compared to conventional army heavy tanks and artillery, let alone Titans.

This puts them under tremendous pressure if they are forced into intense combat immediately upon landing.

Overall, all the adverse factors encountered during this airborne operation impacted the paratroopers.

This resulted in them suffering extremely heavy casualties.

Objectively speaking, this cannot be considered a successful airborne operation.

There were still some experimental units, which were thrown into such a brutal war, somewhat irresponsibly.

However, only through the baptism of real warfare can a sufficiently strong army be forged.

The lessons learned through bloodshed from this battle should help this orbital airborne unit evolve further.

Moreover, speaking of objective significance, it must be stated comprehensively.

Regardless of the heavy sacrifices made upon landing, at least, more than thirty thousand soldiers from over a dozen airborne divisions performed the airborne mission, and nearly twenty thousand landed and participated in combat. Even though they scattered upon landing, some quickly fell into dire situations and were annihilated, they indeed achieved Gu Hang's strategic goal: swiftly supplementing ground forces.

The previously deployed Phoenix and other Interstellar Warriors, along with the elite Glory Guard, would not just sit and watch their allies take a beating.

Wang Jun, as the frontline combat commander, decisively acted to rescue and rally the paratrooper units.

Subsequently, they divided into two groups, with one part continuing to defend the drop zone, providing a relatively safe landing environment for the incoming second and third waves of drop pods and orbital paratroopers.

Meanwhile, Wang Jun personally led the freed elite units and a few airborne Sentinel Mecha, infantry fighting vehicles, and light tanks to attack his original target.

After sacrificing 67 Interstellar Warriors, 792 Glory Guards, and 20,000 paratroopers, they destroyed their predetermined target within three hours.

When the green Earth Shield disappeared, the human forces had already begun their retreat.

The Command Center only allowed them eighteen minutes to withdraw.

Once time was up, orbital fire rained down heavily.

The Green Skin Orcs' most important anti-orbital air defense fortress cluster in the area was reduced to ruins under the barrage of two X-level cannons and countless L and M-class ship cannons.

Additionally, some airborne troops originally tasked with blocking Beastman reinforcements during the main force's attack, who didn't have time to retreat, including three airborne regiments, vanished along with them.

Chapter 857: The Entire Star Domain Is Burning (5)

The greatest threat to the landing zone has been eliminated, significantly reducing the area's air defense and anti-orbital firepower. The human forces can finally conduct large-scale landing operations, deploying more and stronger forces to the surface.

The first wave to arrive came from fighter jets launched by the carrier.

Previously, concerns about losses made the survival conditions for the jets quite troubling. Though some were deployed into the atmosphere of Ancache VIII, they played a part when Wang Jun led the mission to take down the air defense position.

However, the number of jets wasn't large, and they weren't the main players in the battle.

Now, the swarming jet fleet has become a force that cannot be ignored.

The firepower of fighter jets is obviously not as fierce as cannons, yet the ground forces on the human side are particularly short of artillery at the moment.

But fighter jets can make up for some of that shortage.

One after another, these airborne jets armed with missiles can deliver firepower precisely where the ground forces need it.

They certainly don't have the endurance of artillery units, nor can they accompany the offensive like ground tanks, armored vehicles, or even mechas, but the intensity of their short-term firepower is undeniably impressive. Additionally, the speed at which they respond to calls is very rapid. When they run out of missiles, they can switch to firing their machine guns at the ground.

The most crucial point is that, with the enemy's most significant air defenses down, they have become reckless. Although there's still some air defense vehicles and man-portable air defense missiles within the Green-Skin Army, their threat level has drastically decreased.

The greatest role of fighter jets is to counter the Beastman's air force.

Previously, the Beastman air units caused trouble for the human side. Even though the human side holds orbital dominance, the Beastman controls the air superiority over the surface.

Now, the situation is reversed.

The battles between human jets and Beastman jets and airships are exceedingly fierce in the skies.

Perhaps until now, humans haven't been able to completely dominate the skies. At least, the period when the Green-Skins controlled the skies is now a thing of the past.

When fighter jets are busy engaging the Green-Skin air forces and unable to provide the requested fire support to ground forces, they can always call for orbital strikes if necessary.

Without the interceptions from anti-orbital positions, the success rate of orbital strikes has greatly increased.

In orbit, several cruisers accompanied by a destroyer combat group are specifically serving the surface troops commanded by Wang Jun. The weaponry outfitted on these warships is not like typical ones. Weapons like light lances, which are especially effective in naval battles, are largely absent; only a third of the cannons are macro cannons, and the rest are fully equipped with missiles.

Both types are quite effective in supporting ground operations.

The macro cannon is quick, precise, and vicious; missiles blast a large area.

Where the ground forces are in dire straits, a surgical strike often solves the problem; when facing a giant Gao Mao King Kong, Interstellar Warriors may have to pay a hefty price in casualties for decapitating and destroying it, but that single Heat Hammer Macro Cannon strike can also settle the matter.

Minor issues dealt with by jets, major ones by warships.

The Beastman's counter-attack is indeed fierce and efficient.

Before the destruction of the air defense positions, the Green-Skins dispatched large forces to attempt to defend them; after their destruction, they didn't reduce their support efforts but instead intensified them, attempting to wipe out the landing human forces completely.

Now, this entire area has turned into a three-dimensional battlefield.

The battle is not only on the ground, but also in the sky, with Green-Skins fighting back from outer planetary orbit and the underground is being developed into a new battlefield.

The nests and tunnels once belonging to the Void Insect Species have been converted into ambush corridors; subterranean digestion pools have become bases for storing troops, weaponry, ammunition, and armored units.

Above these bases, a crossfire net is set up to prevent human ground forces from descending.

This kind of underground facilities and tunnel warfare are very disadvantageous for the attackers. More critically, it's challenging for air and orbital firepower to assist.

Before the enemy's ambush is activated and before precise reconnaissance of the underground tunnels and bases, relying solely on orbital observation and aerial reconnaissance to discover them is indeed very tough.

And even if they are discovered, it's difficult to destroy them. Even the heavy Loyal Rage Macro Cannon has trouble penetrating the thick earth to destroy the underground bases located deep down.

The human forces often have no choice but to expend immense resources to dispatch troops to clear out those bunkers and underground bases one by one.

Though at first the humans were somewhat lacking in personnel and resources, making it difficult to execute this strategy, soon they won't face that issue.

Three hundred transport ships broke through the remaining Beastman air defenses, deploying two fully organized Alliance Army group forces and twenty Titans to the planetary surface. Phoenix, Ironfist

Ambassador, and other battle groups are fully in place, with the Knight Mechas of the Alliance Knight Order, and the Titan Legion from the Alfonso Sect... forming a heavy assault spearhead, they start to showcase their power, advancing deeper into the Green-Skin core battle zones.

And when truly encountering tunnel warfare situations, the combined efforts of Interstellar Warriors with Glory Guards can complete a breakthrough.

The battle between the two sides has not become one-sided due to the destruction of air defense positions; rather, it has evolved into an even more intense situation.

When a Predator-Class Titan from the Sect of Mechanics crushed the third Green-Skin turret, the Beastman demolition team lurking underground suddenly detonated a bomb, and the Titan's right leg joint was swallowed in an instant by the twisted rift.

Green-Skin suicide squads surged up on the Titan armor. The chainsaw axe enhanced by the Waaagh field frantically tore the reactor armor until a few Interstellar Warriors arrived and smashed the invaders into pulp, resolving the trouble, but that Titan also lost most of its combat capability.

Similar scenes keep playing out along the entire assault route, and humans must pay a bloody price for each kilometer of progress.

But all of this is not the end.

On the surface of Ancache VIII, similar battles are not just initiated by the troops led by Wang Jun.

In reality, Gu Hang's targets for the ground airdrop missions amount to six.

The six airdrop target locations form a hexagon. At the center of this encircled area is where Bone Shattering King himself is located.

Gu Hang's purpose is already clear.

These six areas have some successful airdrops, such as the area where Wang Jun is located, and some failed ones.

But that's alright; if they fail, they'll try again.

Especially when the ground has already produced results in certain places, they can attack the target area from the ground as well.

Ultimately, what Gu Hang intends to achieve is to create a siege around the warfare bastion throne where Bone Shattering King is located.

Chapter 858: The Stars Are All Burning (6)

The surface of Ancache VIII has turned into a grinding machine.

Human forces, following Gu Hang's strategic requirements, have established six landing zones based around the war fortress throne where Bone Shards is located.

Landing Zone One, led by the Phoenix Battle Group and the Ironfist Ambassador Battle Group, has basically stabilized its footing.

The other zones, Two to Five, have also been gradually established in subsequent battles.

These landing zones follow similar tactics as Zone One, but success is not always guaranteed.

The most tragic was Landing Zone Four, where three hundred Interstellar Warriors coordinated with Navy Marine Corps orbital drops but ended up nearly wiped out. The paratroopers suffered heavy casualties during the landing and assembly phase. Once regrouped, the Interstellar Warriors led an attack on the nearby anti-aircraft positions but lacked sufficient manpower, failing to destroy the ground shield, and could barely retreat to rely on a nearby insect nest ruin for a desperate stand.

Command Center had no choice but to endure the casualties and deploy more paratroopers, along with two thousand Battle Nuns from Holy Mercy Lily via drop pods to stabilize the situation.

They held out there for eight Terra Days, making two more attempts to attack the anti-aircraft fortress, both of which failed. Not until the fifth day, when total casualties exceeded 70%, did forces from the neighboring Landing Zones Three and Five arrive from the ground to relieve them and destroy the anti-aircraft fortress.

Until now, no matter how many sacrifices the human side endured, spending so much in terms of costs, within these less than half a month of ground assault, the war fortress throne where Bone Shattering King resides has been fully surrounded.

During this time, Bone Shattering King did not make any moves.

Gu Hang had a strategy ready to deal with Bone Shards, as long as he personally engaged, all means could be employed.

But regrettably, Bone Shards did not act.

This Ork King was peculiarly patient, not like the typical impulsive and irritable Green Skins. He profoundly understood that strategic timing was on his side. As long as he could hold out, victory would be his.

Indeed, that was the case.

Since the Ancache campaign had started, it had been over twenty days.

The entire Star Domain's Green-Skin loyalist army was surging towards the Ancache Star Sector like a giant wave.

Meanwhile, the human forces fighting on Ancache VIII, including naval and ground elite units, in total only constituted slightly more than half. Besides the two Queen of Glory warships, and Gu Hang, the three major strategic weapons that came to Ancache VIII, the rest of the forces were basically split in half.

The other half is now at the perimeter of Ancache VIII, resisting the Green-Skin army.

They act like a levee, blocking the tide-like Green-Skin army.

Over these twenty days, reports from various lines indicated the pressure from Beastmen was increasing.

Currently, the levee remains rock-solid.

But nobody knows how long the stormy days will last.

Increasingly, they are being baptized by victory, and under the waagh field, new Ork lads are born, becoming stronger; Green-Skin technology becomes even more powerful, Techmasters more imaginative, devising more Green-Skin styled technologies. Maybe it's simply welding a rocket engine to a ship's stern to make it work; changing the pattern color at a cannon's muzzle enhances artillery power...

Just twenty days have already brought noticeable enhancements in combat intensity against human forces, what about if it prolongs further?

At this rate, three months later, the pressure capacity of the outer lines will reach its limit, and inevitably the Green-Skin army will penetrate the outreaches to reinforce Ancache VIII;

Five months later, the outer lines of the human forces might collapse completely.

In reality, the Green-Skin army is already interfering with the human supply chain.

This time, humans have sent an Expeditionary Force, consisting of tens of billions of troops, thousands of warships, consuming astronomical sums of energy, food, and weapons daily.

Even with support from the surrounding five Star Domains, it's still not enough.

Humans are not like Green Skins or the Insect Race. The latter two, as long as they occupy a planet, can quickly generate digestion pools/incubation pools, Green-Skin ecosystems/junk city industrial areas, fighting and resupplying locally, truly sustaining war with war.

However, humans, wanting to utilize resources from a recent battlefield or even ongoing combat zones, are much slower. They must settle down, at least stabilize an area for post-war construction before truly establishing control.

Logistical constraints prevent many army units from hastily deploying to the Omgeria Star Realm, while they remain guarding outer Star Domains. It would truly bankrupt supply if tens of billions flooded in all at once.

The overall war model, on the human side, requires that the Alliance, during the nearly year-long preparation before the Western Expedition Army's deployment, stockpiles massive supplies at several key hub worlds on the edge of the Magrey Cosmos Domain. These supplies are transported in batches from the five Star Domains to numerous entry points into Omgeria, then further distributed within the Star Domain, delivered to each combat unit.

Meanwhile, each world within the five Star Domains continuously collects war resources, from food to military goods, and transports them to Omgeria.

Front-line units, needing troop and material reinforcements, then receive supplies from the five Star Domains.

While thousands of warships fight at the front lines, over five hundred thousand transports work day and night along this supply chain.

But now the Green Skins have begun attempts to threaten the human logistical supply chain.

The prior three-month, five-month assessments were based purely on front-line combat considerations. If strategic factors are considered, if the supply chain is severed, it will affect both the outbound resistance and the assault on Ancache VIII.

Even though all units have sufficient combat material reserves to avoid emergencies, if the worst situation occurs, the strategic time conclusions of three months and five months might need revision.

Bone Shards is waiting.

Despite humans having a significant advantage, it's taken over twenty days just to secure orbit and deploy forces to the ground.

Subsequently, the area surrounding his war fortress throne has been turned into a near impenetrable fortress under his management.

Come, chew them, let's see how long these shrimps can last!

Chapter 859: The Stars Are Burning (7)

What does the defeat in the Omeglia Campaign mean for the Alliance?

It means the Western Expedition Army will be practically obliterated, and not many will manage to escape back;

It signifies a complete failure in the conquest of the Forward Cosmic Domain, with the entire domain possibly engulfed by the Green Tide, leaving thousands of worlds and trillions of people in the depths of despair;

It implies that the Green Tide will not stop at the Forward Cosmic Domain and will inevitably spread toward the Magrey Cosmic Domain, severely challenging all the achievements of the Dark Side Expedition over the past thirty-odd years;

The Alliance might need to fight the Magrey Defense Battle, requiring a profound change in the Dark Side Expedition's situation, shifting from the past thirty years of advancing triumphantly to adopting a strategic defensive stance to safeguard the achievements. Plans initially meant to proceed smoothly now need to recalibrate the timeline for the Dark Side Expedition in terms of centuries, with an uncertain duration.

From these concepts, the Omeglia Campaign is a battle that cannot be lost.

Yet, Gu Hang also recognizes that the Alliance is not completely unable to afford defeat in this battle.

Even if all the worst scenarios mentioned above unfold, the Alliance still has confidence.

The Southern Expedition Army, similar in scale to the Western Line, remains; on the Alliance's homefront, there are garrison forces equivalent in size to the Western Expedition Army; the loss of elite units such as the Interstellar Warriors is generally a permanent loss that is difficult to replenish, but for Gu Hang, the replenishment is quite swift; highest-level mobilization orders on the core territories of the Alliance have not been activated yet, leaving ample untapped wartime potential.

In the context of the Alliance's survival or demise, even if the Omeglia Campaign suffers a disastrous defeat, there's still the entire Magrey that can be fought.

It's far from reaching that stage.

It was on this foundation that Gu Hang dared to fight.

Winning would mean that the Forward Cosmic Domain could be completely secured within three to five years, greatly speeding up progress;

thoroughly eliminating a major explosive threat;

and ultimately, it's preferable to fight sooner rather than later, even if it results in defeat.

...

As the outer defense line endures increasing pressure, humanity's full-scale assault on the Fortress Throne on Ancache VIII has already commenced.

The intensity of the war has elevated again by a significant notch!

The first enhancement came from the Alliance intensifying its bombardment on the planet's surface.

In fact, since the battle began, orbital bombardment has never ceased.

The firepower of the Starship was not solely for assisting in establishing those six drop zones. The vast majority involved bombarding various places across the entire planet, from trash cities to ecological zones, from air defense fortresses to gathering grounds for Beastman surface units...

Nonetheless, demolishing six air defense fortresses doesn't decisively influence global bombardment. At most, it improves bombing efficiency in areas where the air defense has been eliminated.

However, for directly bombarding the War Fort Throne and assisting in deploying Extinction Order weapons, the impact is nearly nonexistent.

The War Fortress Throne naturally has the Green Skins' most outstanding surface air defense and anti-orbital firepower facilities, equipped with the strongest waaagh field shields, making bombarding it ineffective.

But avoiding bombardment isn't an option either.

Bombarding at least ties up the Green Skins' cannons for interception; refraining means liberating the fortress throne's cannons, posing a deadly threat to human ships in outer space.

The bombardment on the fortress throne serves more as a means of containment.

As for Extinction Order weapons, the Alliance never ceased using them. Observations and calculations on surface air defense firepower are continuously conducted. Upon discovering weaker points, the human fleet may casually deploy an Extinction Order weapon.

If ending this great war with just one Extinction Order weapon is feasible, even at the cost of sacrificing all surface troops already deployed, it's worth the risk.

But success eluded them.

There were even two types of failure.

The majority were intercepted.

The Bone Shattering King's vigilance against the Extinction Order was indubitable, and the waaagh field enveloping the entire planet was linked to him. This 'Great Prophet' of the Green Skins possesses ample capability to identify Extinction Order weapons amidst concealment and cover, promptly intercepting them through a mental invocation.

However, two Skyburn Torpedoes did indeed explode.

Yet, the torpedo meant to ignite Ancache VIII's atmosphere through ongoing fission and envelop the entire planet in the skyburn flames, merely erupted like a grand firework.

The overwhelming flames ravaged over a dozen kilometers before extinguishing.

A peculiar force isolated the material, suffocating the torpedo.

The process was so swift that Gu Hang was caught off guard. When he attempted to employ his power to escort the Skyburn Torpedo, the encounter with the opposing waaagh field thwarted him.

Disbelieving Gu Hang infused spiritual energy at the very onset during the second torpedo explosion.

This confrontation allowed Gu Hang to perceive through the power struggle the Ork King seated on the throne.

Grinning Bone Shards was not at a disadvantage in the struggle.

Even with Gu Hang's intervention, this explosion halted at just a hundred kilometers.

Attempting a third confrontation, Bone Shards no longer allowed the opportunity.

He also perceived the risk.

Gu Hang can afford to fail numerous times, but Bone Shards would be finished with just one failure.

Bone Shards, more focused on interception, rendered Extinction Order impotent.

Despite realizing the impossibility of easily ending the war with Extinction Order, humanity under Gu Hang's orders would sporadically deploy another.

The aim remains containment.

As long as I keep bombing, you must remain perpetually ready.

Should Bone Shards exert his power to annihilate ground human units, the threat would be substantial.

But conversely, Gu Hang can execute this task.

And it's somewhat feasible.

...

Baiqiao never imagined a scenario resembling hell itself.

A graduate of the seventh Military Academy on Flying Wing Star, he is a soaring eagle. Enlisting in the army, joining the Dark Side Expedition, he rapidly achieved countless feats, becoming a colonel commanding an Armored Infantry Regiment subordinate to a Skeleton Division.

Throughout the Dark Side Expedition, he experienced arduous battles. Yet, victory always belonged to him in the end. The elite warriors under his command instilled pride in him. He consistently believed that regardless of the adversary, he would confront and fight them with vigor, confident victory would be his.

But this conviction was shattered in the ninth hour after leading his regiment to land on the surface.

His regiment, fully staffed with 3600 men, had an actual count of 3169 men, and by now, fewer than six hundred remained.

In just nine hours!

To be precise, four hours.

His regiment was not even responsible for the main frontline operations!

In the second hour of landing, he received orders to clear a tunnel.

This site was only on the battle's fringes; humanity's forces had destroyed the Green Skin Army units upfront, the main forces had already crushed through and proceeded eastward. However, sporadic Beastmen emerging from the tunnels to attack the rear were detected in the crushed area.

Hence, Baiqiao's regiment was commanded to clear the tunnels.

During four hours of executing the tunnel-clearing task, his troops were nearly wiped out.

Although they had reached the tunnel's end, where an underground mushroom farm facilitated the birth of new Green Skins.

Yet he seemed devoid of strength to destroy this place.

Chapter 860: The Cosmos Burns (8)

On the battlefield of Ancache VIII, there is no room for tricks, only head-on collisions.

Baiqiao and his group faced a battle just like this.

When attacking the underground passage, Baiqiao encountered a crisis right from the start. The narrow passage made it difficult to call for long-range fire support, and air support, orbital cannon strikes, and artillery positions were all hard to deploy effectively.

Even their own regiment's artillery company was temporarily reassigned by higher-ups to join a larger artillery group.

But not all news was bad. His troops were reinforced with equipment like flamethrowers, rockets, thermobaric explosives, and even portable thermobaric bombs.

With this strong firepower, their initial attack went relatively smoothly.

After calling in one last airstrike to bomb the entrance, they severely hit the few Beastman soldiers guarding the entrance. The Baiqiao Group moved in and easily crushed the orc guards.

Then, the human infantry didn't rush to advance further down but first fired a large thermobaric bomb.

This weapon was particularly suitable for dealing with targets hidden underground or in caves, proving quite effective in the current environment.

After firing the thermobaric bomb and waiting for the blast to end, the first batch of vanguard companies, fully armed and wearing masks, went down.

The passage wasn’t very large at first, barely four meters in diameter, with its top reinforced by a mixture of Insect Race biological carapace and concrete. The ground was covered with a sticky green fungal carpet.

The attack sequence unfolded according to standard underground combat regulations: a scout company with infrared detectors led the way, a flamethrower team followed in the second echelon, and the main force proceeded in a double column formation.

The first 300 meters of advancement went smoothly, encountering some charred corpses of Green Skin Orcs and a few scattered Green Skin sentries rushing out from deeper areas. But upon passing through the first cross-intersection, the fungal carpet on the ground suddenly shook violently.

"Trap!" The scout sergeant barely gave a warning before three Orc-modified motorcycles burst out from the left passage.

A Green Skin Orc was riding a very low vehicle capable of moving through tunnels.

However, this thing was quite terrifying.

The rotating chain saw welded to the side of the motorcycle directly cut into the human lineup, slicing the first five soldiers in half.

The flamethrower team immediately spread a fan-shaped fire to engulf the Green Skin lad. But the Green Skin’s vitality was so tenacious that he rampaged for a long time with the flames on him, until, unable to withstand it after taking over twenty shots, he even yanked open a pull cord and blew up his low motorcycle tank.

But it wasn’t just one motorcycle that came.

One after another, motorcycles rushed forward, attacking the human troops; the orc infantry also followed among them.

These waves of attacks exerted significant pressure on the human forces.

Baiqiao had to order the main force to retreat to a relatively stable arc-shaped bend.

Engineers quickly deployed shock mines and filled cracks with fast-setting foam. At this time, thermal imaging detected a massive biological heat source 200 meters ahead—over four hundred Green Skin units were surrounding them through three branch passages.

Fighting the orc troops at close range was definitely not a good idea.

Baiqiao ordered the troops to use firepower to prevent the enemy from approaching as much as possible.

They somewhat succeeded, but at a considerable cost.

The flamethrowers consumed a lot of fuel, creating a flaming strip tens of meters long in the main passage, effectively stalling the Green Skin charge.

But the orcs had many other methods; more motorcycles appeared, forcing the human troops to allocate more firepower and focus on attacking these high-threat targets.

Later, an orc engineering team suddenly opened vertical shafts from the lower levels and emerged behind the human lines. Three orc combat teams appeared behind the human defenses. Although the human forces reacted quickly enough to block and counter these orc units immediately, still, more than half a company of soldiers were shot or had their heads split by blades in close combat.

Baiqiao established a regimental command post at the cave entrance, immediately sending two infantry companies down to reinforce the front line. They finally defeated the Green Skin Orcs attacking from the front, while the previously heavily damaged company was nearly combat ineffective and had to retreat, being replaced by new reinforcement companies.

But the brutal battle was not over; the number of Green Skin Orcs seemed to exceed expectations. After repelling the first wave of four hundred orcs, unexpectedly, a new batch of Green Skins, over six hundred in number, was detected by thermal sensors, surging toward the human defense line.

At this point, Baiqiao felt something was wrong.

Clearly, the human forces were the attacking side. So how could it turn out that the humans became the defenders?

Baiqiao decisively used a second thermobaric bomb.

He first ordered the troops to retreat from their positions, leaving a delayed-explosive thermobaric bomb to be detonated when the Green Skins arrived.

This move had a significant effect. The explosion of the thermobaric bomb caused massive casualties among the Green Skins, and when the human troops returned, they found that most of the approaching Green Skin Orcs had turned into charred corpses; further advancement revealed some severely burned but not yet dead Green Skin Orcs.

After killing these severely wounded orcs, the troops could finally continue to move forward.

Chapter 860: The Entire Star Domain is Burning (Part 8)_2

But by this stage, Baiqiao’s confidence had already started to waver.

Without even reaching the core of the underground base where the Green Skin Orcs were located, his troops had already seen three companies decimated, with one company entirely wiped out. Weapons like flamethrower fuel and thermobaric explosives, which were effective in tunnel environments, suffered significant losses.

Continuing the battle... Baiqiao already sensed that the outcome was uncertain.

But this was a mission, and they had to grit their teeth and press on.

Upon advancing to 2.8 kilometers underground, the troops encountered structural defenses. The Green Skins used the existing egg chambers of the hive to transform into a three-layered circular fortress, with outer walls made of hardened mycelium and scrap metal.

The crossfire was set up clearly, and using human lives to pile through the narrow entrances seemed impossible.

A tentative attack was undeniably repelled, and the frontline troops had to consider other ways to advance.

They first attempted to use rocket launchers to fire armor-piercing warheads, but the armor-piercing rockets were ineffective against the thick composite walls.

Based on the battlefield situation, Baiqiao approved the frontline troops' request to use rock-drilling bombs.

But this wasn't a simple task.

The troops temporarily withdrew, and the precious thermobaric bombs were utilized once again. After the explosion, once safe, the human troops returned to the battlefield.

A reconnaissance team sneaked up, initially progressing smoothly, but when they got close to the circular fortress, gunfire erupted, and the scouts were quickly wiped out.

However, it was this very situation that led the frontline commander to directly order the troops to launch a fierce attack.

Because he could sense that the firepower of these Beastmen was much weaker than during the initial wave of attacks.

The bombing by thermobaric bombs had not been without effect.

Having suffered several thermobaric bombings, the Beastmen were not unprepared. Firstly, the circular fortress structures offered some resistance against the bombings. Additionally, before engagement, the Green Skins stationed part of their troops further behind the fortress and only brought them up during engagements, retreating them afterward as reserve forces.

Had they been on the surface or in open spaces, using thermobaric bombs would have been fine. In underground tunnels, using such weapons required the Alliance troops to retreat a bit farther to avoid being caught in the explosion. This gave the Green Skin Orcs an opportunity to withdraw their troops.

But ultimately, the Green Skin Orcs did suffer losses under the thermobaric bombs, which explained their weakened firepower.

This was actually the best time for the human troops to attack.

However, even at this juncture, the humans' chances were slim. Simply trying to storm the orcs' circular fortress in this terrain and environment was exceedingly difficult.

Human infantry, at a disadvantage and sustaining heavy casualties, had to engage in a shootout with the Green Skins, primarily to cover the engineers' operations.

An entire squad of engineers, under artillery fire and the cover of smoke grenades, risked their lives to rush forward, reaching beneath the circular fortress. They drilled blasting holes in the side walls, embedding two seismic charges into the rock layer, and then placed the rock-drilling bomb.

Subsequently, the seismic charges exploded, weakening the physical structure of the fortress. The rock-drilling bomb then easily penetrated the previously sturdy fortress made of hive biological materials and steel, exploding inside.

When the rock-drilling bomb exploded, causing substantial orc casualties and creating a crater in the cave wall, the Alliance Army soldiers shouted and began their attack, charging into the circular fortress.

The remaining orcs were few, and in poor condition, yet they continued to fight desperately against the humans within the fortress.

Using guns, explosives, machetes, war axes, and even biting...

Meanwhile, behind the circular fortress was the orcs' 'mushroom garden.' It was unclear how many reserve troops the orcs had in the mushroom garden, or how quickly new orcs were being born, but the observable situation was that orc youth continuously poured into the battlefield in small units.

The human troops almost got pushed out of the hard-won fortress.

Baiqiao certainly couldn't let that happen.

He threw in his last reserves.

He even personally stopped directing from the entrance and led the troops forward.

Within the orcs' defensive structures, humans and beasts fought fiercely for hours, a primal meat grinder, spilling the blood of thousands of humans and orcs alike.

And the final result was a human victory.

They ultimately captured the fortress completely.

Looking further from the fortress, they could already detect, through thermal monitoring, their strategic target of this mission—a subterranean biosphere.

Reconnaissance soldiers, ordered to approach and observe, confirmed using night vision: the area was extensive, with thousands of glowing spore mushrooms hanging from the ceiling, and densely arranged cultivation troughs on the ground.

In the subterranean ecosystem, new Green Skins were emerging at the rate of three to five every ten minutes from the mushrooms, falling into the cultivation troughs, and then leaping out of the troughs at the same rate.

The Green Skins emerging were already in adult form.

This generation rate was terrifying. To have a qualified human warrior, it takes ten months of pregnancy, eighteen years to reach adulthood, and training and education. But for the Green Skins, such an underground mushroom garden could produce several hundred qualified warriors in a single day. And on the entire planet, how many such biospheres, even larger ones, might exist?

Some scholars argue that orcs are a created biological weapon of war, not without reason.

At this moment, it wasn't the key issue. More deadly was the crossfire net formed by several turrets, with firing ports all hidden behind fungal mounds. More than four hundred orcs were also guarding this place.

And in Baiqiao's hands, only about a thousand men remained.

The series of battles before had almost drained the blood of their group.

But he still gritted his teeth and ordered a full assault.

The thermobaric bomb destroyed two turrets in the northeast corner, and the assault team took the opportunity to penetrate the central control pillar. However, the Green Skins had set biological booby traps here—the seemingly ordinary fungal carpet sprayed strong acid under pressure, melting five bomb disposal soldiers on the spot.

When the only remaining flamethrower operators attempted to burn the control pillar, several Squigs suddenly fell from the ceiling, biting through their throats with tusks.

Ammunition stocks were depleted, manpower was depleted, and even those alive were mostly wounded, forcing them to continue fighting purely on willpower.

Logically, he knew it was impossible to complete the mission, but he still intended to make one last effort.

The entire army, bearing the brunt of casualties, charged forward, planting all usable explosives on the control pillar, cultivation troughs, and Green Skin mushrooms. These actions were all aimed at covering the placement of the final few seismic bombs at the calculated weak points of the cave.

He hoped the explosions would cause the plantation's top structure to collapse, burying this place completely, even if it meant burying his own group along with it, he would not hesitate.

But unfortunately, they failed.

After the explosion, the biosphere was indeed severely damaged, but the crucial plan to collapse the cave didn't succeed.

47% of the underground base's core area structure remained intact, and it seemed the Green Skins could restore production capacity after some time.

Major Baiqiao and his group had entirely lost the capability to advance further.

He could only lead the troops out of the cave.

After counting the numbers, only about six hundred people remained in the group, all with varying degrees of injury, and most critically, they had little ammunition left and no heavy firepower. Below, at least two hundred orcs remained.

With laser guns, Gauss Rifles, and scarce ammunition, fighting one-third of orcs in an environment where combat distance generally didn't exceed twenty meters?

Certain death.

The orcs could even throw away their guns, charging through their bullets to hack them all to death.

In fact, that's precisely what the orcs intended to do.

As the remnants of Baiqiao Group, morale low, withdrew from the cave, ready to abandon the mission and seek assistance from superiors, the orcs pursued them.

Baiqiao was near despair.

But at that moment, lightning suddenly appeared. Amidst the thunderous explosions, a valiant translucent blue-white warrior stepped out of the lightning. They ignored the human soldiers beside them and fought fiercely against the pursuing orcs!