

Scavengers 781

Chapter 781: Stay

In the cafeteria, the originally jovial atmosphere instantly stiffened upon the announcement of an emergency assembly.

He Bi's entire face immediately turned stern; he didn't even have time to continue mocking Ji You, quickly leaving behind just one sentence: "Stay in the space station, don't wander around."

Having said that, He Bi swiftly headed towards the assembly point.

Ji You shouted: "Senior He Bi!"

He Bi stopped in his tracks, and finally turned back, his deep black eyes darkening further. As he opened his mouth, the corners of his lips curled up, intentionally maintaining a light tone: "What's up? Not lending money."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You took a deep breath and cursed: "Scumbag He Bi, you owe me 5 million, remember to pay it back on time!"

He Bi: "..."

Are debts something to be blurted out casually?

He Bi cursed: "Nonsense! I'm off, I'm off."

Unable to help herself, Ji You ran forward a few steps, shouting: "Scumbag, your debt is not something you can just write off unless you come back on time!"

He Bi: "..."

He Bi cursed: "Where did this fool come from, dreaming away."

After speaking, he didn't hesitate to step out of the cafeteria. Other warriors in the cafeteria, some having not finished their meals, hurried to the assembly point while stuffing food into their mouths.

In the blink of an eye, all the front-line warriors had left the large space of the cafeteria, leaving only Ji You, Chu Jiaojiao, Shen Changqing, Yue Qiguang... 10 people.

The food serving window in the cafeteria was filled with delicious food.

Ji You muttered: "All this food just left here uneaten..."

Yue Qiguang frowned and said: "4444, try not to eye this food for your father."

"..." Ji You glared at Yue Qiguang, "Am I that kind of person?"

Yue Qiguang thought to himself: [You usually are.]

Ji You turned to the others and said: "Everybody, help out to clear all the food and store it properly."

Yue Qiguang, hearing this, felt it was somewhat reasonable and said: "Good that you're still a person, not scheming against the front-line warriors' food."

Ji You snorted: "Of course I am a person, after all, not everyone can be a beast."

Yue Qiguang pursed his lips, "Dad feels you're intentionally implying me, but dad can't be bothered with you."

After speaking, Yue Qiguang started working.

Ji You couldn't be bothered with Yue Qiguang either, called to the others, and together they sorted through all the remaining prepared dishes in the cafeteria. They organized them according to the type of dish and placed them into constant temperature boxes.

The remaining vegetables, fruits, meat, and other food supplies were also sorted out.

Despite the amount of work, it took less than 5 minutes to finish everything. Meanwhile, the alarm at Eagle Space Station kept blaring.

That sound—

Everyone's hearts tightened.

Chu Jiaojiao, who grew up in the military, was very familiar with different alarm sounds. She furrowed her brows tightly and said: "This means an emergency preparation for battle. Does it imply a tight front line? Or is there an enemy attack near the space station?"

Shen Changqing kept a solemn expression and said: "Both possibilities exist, but I think it's the front line tightening, needing more new warriors for reinforcements."

The others didn't make a sound, but they obviously understood Shen Changqing's meaning.

For a moment, the atmosphere was very serious.

Since the spaceship was still charging, Ji You and the others couldn't depart to return, Ji You thought for a bit and told everyone: "It's very busy here right now, let's not add chaos for the warriors. Everybody, just stay calmly in the cafeteria, eat something, and wait for further instructions."

Once a war breaks out on the front lines, warriors must immediately join the battle and are almost constantly engaged in fighting, depleting their physical and spiritual power greatly. Therefore, the Alliance provides tremendous privileges for the warriors, including three full meals a day, completely free of charge.

Ji You and a bunch of noobs, hearing the alarm but unable to watch, unable to participate, and unable to run around causing trouble, felt anxious, uneasy, and full of wild thoughts. What could they do at such a time?

Nothing at all.

So, they might as well eat.

After Ji You spoke, she took the lead and piled her plate with a heap of food.

Vegetables, meat, and staple foods, her plate was filled to the brim.

Seeing this, Yue Qiyuan couldn't help but ask, "Can you really finish all of that? With your short, stout body?"

Ji You raised her chin proudly, "Doubt my abilities?"

"..." Yue Qiyuan pursed his lips, "What's there to be proud of being a big eater?"

Ji You chuckled, "Isn't the ability of a big eater still an ability?"

Yue Qiyuan: "..."

That makes sense, he found himself unable to argue.

Yue Qiyuan took out a plate and began to fill it. He didn't get greedy; he just picked the food he liked and the amount he could finish.

Everyone else silently filled their plates, and then the group returned to the table and sat down.

The sound of chopsticks, chewing, and smacking lips filled the cafeteria.

Silence.

Still silent.

Everyone quietly ate. At this moment, the alarm also stopped. But all the students knew this didn't mean that the alert was cancelled, but rather that the warriors had gathered, assigned their duties, and were ready to set off.

Indeed—

[Beep beep beep...]

The signal to set off had sounded, and Ji You and others heard the sounds of Starships and Mechas launching.

Inside the dining hall, everyone remained silent, buried in their food.

Suddenly—

A new communication request came in. Ji You saw that it was Senior Brother Han Zheng calling.

Ji You quickly answered. "Senior Brother Han Zheng, please go ahead."

Han Zheng's voice was exceptionally pleasant, but at the moment it sounded quite low. He said, "Ji You, there has been a sudden incident on the front lines. Currently, the Eagle Space Station is surrounded by Star Beasts. The route for your return is also within this encirclement zone. I personally advise that you and your classmates suspend all activities and delays in returning until a more opportune moment."

Eagle Space Station, at least, is a man-made fortress, temporarily safe.

But what about outside the Space Station?

The star domains outside are currently prone to clusters of Star Beasts organizing. If Ji You and the others encounter them, they could very well face annihilation.

So—

After Han Zheng finished speaking, he added, "I will likely finish this mission within 3 to 5 days. So, you all should stay a few more days at Eagle, and then you can return with me."

Ji You obviously understood Senior Brother Han Zheng's meaning, she quickly responded, "Senior Brother Han Zheng, rest assured! We'll stay put and definitely won't go wandering about."

"Good," Han Zheng said. "I'll call you later."

After that, Han Zheng immediately cut off the communication.

Ji You looked at the darkened screen, glanced at her teammates, and with a slightly helpless smile said, "Teammates, our stay has suddenly been extended."

Chapter 782: Painful Game of Dou Dizhu

The spaceship was supposed to return immediately after resupplying its energy, but now, the return journey is indefinitely postponed.

This—

Yue Qiguang said blatantly, "It's actually good, the extension of our stay means we can keep mooching off food and drinks."

Everyone knew that Yue Qiguang was deliberately saying this to lighten the mood.

Ji You retorted, "You think everyone is like you, a total glutton?"

Yue Qiguang rolled his eyes, "Who are you calling a glutton?"

"Cough cough..." Yue Qiyuan cleared his throat, "Can you two stop talking? I just want some quiet."

Ji You was shocked, "Who's 'Quiet'? You better not go and bother her!"

Yue Qiyuan: "..."

"Cough cough..." Zhang Ye said with some emotion, "I'm really envious of you guys bantering at a time like this. I'm so anxious right now, I can't focus on anything at all."

Ji You said, "That's why you need to find something exhilarating to do. How about playing 'Fight the Landlord'?"

Zhang Ye: "???"

Ji You chuckled, "Little Zhouzhou, come on... the three of us can play 'Fight the Landlord'."

Xuzhou: "..."

Why the hell are you dragging me into this?

Confused, but Xuzhou immediately declined, "No, I don't want to play 'Fight the Landlord'."

Ji You blinked her eyes, tempting him, "Don't you want some beef jerky? I have 100 pounds of it in my Space Button! 100 pounds! We can bet with beef jerky, and if you win a lot, maybe you can take all of my beef jerky."

Honestly, Xuzhou was tempted upon hearing this, but, his mom had taught him since a young age that gambling never ends well. After a lot of hesitation, Xuzhou still declined, "No, thanks."

Ji You continued to persuade him.

But Xuzhou's will was ironclad, and he just wouldn't agree.

Just as Ji You was feeling regretful, Sheng Qingyan sauntered over, covering her mouth, "Oh you poor thing, I'll play with you guys."

Ji You eyed her, "Do you have any beef jerky?"

Sheng Qingyan shook her head.

Ji You asked, "Do you have any other food?"

Sheng Qingyan continued to shake her head.

Ji You raised her foot and kicked her in the butt, "Scram! You think you can swindle me, Ji You, empty-handed? No way!"

She had anticipated the kick, but Sheng Qingyan nearly got hit dodging it, and thought to herself, [This poor dead can't catch a break, recently she's been improving a lot.]

"I might not have food, but I have credit points!" Sheng Qingyan said out loud while dodging.

Upon hearing this, Ji You immediately switched to a warm and cordial smile, "Why didn't you say so earlier? If you had, you wouldn't have been kicked."

Sheng Qingyan fumed, "Such a greedy expression at the mere mention of money, it's utterly repulsive."

Ji You laughed it off, not caring, "If you've got money, who cares about an ugly mug?"

Sheng Qingyan looked down on her and urged, "Let's get started, stop wasting time."

Although Zhang Ye thought playing 'Fight the Landlord' was boring, after some thought, he decided to play to kill the tedious time.

The others weren't too interested in playing or watching 'Fight the Landlord'. Shen Changqing was engrossed in tinkering with Mechanical Materials, Yue Qiguang, Lou, Lance, and Chu Jiaojiao were taking turns chugging drinks, while Yue Qiyuan was resting with his eyes closed.

And what about Xuzhou? He was completely full and couldn't eat anymore, so he was walking circles around the dining table to digest.

Then.

The game of 'Fight the Landlord' began with Ji You, Sheng Qingyan, and Zhang Ye.

In the first round, the landlord was Sheng Qingyan.

The peasant team, Ji You and Zhang Ye, lost. Reluctantly, they handed over a few sticks of beef jerky to Sheng Qingyan.

In the second round, Sheng Qingyan was the landlord again.

Ji You and Zhang Ye, these two unlucky peasants, couldn't beat the despicable landlord and lost miserably.

In the third round, Ji You managed to become the landlord.

Then, the landlord without surplus grain was double-teamed and ousted by two old peasants.

Ji You's hand shook with rage.

The fourth round.

The fifth round.

The sixth round.

...

Round after round, Ji You, who lost every single one, flipped the table: "I'm done playing! This is no fun!"

"Hey!" Zhang Ye disdainfully said: "Have some sportsmanship, haha, flipping the table just makes it uninteresting!"

Sheng Qingyan, counting a large stack of beef jerky in front of him, beamed with joy: "So tasty, really delicious."

Ji You: "..."

Sheng Qingyan covered her mouth, continuing to chuckle: "Getting something for nothing really feels amazing."

Ji You: "That's enough from you."

Sheng Qingyan stuck a piece of beef jerky in her mouth: "Not enough."

Ji You was almost infuriated to death by Sheng Qingyan, and she couldn't continue to play Fight the Landlord either. With a huff, she stood up and said: "It's no use for us to just sit here and glare at each other with mutual disdain."

Yue Qiyuan abruptly opened his eyes: "What do you want to do?"

Everyone turned towards Ji You with inquiring looks in their eyes.

Ji You thought for a moment and said: "I want to ask if there's anything we can do."

As soon as the words fell, everyone stood up together, and in unison, they said:

"Let's go!"

Ji You smiled and said: "Let's go!"

people walked out of the cafeteria, and just as they were about to find a person in charge to express their needs, Ji You suddenly caught a glimpse of a somewhat familiar figure walking this way.

Upon closer inspection, Ji You realized it was Ma Lei, a senior in his second year.

Ma Lei saw the junior brothers and sisters, and with a somewhat defeated look on his face, he perked up a bit, smiled, and said, "Ji You, why aren't you guys eating in the cafeteria?"

Ji You explained the reason.

Ma Lei chuckled: "You guys want to do something, huh? In that case, come help me pick vegetables in the kitchen."

Ji You and the others: "???"

Ji You, with an awkward yet polite smile, said: "Ahem... Instead of a camera, we'd much rather take up arms against the enemy!"

Ma Lei laughed and said: "Okay, I won't insist on it. If you want to help out in the cafeteria, just come and find me anytime."

After saying that, Ma Lei walked away briskly.

Ji You suddenly asked: "Senior Ma Lei, has Senior He Bi been assigned to the frontline?"

Ma Lei nodded: "Yes."

There was a hint of dejection in his voice. Both from the 130th batch of second-year students, he and He Bi were top achievers. However, one was already approved to go to the frontline, while the other could only continue to work as a chef in the cabin. Naturally, Ma Lei felt downhearted.

Ji You listened to Senior Ma Lei's words and confirmed her own guess, suddenly feeling a bit heavy-hearted.

Ma Lei with a straight face, spoke up: "He Bi is incredibly strong; he is the strongest student of the 130th batch and the champion of the Alliance's recent net diagram competition! You all should have faith in him!"

Huh?

The champion?

The second-year solo net competition champion is...

That person called 'He Bi'?

He's the scumbag He Bi?

Ji You pursed her lips and said: "Thank you, Senior. I also have a lot of confidence in Senior He Bi."

Ma Lei said: "I'm off to the kitchen."

After parting ways with Senior Ma Lei, Ji You found the temporary person in charge of the Space Station and explained their intentions.

After pondering for a moment, the person in charge agreed and laughed: "Sure."

Chapter 783: Patrol

Considering the capabilities of these novices, the temporary person-in-charge of the Eagle Space Station pondered for a while before assigning Ji You and the team a mission to patrol within a 5-light-year radius of the first Checkpoint.

The area within a 5-light-year radius near the Space Station, whether piloting spaceships or Mechas, would take about an hour back and forth at maximum speed. Moreover, there are hundreds of man-made satellites near Eagle Space Station, equipped for surveillance, detection, reconnaissance, collection...etc., all operational every moment, and many of their detection scopes have reached beyond 100 light years.

Thus, the situation within 5 light years is all within the surveillance range of the detection satellites.

In other words, human patrolling isn't necessary.

That means the temporary person-in-charge has merely found a simple task to pass the time for Ji You and the kids.

But!

Ji You happily accepted anyway, representing all the teammates loudly proclaiming: "Received! We guarantee to complete the mission!"

The person-in-charge smiled: "Go ahead."

The tone was like saying 'go play.' Yue Qiguang, hearing this, felt a bit depressed.

This was totally treating them like novices.

Until he turned around, Yue Qiguang then spoke, somewhat dejectedly, "He is obviously looking down on us! Not giving us any significant task."

Ji You glanced at him: "Just behave! Don't think about stirring big trouble! What counts as a significant task? Is being in charge in the kitchen significant? The question is, would you dare eat what you cook?"

Yue Qiguang: "..."

Yue Qiguang grumbled: "Dad is not cut out to be a chef."

Ji You said: "That settles it. Young man, you should have some self-awareness and consciousness, alright?"

Yue Qiguang: "..."

Chu Jiaojiao laughed and echoed: "Exactly, a novice should have the self-awareness of a novice."

Yue Qiguang clenched his fist: "Dad is not a novice!"

Yue Qiyuan raised his hand to his forehead: "Here, you are a novice."

Yue Qiguang turned towards Shen Changqing, Sheng Qingyan, Xuzhou... and realized that they seemed not to mind being called novices and rather accepted it willingly.

Yue Qiguang suddenly felt depressed, feeling a lack of common language with the group, hence he shut his mouth and decided to stay withdrawn from now on.

...

The group walked toward the port, reached the location where the spaceship was stationed, boarded the spaceship, and took out their respective Mechas.

Then.

Before boarding the Mechas, Ji You turned around, facing Chu Jiaojiao, Shen Changqing, Sheng Qingyan, Yue Qiguang, Yue Qiyuan, Xuzhou, Zhang Ye, Lou, Lance, and stood straight, opening her mouth to say: "Comrades, our mission is to patrol, this is our first time exploring the starry sky by ourselves, no teachers, no protection, everything relies on us to handle."

Ji You's voice was very clear, each word, each phrase, like drops of rain, knocking on everyone's hearts.

After a slight pause, Ji You continued to look seriously at everyone, with eyes like torches in her dark pupils: "As long as we are in the starry sky, there's no absolute safety. Moreover, we are currently on a battlefield, at wartime, I hope everyone takes the patrol mission seriously."

Everyone including Chu Jiaojiao tightened their lips, their expressions growing more serious.

Ji You continued: "There's no big or small, heavy or light in tasks, only whether it is excellently completed or not!"

Everyone listened quietly.

Ji You's eyes sparkled, her tone carrying a slight and barely noticeable passion: "And we, are destined to be the kings at the Peak of the Universe! We aim to be, the very best and strongest one!"

The words rang out—

Shen Changqing's handsome face flushed with color: "That's right. If you're going to do it, be the strongest one there is!"

Chu Jiaojiao's eyes sparkled: "Ji You is correct! I am the ultimate champion!"

Yue Qiguang pouted: "Who isn't the strongest? In terms of combat power, even Dad might not lose."

Yue Qiyuan's dark eyes shone brightly, yet he remained tight-lipped and solemn: "The antagonists perish with their excessive talk, and the weak love to prattle, hence, only oneself can be the king of strength!"

Xuzhou's eyes widened and he clenched his fists: "To become the strongest? You can do it, Xuzhou, believe in yourself."

Zhang Ye stared at Ji You with a surge of pride in his heart, yet maintained his composure on the surface: "A true powerhouse disdains verbosity."

Lou's deep blue eyes gleamed with starlight, he blinked and muttered to himself, "The strongest, huh?"

Lance stroked his chin and gazed at the distant stars above his head, his thoughts swirling: "Yes, I too wish to be the strongest."

Sheng Qingyan raised her hand to cover her mouth, yawning without care: "You all talk too much, I'm going to fall asleep if you keep dragging on."

Ji You's mouth twitched: "Here I am trying to give a pep talk, and Spicy Eye dares to slack off? Seems like the beef jerky I gave him made him too full."

Must find a chance to get that beef jerky back.

Then, Ji You raised her hand, declaring: "Now—let's go!"

At her command, everyone was shocked and instantly began to board their mechas!

Ji You was the first to step in, choosing the Wind Wing mecha for this assessment, whose core chip and energy and power systems were not the best, being rated 2-star.

Therefore, it was a 2-star mecha, meaning it was a low-level mecha.

But for now, it was enough for Ji You.

Connecting to the Spiritual Connector, Ji You's view changed to that of the mecha's, standing tall thereby seeing far. She allocated a strand of Spiritual Silk specifically to survey the surroundings, then she meticulously divided her limited Spiritual Silk for various tasks.

Everything arranged, Ji You said: "Set sail—"

Whoosh—

The Wind Wing unfolded its wings, flapping them and breaking through the artificial atmosphere.

Ji You led the way with Chu Jiaojiao following closely, catching up with Ji You in the blink of an eye.

Shen Changqing, Sheng Qingyan, Yue Qiguang, Yue Qiyuan, Xuzhou, Zhang Ye, Lance, and Lou followed in neatly arranged order behind Ji You.

The flying formation they adopted mimicked the V-shaped flocks of geese flying south in Ji You's memory—initially in a straight line, switching occasionally to a V-formation.

These frequent shape changes reduced air resistance at high speeds and prepared them to quickly support teammates or surround enemies upon encounters.

The team circled around the Space Station, flying continuously without anyone falling behind or causing trouble.

minute.

minutes.

minutes.

...

The cruise process was extremely smooth.

...

The students, each maneuvering their mecha, made no errors, all swiftly exiting the artificial atmosphere. Inside the temporary head's office of the Space Station, the stationed veterans watched the students' performance and exchanged glances, falling silent.

Chapter 784: The Cubs

The temporary in-charge of Eagle Space Station is a soldier with an extraordinarily youthful and handsome appearance. In fact, he's not that old; he's not even 50 years old this year, and has already been serving in the Sixth Legion for 25 years, during which he has accumulated a wealth of combat experience.

Because of his baby face, people often mistook him for a student. Therefore, to make himself look more serious and proper, he usually kept a straight face and never smiled.

At this moment.

The baby-faced in-charge was keeping his mouth shut, face taut as a board.

Nearby, a few warriors were watching a scene on the light screen. An old soldier asked, "Which grade are these kids in?"

The others exchanged glances, all looking confused.

"No idea."

"Didn't notice."

"Seems like, probably, second year or something?"

Ji You's group's entry to Eagle Space Station went unnoticed by the stationed warriors; their full attention was on the entrenched frontline battle, focusing all their energy on their responsibilities, and honestly, almost no one had the energy to care about the group of young pups rescued back to the base.

So, they really didn't know.

Then—

The baby face said: "Freshmen."

After uttering three words, he closed his mouth.

Upon hearing this, the old soldiers stood up with a clatter:

"Freshmen?"

"Really?"

"Are you sure?"

...

Facing his comrades' doubts, the baby face said: "Sure."

Everyone: "!!!"

An old soldier with his mouth agape said, "That small leader, if you guys didn't say anything, I would've thought he was a middle schooler!"

"Cough cough..."

"Is this kid underdeveloped or what?"

"Let's not digress. Talking about these little pups, just freshmen, that's kinda impressive!"

"Freshmen pups, but looking at their mecha control level, it doesn't seem like it at all. Back when we were in school, to reach their current level, it would have taken at least until the second year."

"Cough cough... I remember some people didn't reach that even in their second year, seems like, for their Basic Mecha Driver's License exam, they took the test 10 times, or was it 9 times to finally pass."

Saying so, the old soldier shot a glance at the baby-faced in-charge, with a hint of teasing in his eyes and tone.

The baby face: "..."

With a serious face, the baby face said: "5 times."

Just 5 times, where did 10 or 9 come from?

The old soldier laughed, "Ah! Right, 5 times, my old age is getting to me, memory isn't what it used to be."

With a solemn expression and speaking deliberately, the baby face said, "A clumsy bird has to start flying early; diligence can make up for clumsiness. Those who were better than me back then are now no match for me, including you."

The said old soldier: "Cough cough... That's old news; let's not talk about it. Cough cough... Look at these little pups, the future of our Alliance is a smooth path."

The Space Station, as a border defense checkpoint, was surrounded by layers of defense mechanisms and naturally could also monitor nearby movements at all times. At this moment, the moves of the students were seen under the watchful eyes of the baby face and the stationed warriors.

On the screen, Ji You's group switched to a line formation quickly, led by Ji You's Wind Wing, followed by Chu Jiaojiao's Po Jun, the team advancing on their flight path with extreme disciplinary precision.

A glimmer of satisfaction crossed the baby face's eyes, and he nodded: "Mhm."

After watching for a while and seeing that the young pups didn't have any issues, an old soldier asked, "How's the front line?"

"The kids are playing in the safe zone, shouldn't be any problems."

"Let them play by themselves. Practicing flying is good too, it helps with future battles."

"Look how seriously they're playing, quite professional, haha..."

"The little pups are playing house, what cute kids they are! Everyone, perk up! Secure our own lines well, don't let the Star Beasts break through, otherwise, our little pups will get scared." An older soldier, his face filled with worry, warned.

Seeing his face color, it was clear that he was genuinely concerned when he spoke these words, not just teasing.

The baby face pursed his lips.

Playing?

They were certainly not playing.

Practice?

They didn't treat it as practice either.

Playing house?

Which cub would have the guts to come to the front line to play house? And with Star Beasts rampaging, it's quite possible they would burst in and smash their toys, devouring them whole.

They—

This group treated the patrol within 5 light-years as their duty and responsibility, strictly executing their mission in their own way.

These youngsters were quite endearing.

Suddenly, Baby Face's expression turned solemn, and he said in a deep voice, "Switch to coordinates north 50 degrees."

The screen shifted.

The scene of the cubs peacefully and earnestly at play disappeared, and the screen violently turned intense and bloody. A giant Carrion Vulture, with its massive beak open wide, brutally picked up a warrior clad only in protective clothing after shattering the mecha, and brought him close to its mouth.

Everyone's heart clenched.

Baby Face clenched his lips tight.

The sharp beak of the Carrion Vulture ruthlessly pecked towards the warrior's head—

Baby Face closed his eyes, clenched his teeth; a faint metallic taste of blood gradually spread in the air.

Silence.

A suffocating, utterly oppressive silence.

...

Baby Face reopened his eyes, on the screen was the triumphant cawing of the Carrion Vulture, and the motionless body of the warrior floating in space. Baby Face's voice was calm and untroubled: "Notify the

troops, coordinates north 50 degrees, defensive line breached, immediately dispatch more personnel to block it."

"Yes."

On Baby Face's exquisite cheeks, not a single trace of sadness, grief, or mourning could be seen. His tone remained steady as he said, "Switch to coordinates south 30 degrees."

The screen shifted once again.

Several mechas were surrounding and penetrating a massive Vulture.

In the blink of an eye, the Carrion Vulture shattered into several pieces.

Immediately after, the mecha squadron expanded the battlefield, advancing towards the next target.

The corners of Baby Face's tightened lips relaxed imperceptibly, and his voice remained steady and calm: "At south 30 degrees, a breakthrough was created, dispatch two more people to hold the new position."

"Yes."

...

One after another, calmly reporting various information, issuing various commands.

The work seemed easy, but was incredibly difficult. The most important thing was to remain absolutely calm, to keep a clear mind. If your emotions take over, cloud your judgement, lead to misjudgments, or result in the transmission of incorrect information or errant commands, it's not just a mistake in the job, but a disregard for the lives of comrades.

Despite this, with absolute calm, you would witness countless familiar comrades disappear before your eyes, one after another.

Inside the room.

Silent, save for Baby Face's continuous relay of information.

Time ticked away...

Baby Face raised his hand, his voice clear and steady as ever: "Switch to 5 light-years."

—To see how the cubs were doing.

On the screen, in the vast starry sky, the cubs were arranged in a V-formation, flying continuously.

No gunfire.

No flashes of blades.

No bloodshed.

...

The scene was so peaceful, so beautiful.

Unconsciously, the taut strings of their hearts calmed down. Baby Face and the few veteran soldiers beside him had an almost imperceptible uplift at the corners of their lips.

Suddenly—

Chapter 785: Viper Worm

Suddenly ——

Baby face suddenly tensed up, "Evacuate!"

"Evacuate quickly!"

His words were directly conveyed to Ji You, the team captain. When Ji You received the message, though she couldn't understand what had happened, still!

Ji You immediately ordered, "Tighten the formation, everyone gather around me, prepare to return immediately!"

Chu Jiaojiao was startled: "What's the situation?"

Everyone moved quickly, immediately closing the distance and gathering around Ji You.

Ji You narrowed her eyes and said, "Danger is approaching."

Zhang Ye exclaimed: "What?"

Lou smacked his lips: "Impossible, right?"

Xuzhou furrowed his brows: "Within a radius of 10 light years, I have thoroughly searched and confirmed there are no issues."

Shen Changqing and Yue Qiyuan, both with S-level mental power, remained silent. They immediately spread out their Spiritual Nets to search.

However ——

They found nothing.

All around was as calm as the beginning, showing no hint of danger.

The expressions of Shen Changqing and Yue Qiyuan instantly tightened; they were not convinced and searched again.

Seeing the expression of his younger brother, Yue Qiguang sensed that the situation was not optimistic: "What's going on? Is a large number of Star Beasts approaching?"

After the second round of searching with Spiritual Silk, Yue Qiyuan shook his head, his face grave: "Can't detect anything."

Yue Qiguang turned toward Shen Changqing, who also shook his head: "I can't detect anything either."

Yue Qiguang tugged at his hair: "Damn! Could it be that the front lines have been breached?" This was not a good guess.

Upon hearing Yue Qiguang's comment, others immediately cursed: "Crows mouth, shut up!"

Yue Qiguang: "..."

A hint of worry flashed in everyone's eyes.

Ji You said: "It's not that."

Everyone: "Huh?"

Ji You stared intently around her, her voice firm, she said: "The danger is very close."

Everyone: "!!!"

Sheng Qingyan, who had been appearing somewhat lethargic, suddenly perked up, and banished all traces of drowsiness, becoming more serious than ever, releasing his Spiritual Silk without holding back.

Nothing was found.

Sheng Qingyan furrowed his brows and said, "This is bad, I really have a bad feeling that a major disaster is looming."

Ji You was fully alert, saying, "What exactly the danger is, remains unknown. Where it comes from, also remains unknown, so — stay 120,000% alert!"

Not knowing anything, that was the most troublesome part.

As everyone conversed, their movements didn't stop; after quickly gathering with Ji You and others, without needing instructions, everyone perked up and kept checking for any danger.

After the team consolidated, they quickly executed the Space Station Commander's orders to return swiftly.

Ji You asked, "Senior, may I ask what is the danger?"

Baby face pressed his lips together, trying to maintain calm and composure in his voice, he said, "Preliminarily, it is considered that a Viper Worm has infiltrated within a 5 light-year radius outside the Space Station."

Ji You's pupils contracted: "Viper Worm?"

Chu Jiaojiao and others: "!!!"

Yue Qiguang exclaimed, "Damn! Are you serious?"

After enrolling in Lanyue Star Military Academy, a mandatory course for everyone is called "Star Beast Encyclopedia," which includes all the Star Beasts discovered and recorded by humankind so far, including the Viper Worm.

The Viper Worm is an amphibious arthropod Star Beast, with a body length of at least 100 meters. High-level ones can even reach the size of a kilometer. They somewhat resemble a centipede, with legs on each segment, but they are also covered in toxic spines which can cause immediate death in humans if ingested in excess.

But !!!

The terrifying part about Viper Worms isn't just this—within their sebum, they secrete a substance that grants them invisibility, making them nearly impossible for the human eye to see! Many human detection devices also struggle to find them, only detectors made from certain rare and expensive materials can sense the spiritual fluctuations of Viper Worms.

This invisibility substance on the Viper Worms is not only useful for them but, once extracted, can also be applied to Mechas, machinery, spaceships, and Starships. However, due to the difficulty in harvesting this material, it is currently only used in some highly sophisticated products.

For example, the Mecha Sheng Qingyan drove in the Star Network competition—Ghost Stab—its invisibility function stems from the invisibility substance in Viper Worm's sebum.

...

It should be mentioned that Viper Worms are ferocious by nature. From each clutch of eggs laid by the same mother, the hatched juveniles must engage in mutual slaughter, devouring each other to enhance their survival capabilities. Only two or three, or even just one, survive out of a brood of hatchlings, making this species extremely rare.

But precisely because of this brutal survival method, each Viper Worm is incredibly strong and dangerous. They are twice as dangerous as other Star Beasts of the same level—an ominous thought indeed...

Upon hearing baby face's statement, Ji You felt a storm brewing in her heart:

"Really?"

This unlucky?

To encounter a Viper Worm, a creature as rare as pandas in the world of Star Beasts?"

Ji You straightened her face and told her teammates, "Stay calm, stay calm, after this fight, let's all go buy a lottery ticket together."

With this kind of lousy luck, Ji You believed it, even if the prize was 500 million credit points.

Upon hearing this, the others nodded in agreement, "Let's do it!"

"Absolutely!"

"Forget buying a lottery ticket, I even want to burn some incense to pray for our ancestor's protection."

"You unfaithful descendant, your ancestors probably got so annoyed by you that they don't even want to deal with you anymore; you better pray for your own fortune."

...

The situation was very dangerous, but the atmosphere on the scene was relatively light.

The group retreated while staying alert.

Ji You raised her hand and commanded, "Shen Changqing, Yue Qiyuan, Sheng Qingyan, and myself, the four of us will handle the reconnaissance; the rest of you stay on high alert, and if anything looks off, don't hesitate, just start firing!"

Ji You gave the order.

Meanwhile, baby face said, "The Viper Worm has breached our defenses and sneaked in; currently, its whereabouts are mysterious; the Space Station is searching fully. Don't be careless, retreat towards the Space Station first."

"Attention, 10 seconds ago, a Viper Worm was spotted at 13 degrees east."

"5 seconds ago, a Viper Worm appeared in the southwest corner!"

"..."

Due to their ability to turn invisible, the Eagle Space Station only had two detection devices capable of tracking the Viper Worm's movements. However, constantly moving at high speed and in the vast expanse of space, two detectors were far from enough.

After baby face finished speaking, a pair of delicate eyebrows furrowed tightly.

Nearby, the expressions of several veteran soldiers also turned grim:

"How did a Viper Worm get in here?"

"This is indeed a serious issue; how could Viper Worms be in this area? There is nothing here that Viper Worms like."

"This is troublesome."

"So—what are we going to do about our cubs?"

Chapter 786: Run, Run, Run!

Under the surveillance monitor.

Baby face was closely monitoring the movements within 5 light-years, but he couldn't keep watching non-stop; other areas also needed timely information transmission. After some thought, baby face asked, "How many vital forces do we have left inside the space station?"

The oldest soldier among them said, "Including us, there are still 108 people. We cannot randomly change personnel at critical positions, only less than 10 are effectively available for adjustment."

Hearing this, baby face's heart sank.

The old soldier asked, "Do the youngsters need reinforcements?"

Baby face didn't respond right away.

Seeing that baby face didn't reply, the old soldier became a bit anxious, "Given the danger of the Viper Worms, if we don't send an emergency rescue, those 10 youngsters will be in danger."

Another middle-aged veteran soldier said, "Old Chen, you and I both know the destructive power of the Viper Worms. If we send a rescue now, it might not be a rescue for the youngsters, but a death knell. And — dispatching forces rashly will compromise the defense at the checkpoint; if that causes an even greater loss..."

What the other party said was very reasonable and absolutely true, but—

But—

Implicitly, after weighing the pros and cons, sacrificing this group of youngsters clearly seemed to be the most cost-effective method.

Having heard this, Old Chen knew the reasoning was sound, yet he just couldn't feel at ease, furrowing his brows, he said, "But surely we can't just do nothing, watching the youngsters get into trouble?"

The middle-aged veteran was also feeling distressed, clenching his lips tightly and said, "It's not like we're just watching; we will relay the Viper Worms' movements to them in real-time."

Worry filled Old Chen's eyes, "They are only first-year youngsters, who have handled the Mecha for less than half a year..."

At this moment, baby face suddenly said, "Stop!"

The arguing veterans all closed their mouths.

Baby face spoke with a very calm voice, "Old Jiang, you keep a close watch solely on the 5 light-year range, any Viper Worm activity, report to me immediately. As for everyone else, hold your current positions."

Middle-aged veteran Old Jiang's fingers trembled, "Captain, what are you doing?"

Baby face calmly declared, "I will take care of this Viper Worm."

Everyone: "Captain, you mustn't!!!"

It's too dangerous.

Encountering Viper Worms, the best strategy is to stay still if the enemy does not move, lowering our presence and waiting for the Viper Worms to leave on their own.

But!

We can't disregard the Viper Worm that infiltrated the star domain near the space station. Because it may avoid detection devices and sneak into the space station undetected, which would lead to even bigger problems.

Baby face had made up his mind:

The youngsters must be saved!

The Viper Worm must be killed!

The space station must be protected!

All other duties must not be delayed!

Baby face took off his helmet, took out a set of protective clothing, his expression usual, his tone flat, "I'll be back soon."

Old Chen suddenly stood up, "Captain! Let me go!"

Here, he was the oldest, a lifelong campaigner who had slain numerous Star Beasts, believing he had lived enough and had long been indifferent to life and death. He was prepared for accidents.

Moreover, the control room and here in the space station absolutely cannot lack the captain.

Old Chen had made up his mind; he reached out, donning the protective clothing, "You youngsters, none of you have fought with Viper Worms! I'm different, I've encountered one before and personally slaughtered it; I have the experience."

Saying so, he started to head out!

Baby face shook his head, "Old Chen, stop, that's an order."

Old Chen did not look back as he stepped out of the control room, "Soldiers in foreign fields are not subject to military orders."

Baby face: "..."

Baby face spoke gravely, "I'm still here."

Old Chen turned around with a grin, "I've already stepped out of the control room, it's outside my work area, so let's pretend I can't see you."

Baby face: "..."

As Old Chen was about to take a Mecha out of the Space Button, baby face said, "Old Chen, come back."

Old Chen paused his steps.

This 'come back' meant for him to return safely.

Old Chen, with his back to the baby face and the others, lifted a hand and waved dismissively, "It's fine."

Having said that, he entered the cockpit and plugged into the Spiritual Connector.

The Mecha dashed into the starry sky, watched by all.

Baby face refocused his attention and said, "Switch to 30 degrees northwest."

The screen shifted.

It was the team led by Captain Han Zheng, moving steadily forward.

Baby face then said, "Switch to 50 degrees southwest."

The screen turned again.

The situation on this front was also very stable.

Finally, some good news.

Just as baby face was about to speak, suddenly, Old Jiang, who was specifically responsible for monitoring the Star Domain where the young ones were, changed his expression and said, "Captain—"

Baby face: "Speak."

Old Jiang said, "The direction the Viper Worm is moving in is heading towards the young ones. They will be discovered within 5 minutes." Given the Viper Worm's aggressiveness, the young ones would be hard-pressed to resist.

Baby face pursed his lips tightly: "How long will it take for Old Chen to get there?"

Old Jiang looked somber: "He is already pushing at full speed, but at the fastest, it will take 10 minutes."

Baby face struggled to maintain calm and said, "Switch communication to the young ones."

Old Jiang: "Yes."

On the other side.

Ji You and the others were on high alert, not daring to relax the slightest bit, with the four individuals with high Spiritual Silk Cleaning Rate taking on the primary detection tasks.

After receiving the alert, with the efforts of Ji You and her team, no danger had arisen for the time being.

The entire Star Domain was tranquil and undisturbed; if not for the hidden danger of a Viper Worm, one could almost savor the taste of peaceful years.

But!

That hair-raising feeling lingered, and it kept closing in.

Ji You furrowed her brows tightly and asked, "How much longer until we reach the Space Station?"

Shen Changqing accurately reported a series of numbers, "Maintaining the current course and speed, 21 minutes 57 seconds and 40 frames to arrival."

Ji You frowned: "Too slow."

"Not good!"

Damn!

This terrifying sense of dread—

Scalp tingling!

Ji You shouted loudly, "Change course!"

Everyone was stunned for a moment. The current route was the optimal and quickest path; a sudden change would undoubtedly extend the time spent in outer space.

There was no time to explain!

After speaking, Ji You immediately took off running, without a millisecond of hesitation.

The others, seeing this, immediately followed suit.

Huff~

Huff~

Huff~

Everyone followed Ji You, panting and out of breath, but she showed no sign of stopping, and everyone kept up firmly with her.

Those with a slightly poor sense of direction, like Lou and Lance, were even getting dizzy from running. Thankfully, they didn't have to discern the direction themselves and just needed to keep up with Ji You.

In the control room.

Baby face was just about to connect to Ji You's comms when he saw this scene and paused his movement.

Old Jiang next to him opened his mouth wide: "These kids are quite something! They realized the Viper Worm was coming and ran in advance?"

"I have to say, their running is pretty clever! They have widened the distance from the Viper Worm considerably, enough to hold out until Old Chen arrives for the rescue."

"Not to mention, these kids aren't bad at playing house."

"Ha ha!"

"It's not bad playing with mud and make-believe, huh."

Baby face withdrew the communication request, his lips curved in an almost imperceptible smile: "Hmm, not bad indeed."

Chapter 787: Trap

Baby face's taut heartstrings finally relaxed a bit.

In the Space Station control room, thanks to the exceptional performance of the young ones, the previously dull atmosphere also livened up slightly.

But on the other side of the battlefield, because of the sudden rampage of several large Star Beasts, the situation was not looking optimistic.

One by one.

Familiar silhouettes, familiar names, kept vanishing, gradually, the control room fell silent again.

...

Ji You sensed something was off. Having just led her team on a round, logically, that creepy, tingling sensation on her scalp shouldn't be there anymore, but...

This eerie feeling, it seemed to constantly follow her, like an unshakable specter.

Could it be the Viper Worms getting closer again?

Ji You asked Shen Changqing beside her, "Xiaoqing, do you feel like you're being watched by a Devil, with a tingling scalp?"

Shen Changqing frowned and felt carefully for a moment, then shook his head: "No."

Ji You turned towards Yue Qiyuan: "Little Yuanyuan?"

Yue Qiyuan: "..."

What kind of cursed nickname is that!

Ji You asked again: "Little Yuanyuan?"

Yue Qiyuan rolled his eyes: "Yes!"

Ji You's pupils shrank, only to hear Yue Qiyuan say irritably: "Isn't that Devil you?"

Ji You: "..."

Ji You grinned, heehee'd with a laugh: "Just kidding, come on, Little Yuanyuan sounds pretty cute, doesn't it?"

"Oh——" Yue Qiyuan drew out the sound, then spoke indifferently: "Little Jiji?"

"Cough..." Ji You cursed: "Making up nicknames is forbidden!"

Yue Qiyuan tilted his head: "Then how about Little Jiji?"

Ji You: "..."

Ji You took a deep breath: "No flirting on the battlefield, remember to stay serious!"

Yue Qiyuan smiled: "Just lightening the mood of the battlefield."

Ji You's eyes hardened: "Comrades, it's time to run for it again!"

Without finishing her sentence, Ji You turned and bolted!

This time, she changed direction again, heading further away from the Space Station.

Without a word, the others immediately followed suit.

Ji You clenched her fists and declared: "Hold on, rescue should be around 10 minutes away. During this time, no matter what happens, just cling to life desperately!"

"Cling to life!"

"If we survive this second, there'll be a next one!"

"If we survive this moment, there'll be a next one!"

"If we survive today, there'll be a tomorrow!"

...

For a time, nearly the whole starry space echoed with Ji You's voice.

Unaware of where the enemy might emerge from or in what manner, Ji You and her team's flight was nothing short of exhilarating, but——

No need for stress relief to the point of having someone repeatedly buzz in your ear non-stop!

So everyone chorused: "Nagging."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You said: "Cough cough, since you've recognized the importance of clinging to life, I'll hold my peace then."

Cough cough...

Though she hated to admit it——

She really wanted to talk!

Not talking, not nagging, Ji You was tense! Seriously, these darn Viper Worms gave her an even more bizarre, more terrifying vibe than that level 8 Sea Iron Bull...

Not talking really made it easier to get tense.

...

Within the silently sprinting team, Shen Changqing extended his own Spiritual Silk, always on alert for any movement around them. At the moment when Ji You took off running, he vaguely sensed a faint yet extremely dangerous presence closing in.

This sensation was fleeting, but it was enough for Shen Changqing to detect it.

About 5000 kilometers behind them, the Viper Worm was a type of Star Beast with movement speed comparable to a spaceship. With the Viper Worm's speed, it could quickly catch up to the team.

And Ji You's judgment was exceedingly accurate; even the direction of their escape was spot on.

But!!!

Shen Changqing still furrowed his brow, feeling that there was something odd.

This strange sensation was indescribable...

Beside him, Sheng Qingyan suddenly said, "Poor dead, don't you think we're getting further away from the Space Station?"

Ji You suddenly stopped!

Shen Changqing abruptly paused; upon hearing what Sheng Qingyan said, he realized what was strange and was about to speak when Yue Qiyuan interjected, "Don't you feel like we're a herd of sheep being driven?"

Yue Qiguang asked, "What do you mean?"

Yue Qiyuan thought for a moment and said, "The path we're taking to escape seems like it's been deliberately designed, step by step, to lead us away from the Eagle Space Station."

Ji You's frown was so tight it looked like it could kill flies: "Xuzhou, bring up the navigation map for us to see."

Upon hearing this, Xuzhou quickly compiled all the movements they had made up until now into a Starry Sky Map and shared it with the team chat.

Everyone took a close look and inhale sharply in unison: "Damn!"

Looking at the team's movement trajectory, it was indeed the best scheme, steadily taking them step by step away from the Space Station.

What did this imply?

This indicated that the Viper Worm didn't want them to enter the Space Station; it wanted to drive them to a place it deemed safe and then feed on them?

Yue Qiyuan furrowed his brow and said, "Exactly what level is this Viper Worm that we've encountered?"

Chu Jiaojiao touched her chin, pondering, "This intelligence level... at least not less than 4."

Yue Qiguang unsurely speculated, "Level 8?"

As soon as he said this, everyone collectively retorted: "Ptooeey!"

"Ptooeey!"

"Ptooeey!"

After spitting three times in a row, Yue Qiguang received everyone's strong condemnation:

"Crow's mouth!"

"If you don't know what to say, then shut up!"

"Don't you know how offensive your mouth is?"

Yue Qiguang: "..."

He...

He didn't want to make such terrifying guesses either.

A trace of grievance flickered through Yue Qiguang's bright eyes.

Then—

The tough man Yue Qiguang, for the first time, took back what he'd said, "Just pretend that what Dad just said was a fart!"

"Cough..." Ji You said: "It's my fault. I was only thinking about running away and didn't pay attention to anything else; I was negligent."

After boldly admitting her mistake, Ji You did not continue to be disheartened. She raised her hand, pointing to the navigation map, and said, "If I'm not wrong, it wants us to run into here!"

Everyone looked and nodded in agreement, very convinced. Shen Changqing said, "This coordinate, far from the Space Station and also not on the main frontlines, has few troops stationed, and after the Viper Worm achieves its goal, it's easy to escape."

Lou blinked and asked, "So, what do we do now?"

Everyone fell into deep thought.

In the vast starry sky, with an invisible enemy hiding in an unknown place, sinister and crafty, it could appear at any moment to choose its prey.

Ji You tightly furrowed her brow.

This was the first time she had fallen into an enemy's trap without any caution!

And that enemy was a Star Beast!

For the first time, Ji You felt there was so much, so much, so much she was lacking.

She took a deep breath and said to everyone, "The best way to confirm our speculation is to change our path and probe it!"

Yue Qiyuan slightly disagreed, "That's too dangerous. What if the path we're being pursued by the Viper Worm just happens to be a coincidence?"

Such speculation was very possible.

For a moment, everyone hesitated.

Ji You thought for a while and said, "We can't take that gamble. If there's a suspicion, we need to eliminate it... so—"

Chapter 788: Probing

Everyone's expressions hardened, then Ji You said: "So—I'll try going alone."

Everyone chorused: "No way"

Ji You waved his hand, saying: "You all keep running as-is, I'll head west alone and try it out!"

Yue Qiguang looked at Ji You with disdain, and said: "You fool, better not go and get yourself killed! Let Daddy go! Daddy runs fast!"

Chu Jiaojiao jumped out: "Speaking of running fast, who's faster than me? I'll go!"

"Enough," Yue Qiyuan shook his head and said gloomily: "Strong limbs but simple-minded, what's the use of just being fast? At the critical moment, someone smart and strong like me needs to step up, so I'm the best choice."

The thoughtful Shen Changqing interrupted them, concisely stating: "I am most suitable to go."

Lou, Lance, Zhang Ye, and others all suggested themselves.

Xuzhou said: "Investigation is my strong suit, I'm more suitable."

"But Little Zhouzhou, you didn't find anything today." Sheng Qingyan rolled her eyes and mocked: "In front of this Viper Worm, both of you investigators were useless."

Xuzhou: "..."

The wounded Zhang Ye: "..."

Sheng Qingyan continued lazily: "All of you are fools, even rushing to court death. Well, I fear death, I declare I won't go."

Everyone: "..."

Sheng Qingyan looked askance and said irritably: "What, not okay with that?"

Everyone: "..."

It's not that it's not okay, but your attitude is just asking for a beating!

Ji You stepped forward: "Alright, Little Cutie weak chicken, step back. As for the others—"

Pausing briefly, Ji You suddenly gathered his energy and shouted: "Regarding running ability, forgive my bluntness, everyone present is trash!"

Yue Qiguang started to clench his fists: "Daddy thinks you're asking for a beating."

The others were also rubbing their palms, looking ready to gang up and brawl.

Ji You said incredulously: "What kind of world is this, not even allowing someone to speak the truth?"

Amidst the joking and laughter, everyone had gradually moved further from the Space Station. However, seeing the familiar teammates around and listening to their usual way of speaking, the anxious mood of Ji You and the others gradually calmed down.

Ji You too.

Choosing the right moment, Ji You said softly: "You all can't sense the Viper Worm's spiritual fluctuations, only I can detect them, so I am the most suitable to go."

Seeing Chu Jiaojiao and others about to speak, Ji You raised his hand to interrupt: "My mind is made up, no more discussion! Shen Changqing, you take over the team management, Spicy Eye, you take over Shen Changqing's duties."

Having said this, Ji You increased the thruster of his Wind Wing.

Whoosh—

The Wind Wing shot out at great speed.

Sheng Qingyan glanced around, then suddenly said: "Jiaojiao takes over, I won't manage it."

Dropping those words, Sheng Qingyan suddenly darted off, heading in the direction Ji You had left.

Everyone: "..."

Weren't you the one who said you feared death?

Silently for a moment, Shen Changqing said: "I believe in Ji You and Ayan, let's go."

After saying this, he took over Ji You's job, leading the team forward along the original path.

Ji You had only been running for a few seconds when he suddenly noticed something unusual behind him, nearly choking: "What the hell, Spicy Eye, what are you doing?"

Sheng Qingyan had already caught up with Ji You, the distance between their two mechas was minimal. He rolled his eyes and said annoyed: "Who knows what's wrong with this crappy mecha—it started on its own, I can't even stop it."

Ji You rolled his eyes: "Lame excuse."

Sheng Qingyan completely ignored Ji You, speeding up again, and in the blink of an eye, he had overtaken Ji You.

Seeing this, Ji You thought, no way, he couldn't let Little Cutie surpass him.

So, she accelerated again.

The two made moves, one after the other, quickly breaking away from the team consisting of Shen Changqing, Chu Jiaojiao, Yue Qiguang, and others, totaling 8 people.

Suddenly—

Ji You's eyes darkened: "It's here."

Sheng Qingyan whispered: "I can feel it." Besides Ji You, he was the person who felt the most profound sense of danger, even more so than Shen Changqing or Yue Qiyuan.

Ji You didn't doubt Sheng Qingyan's words at all.

Sure enough—

The Viper Worm did not allow its prey to escape.

Ji You asked: "Little Cutie, are you scared?"

Sheng Qingyan narrowed his eyes: "Scared."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You said: "I'm even more scared than you."

Sheng Qingyan: "..."

"You don't understand." Ji You said, "You're the type whose money outlasts their life. I'm the type who dies without ever having spent money."

It was clear who was more tragic.

Sheng Qingyan: "..."

"We might need to do another test." Ji You became serious and said, "Let's split up, you turn back towards Jiaojiao and the others while I keep moving forward to see who it follows."

If the thing continued to pursue Ji You while letting Sheng Qingyan go, it would confirm their speculation.

Upon hearing this, Sheng Qingyan said, "You poor dead guy, you're so annoying you definitely won't die, others have left."

Then, he immediately turned around.

Left decisively.

As soon as Sheng Qingyan moved, the sense of danger that had been following them seemed to vanish momentarily, but soon enough, Ji You sensed it again.

Ji You continued to run.

The dangerous spiritual fluctuations focused intently, maintaining a consistent distance, not too close but also not too far, seemingly intentionally keeping the distance.

Ji You looked solemn:

The more it behaved like this, the higher the Viper Worm's intelligence seemed.

In the team's public chat channel, Ji You singled out Sheng Qingyan and asked: "Little Cutie, can you feel it still?"

Sheng Qingyan replied: "No."

Sheng Qingyan squinted, staring at the Mecha monitor, and said, "Two possibilities: one is what we guessed, it doesn't allow prey to leave the preset track. The second, you might be tastier than us."

Ji You frowned and said: "The second possibility isn't very nice. Is this Viper Worm blind? Have glaucoma? Did it lose its sense of taste and smell? I have rough skin, hardly any flesh, I often don't bathe or change clothes for weeks, and also have bad breath and foot odor, how can it bear to bite me?"

Sheng Qingyan: "..."

Sheng Qingyan disdainfully said: "You're disgusting."

Yue Qiguang rolled his eyes: "I'm about to vomit my dinner from last night."

Chu Jiaojiao clutched her chest: "Ji You, stop talking, my poor little heart can't take it..."

The faces of the others were also twitching—

Ji You chuckled, "I've already lured it to the west, stop griping about it here and take the chance to run towards the Space Station!"

Shen Changqing said: "We've already retreated."

Hearing this, Ji You felt a bit relieved, then she gritted her teeth toward the direction exuding a dangerous aura and muttered: "Dare to deceive your daddy Ji You, hmm—"

Ji You swiftly threw something into the air.

Puff—

The object burst into pieces as it approached the target!

Suddenly, an extremely nauseating stench instantly spread around the area.

Ji You herself, as the center of the revolting smell, along with the Mecha, was completely enveloped in the foul odor.

Chapter 789: Crow's Mouth

"Oh, damn this Stinky Grass!" Ji You pinched her nose, her face contorted, deeply and wickedly knowledgeable of the ways of evil.

The moment the putrid stench filled the air, Ji You focused her attention carefully on a certain part of the starry sky.

Whoosh~

Very faint, but it indeed moved!

Ji You's heart tightened:

As expected, that thing has been following her, its precise location unclear, but Ji You could confirm that it, now certainly under attack by the Stinky Grass, was still there!

What to do?

Keep running?

But what if the Viper Worm thought she was running too far, delaying its original plan, and it might just leap out unwillingly and settle her fate?

If Ji You didn't run, without drawing the Viper Worm's attention, she would not be able to create a chance for the idiots like Sheng Qingyan, Shen Changqing, Yue Qiguang, and Chu Jiaojiao to escape.

So, running was a must. But she had to manage the way she ran, just right, neither too far nor too close.

But—what exactly is just right? That's a tough question. A slight mistake, and she might have to say goodbye to her little life.

Ji You didn't want to die.

She truly, absolutely didn't want to die.

Also—

If she died, what would happen to her 500 million debt?

Cough cough...

Ji You almost cried, moved by her own contract spirit: Look—at the brink of death, yet still worried about unpaid debt, who else in the world could claim to have better credit than her?

After weighing the options, Ji You put on a straight face, and without a word, took off running!

As she moved, from the previously still area behind her, a slight noise was heard again.

Ji You's face darkened!

This creature, it's hell-bent on her, clearly not willing to let go of this piece of meat. Could Little Cutie's words actually come true?

Was her allure to the Viper Worm stronger than all nine of them combined?

With the speed of the Wind Wing, Ji You pushed it to the extreme, and in the starry sky, under the surveillance, it was like a fleeting afterimage...

Ji You ran for a while, then suddenly hit the brakes, nodded, almost without a peep, and fired directly at a certain point behind her!

Bang!

After a loud explosion, clouds of smoke drifted in all directions, followed by an even more pungent stench.

Caught off guard in the center of the stink storm, Ji You choked:

"Cough cough..."

"Dammit, it could have blown my soul away." Ji You pinched her nose tightly, acutely aware that even 10 layers of protective clothing wouldn't mask that stench...

The real Stinky Grass was ten times more lethal than the simulated Stinky Grass on the Star Network!

"Can't defend against it."

"Cough cough..."

Ji You hurriedly moved aside. At the same time, she kept an unwavering watch on a certain area that had been tailing her, and with the explosion of the enhanced Stinky Grass bomb, the terrifying presence that had been shadowing her and making her scalp tingle suddenly became chaotic for a moment.

Hmm?

Was it effective?

At such a good opportunity, of course Ji You took the chance to flee! Almost at the same moment she acted, she immediately increased her speed—

Swoosh~

The slightly chaotic presence behind her then went back to being sharp again, and in that blink of an eye, Ji You felt an even more terrifying deterrence, mixed with a sense of anger.

What's this?

Is the Viper Worm angry?

Ji You's guess was correct. Right after she launched the Stinky Grass bomb and fled immediately, the Viper Worm, which was barely noticeable, suddenly burst out with a strong wave!

Hiss~

Ji You's hair stood on end instantly, but she couldn't worry about these feelings now. The Viper Worm's sudden spiritual fluctuations had also instantaneously exposed its hiding place. With her scalp tingling, Ji You directed all her Spiritual Silk towards the location of the Viper Worm...

Then—

Ji You's pupils suddenly constricted.

At the same time, inside the monitoring room of the Space Station, Baby Face, Old Jiang, and everyone else's pupils shrank as well:

"!!!"

Old Jiang's fingertips trembled: "Lev... Lev... Level 8..."

Beside him, a veteran soldier exclaimed: "How could this be!!!"

"A Level 8 Viper Worm, how did it get into the Eagle Space Station?"

"Is there a problem with our detection system?"

...

Baby Face kept a calm face, not making a sound, his breathing becoming more prolonged.

Seeing that Baby Face remained silent, Old Jiang waited a bit before asking, "A Level 8 Viper Worm, we can't let it leave, nor can we allow it to linger near the station. Captain, what should we do?"

Baby Face's palms unconsciously clenched, his lips moving slightly, with a still calm voice, he said, "Inform Old Chen to hold his position for now, and wait for new rescue."

If it was a Level 4 or 5 Viper Worm, Baby Face and others might be able to handle it, but now it was a Level 8, which was completely beyond the capability of ordinary people. At present, the entire Eagle Space Station could not find a single warrior who could deal with a Level 8 Viper Worm alone.

Old Jiang asked again, "Should we notify the students?" According to Old Jiang's thinking, he felt it was better not to tell the students the true information about the Viper Worm. The students were young and inexperienced; if they knew this was a Level 8 Viper Worm, wouldn't they be scared witless?

Even if they weren't scared witless, what if the students got into an accident while running away in fear? In this kind of battle situation, one action could lead to a chain reaction, possibly causing immense damage to the Eagle Space Station.

Old Jiang originally thought that the Captain would definitely agree to keep the news from the students, but!!!!

Baby Face spoke up with his lips calm and composed: "Inform the students as it is."

Old Jiang was surprised: "Captain?"

Obviously, Captain Baby Face's choice was completely unexpected to Old Jiang, who pursed his lips and kept silent.

Baby Face said, "No need to hide it, the cubs know the significance. Moreover—they should face life and death directly."

As a Mechanical Warrior, one must go through the test of life and death to grow.

Baby Face had given the order, and Old Jiang complied with "Yes."

Following that—

The information was conveyed to the students truthfully.

Chu Jiaojiao and others: "..."

Louise exclaimed in horror: "Oh my god! The heavens want to destroy me, Louise Carter!!!"

Lance covered his chest: "It's over, I can't breathe."

Zhang Ye turned his head to ask Xuzhou: "Little Zhouzhou, I feel my heart pounding fast, how about you?"

Xuzhou pursed her lips: "I think I'm a bit too worked up."

Then—

Chu Jiaojiao, Yue Qiyuan, Louise, Lance, Zhang Ye, Xuzhou all turned their heads simultaneously, glaring at Yue Qiguang: "It's all because of your crows mouth!"

Yue Qiguang: "..."

Yue Qiguang felt a bit wronged: "Hey hey hey... What does this have to do with me?"

It was just a casual remark he made—who knew it would be so accurate? If he had known his mouth brought such fortune, he would rather not go to battle at all and just rely on good luck to buy lottery tickets, maybe win a couple of billions, then life would be too comfortable to speak of.

Yue Qiguang indeed felt a bit wronged and muttered: "I mean, this was originally Level 8, it really has nothing to do with me."

Beside him, Shen Changqing said, "It is related."

Yue Qiguang: "How so?"

Shen Changqing: "The brain."

Yue Qiguang: "..."

Chapter 790: Rescue

Yue Qiguang almost choked to the point of having a heart attack, but what about it?

Compared to Shen Changqing, who suddenly became proactive in criticizing others, the current situation was obviously more urgent.

Yue Qiguang asked, "What should we do now?"

Shen Changqing said, "Run!"

Yue Qiguang felt a bit uneasy and said, "Then, what about that idiot No. 4444 and Sheng Qingyan?"

Shen Changqing paused, fell silent for a second, and said, "We can't waste the opportunity they created for us."

Otherwise—

All their efforts would become meaningless.

Yue Qiguang opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but it felt as if something was stuck in his chest, making it hard to breathe.

Shen Changqing said softly, "Speed up, change lanes—"

Upon hearing the command, everyone sped up—

The team of eight people quickly headed towards the Space Station's entrance at their fastest speed.

Meanwhile—

Ji You gasped in shock, only to see the giant monster in front of her covered with densely packed sharp spines beneath which were countless horrifying legs.

It had two sharp tentacles on top of its head like blades, sinister green compound eyes, and a massive mouthpart—

This thing was truly an eyesore.

Ji You almost couldn't resist drawing her sword and charging forward to chop it down. But Ji You, with all her audacity, still recoiled from its ugly appearance.

Ji You turned and ran.

Hidden in the shadows, the Viper Worm, upon seeing this, wanted to immediately chase after her, but a nasty smell hit it, causing its body to shiver. After pausing for a few seconds, it suddenly exhaled and resumed pursuit.

Team chat room.

Ji You frantically tagged Sheng Qingyan: "Spicy Eye, there's a change of plans; I order you to immediately, right away, swiftly get back to the Space Station!"

"As if I needed you to tell me, I've already started running," Sheng Qingyan's voice was a bit urgent, clearly also in the midst of a frantic escape, as he continued, "Poor dead, this time if I run, I won't come back to save you again."

"I don't need you to save me!" Ji You gestured, panting, "Spend more money for me! In this lifetime, I probably won't have the fate to squander money."

Sheng Qingyan said indignantly, "That's ugly, no way."

Ji You tested the feeling and confirmed that Sheng Qingyan truly had left the area, and only then did she feel relieved.

Then.

Ji You said, "Shen Changqing, you must fully retreat, do not pause, do not fire, do not get entangled with anything!"

Shen Changqing pursed his lips, his voice struggling a bit, "Yes."

Ji You, feeling reassured, said, "Changqing, you little silly, to become an excellent captain, knowing what to give up and not letting emotions cloud your judgment is what's most important."

Shen Changqing fell silent.

Ji You thought he had taken her words to heart, but then Shen Changqing suddenly asked, "Ji You, have you done it?"

Ji You's fingers trembled slightly, then she raised the corners of her mouth, "Of course! I've done it."

No one else spoke, because Ji You indeed had done it; she wanted to save everyone by herself without including herself.

Cool enough.

Composed enough.

Willing enough.

—She was even willing to sacrifice herself.

Shen Changqing said, "But I can't do it."

Ji You said sternly, "This is an order! I'm not persuading you to do it, I am commanding you, you must do it."

Shen Changqing clenched his fist, softly saying, "Ji You, I will do it."

"And—"

Hesitating for a moment, Shen Changqing kept a straight face and said: "My dessert, it's yours if you just come back."

Ji You laughed: "Don't worry!"

While talking, Ji You heard a notification sound, she looked down and saw it was a new communication request.

Ji You answered the call.

"Kid, we're in big trouble, we need to join forces to give your classmates a chance to escape."

This voice, warm and amiable with a hint of vicissitude, belonged to the veteran named Old Chen who had come to rescue.

Ji You's expression turned serious: "Elder, I will follow your commands."

Old Chen said: "Level 8 Viper Worm, ordinary weapons can no longer harm it. Moreover, it has deadly venom, so close combat is absolutely out of the question."

Ji You listened intently.

Old Chen continued: "That's the external truth of the matter. With our strength, even together, we can't kill it. So, let's not waste our efforts."

Ji You: "..."

Is this suggesting we just lie down and wait for death?

Ji You quickly said: "Elder, let's not give up hope! Shall we try harder?"

Old Chen laughed: "We might not be able to kill it, but we can buy some time until help arrives."

While saying this, Old Chen was smiling, but his heart was heavy:

— Because no one knew better than Old Chen that currently, the Space Station couldn't dispatch anyone capable of killing a level 8 Viper Worm.

So, the 'rescue' he spoke of was merely his own deception, his powerless self could only offer Ji You, this little whelp, some beautiful hope through deception.

And he would stay with her until the end.

Old Chen said: "I will be entering your area in 1 minute and 3 seconds, and will immediately attack the Viper Worm. Try to make some noise and distract it."

Ji You solemnly responded: "Yes!"

Old Chen: "Can you handle it?"

Ji You: "Yes!"

At this moment, Ji You felt like her scalp was about to explode!

It stinks.

The power of this Stinky Grass was simply indescribable with limited vocabulary.

She carried this thing because she feared any unexpected events during the assessment, and had prepared it on a whim. Well, apart from the stench, it hardly had any use, so only those with a strong curiosity would buy it, hence there were very few shops selling Stinky Grass on Star Network.

Low sales, low demand, low price.

Ji You compared several stores and chose one, and after negotiating hard to save 5 credit points, the shop owner finally agreed.

Old Chen at full power, arrived precisely on time at the area where Ji You and the level 8 Viper Worm were. The moment he arrived, Old Chen smelled something off and thought his sense of smell was failing.

Old Chen didn't take it seriously and after another fierce rush, he and his Mecha trembled:

"Holy shit!"

"What is this?"

With Old Chen's arrival, the originally smooth-sailing level 8 Viper Worm suddenly became restless.

Its spiritual fluctuations grew stronger, signaling a strong warning,

Clearly, the Viper Worm was irritated and uneasy, ready to confront the invading foe.

This also made the hidden, unpredictable Viper Worm easier to catch.

The moment Old Chen identified the target, he didn't hesitate and fired directly towards the Viper Worm!

Boom—

The Viper Worm was sent flying hundreds of meters away, but it was useless. After shaking its body, it returned to its terrifying form.

Old Chen: "Kid!"

Ji You squinted her eyes: "Present!"