

The People's God: Sacrificing Trillions to Ascend

Chapter 611 - Automaton Stark

Stark appeared regal and impregnable as he stood among the hail of bullets from the other mechs.

Han Wu's fighting spirit soared, and he took a deep breath to center himself.

"Come on then!" he cried, clapping and activating his Divine Ring. The Divine Ring took the form of the Great Dragon Ring.

He then transformed into the Black Dragon King. With the effects of his Divine Ring, his Dragon Fear shook the entire area. His presence shocked even the most seasoned of hunters.

Stark glared at Han Wu, or more specifically, at his arms, which had taken the form of mechanical dragon claws. For some reason, a foreboding sense of danger prickled up his spine when he saw them.

Unfortunately, the presence of his underlings meant he couldn't afford to consider surrendering. Propelling himself forward with two blasts from his palms, he kicked at Han Wu with an electrified leg.

Han Wu was extremely experienced in battle. The moment he saw Stark move, he had already guessed his plan and preemptively raised his arms to guard.

The electrified kick connected without a sound. The electricity surged into Han Wu's arms like mud into the water, dealing no damage to Han Wu. On the contrary, Stark felt his leg go numb, and he quickly jumped back.

Looking down, he noticed that the armor on his leg was missing.

My mech armor is forged from extremely durable Blacksteel. How could it just disappear? he thought in bewilderment. Eyeing Han Wu, he pondered, *It was still there when I fought against the two automatons. Did Han Wu steal them away?*

Another wave of HEAT rounds fired at Han Wu. The latter blocked them with his arms. Even Han Wu himself assumed that the barrage would push him back a few steps, but unexpectedly, the bullets simply disappeared with a puff upon contact with his arms.

When Stark saw this, he finally understood the reason behind his armor's disappearance. Something was indeed wrong with Han Wu's arms.

This was also the first time Han Wu had noticed this, but he was quick to accept it without question. After all, it seemed logical for the arms of the Machine God to suppress and overpower anything mechanical or metallic.

Deciding to forego melee combat, Stark opted to use his firepower instead. He gathered energy into his palm, waiting until the brilliant light appeared solid before firing it at Han Wu.

Han Wu didn't back down, turning his right arm into a laser cannon with a swift retaliating shot. The two lasers collided in midair before exploding, matched in power.

Stark frowned at the realization that he couldn't defeat Han Wu in long-range combat either. As he was mulling over whether to use the item buried deep beneath the Weeping Mines, Han Wu interrupted his train of thought.

"Are you done? My turn."

Han Wu's body flickered, appearing beside Stark and swiping at him with his mechanical dragon claws. The blow was both heavy and destructive against mechanical objects.

In just a few blows, Stark lost most of his armor, exposing his vulnerable body within. Han Wu then landed a final blow.

Stark neither feared nor avoided it. In fact, he conversely anticipated it with a bizarre eagerness. Han Wu's dragon claws crushed Stark's body to pieces, and his vitality faded as he turned into a mangled corpse.

Han Wu pouted in dissatisfaction. Stark was the first enemy he had to take seriously since entering the Lawless Civilization. Unfortunately, even he seemed weak against a World life form.

As Han Wu moved to destroy the remaining mechs, he sensed a strange energy gathering in the Weeping Mines. The convergence point was at Stark's body.

He was already aware of the tiny microscopic machines in the Weeping Mines and naturally knew that Stark would turn into one as well.

But isn't this a bit much? Why is there so much energy?

A powerful gust enveloped Stark's body. If one were to observe this wind with a microscope, one would find that it was actually a swarm of microscopic machines. These machines infiltrated Stark's body, hastening the conversion process.

Stark's body was fortified repeatedly.

The wind stopped as abruptly as it started, and Stark's body suddenly sat up. He had turned into a five-meter-tall automaton. Eight sharp appendages sprouted from his back, a thick armor plating covered his form, and his arms had morphed into weapons.

One of his arms had turned into a warhammer containing the power of lightning, and the other into a cannon barrel with a 10-centimeter diameter. An irregular halo of unknown metal floated above his head.

Although already wary, the halo in particular sent alarm bells ringing in Han Wu's head. While the size and position of the halo were different, he knew it was akin to a Divine Ring—a Divine Halo unique to Stark.

Its enhancement made Stark ten times stronger than before. Moreover, even after becoming an automaton, Stark had somehow maintained his awareness and could still speak.

"It's amazing that you could force me to this state. Yield, and I will spare you before turning you into my underling."

Han Wu was in shock. A transformed automaton was no longer a living life form and couldn't retain its memory or speech capabilities.

What makes Stark different from the others? Han Wu silently pondered.

Meanwhile, Stark took Han Wu's silence as another rejection. "Since you're unwilling to become my underling, you will die in my hands. You're strong, but not unstoppable."

Stark charged forward with speed rivaling that of lightning. The coordination of his hammer and cannon was immaculate. His hammer dealt powerful lightning blows in tandem with the explosive cannon fire.

The eight sharp appendages behind him were extremely nimble and acted as blades. One wrong move and they would stab into Han Wu. Even Han Wu, with arms that could suppress all things machine, felt pressured against Stark's incessant attacks.

Stark damaged and destroyed many of Han Wu's dragon scales. While Han Wu could heal fast, this wasn't something he could sustain forever. He had to change the way he fought, and fast.

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[1,006 words]

Chapter 612 - Five Body Cardinals

With a clap, the Great Dragon Ring behind Han Wu turned into the Pressure Ring, and Han Wu reverted to his human form.

“What’s wrong? Giving up so fast? I won’t stop, so die!” Stark shouted as he charged at Han Wu.

He was five meters away when an absurdly heavy pressure forced him to the ground and pinned him in place.

Han Wu approached him, right arm morphed into the largest laser cannon in his arsenal. Energy gathered in the chamber of the cannon.

“You can’t kill me! I’m unkillable here in the Weeping Mines,” Stark said desperately, managing to get the words out despite not being able to move his body.

“Is that so?” Han Wu chuckled. He had used his Life Aspect to infuse the shot with dense Life Energy. “Goodbye, my enemy.”

The laser landed squarely onto Stark’s body. When the microscopic machines came into contact with the powerful Life Energy within the laser, they either dispersed or were destroyed immediately.

Thus, this powerful expert of the Lawless Civilization, bishop of the Machine God Cult, perished.

Han Wu made quick work of Stark’s underlings and obtained a swift victory. In return, he had bought them time to continue excavating the Nanite Mythril. Three days later, Han Wu and the rest had mined out the Nanite Mythril vein.

According to Kerry’s calculations, the fifty-eight ores they mined equated to 11.6 units of Nanite Mythril. However, this didn’t factor in Han Wu. If they allowed him to process the ore, he could increase the amount extracted.

Obtaining the precious Nanite Mythril meant they had completed half of their mission here in the Lawless Civilization. Their sole objective now was to find the cores of the Machine God.

Following the flow of the tiny machines in the air, they tracked the source and soon found the core of the Machine God hidden within the Weeping Mines. As with the others, destroying it revealed a part of the Machine God.

It was a spirit made out of trillions of microscopic machines. The cornered spirit howled out in despair, triggering the microscopic machines into overwork and hastening the process of converting flesh to machine.

In this condition, even living life forms would be turned into automatons for the core to command. Unfortunately, its foe was Han Wu.

Han Wu and his team had infused themselves with powerful Life Energy, which deactivated the tiny machines the moment they infiltrated their bodies. This effortless counter on Han Wu's end left the Machine God part feeling helpless, and it soon succumbed to a blast from Han Wu's laser cannon.

In contrast, Han Wu was eagerly awaiting the dropped loot and was already envisioning the additions of a new part and blueprint. But, contrary to his expectations, nothing of value appeared. There was only a single level 10 chip and an abundance of Energy Parts.

At first, Han Wu assumed that he had defeated a fake boss. This was further confirmed when he found footprints near where the core had been.

The Machine God Cult was one step ahead of him. They had already killed the boss of the Weeping Mines and taken the loot. The boss that Han Wu had killed was a mere fake that the Machine God Cult had left behind to maintain the basic operations of the Weeping Mines.

Han Wu was pissed. This meant he would have to invade their base to retrieve the parts, but he didn't even know where their headquarters were.

Inwardly grumbling, the group left the Weeping Mines. He was at a bit of a loss once they were out, undecided on whether to head back to the college or try to find the Machine God Cult base.

At the same time, in the headquarters of the Machine God Cult, Stark had sent footage from before he died for the cardinals to watch. He had also marked Han Wu's two assisting automatons and his mechanical dragon arms that could tear mechs like butter.

The five cardinals, known as the Five Body, were thrilled. Even the bishops didn't know that the cardinal they worshiped wasn't a single person but five.

"We found it! He has to be a vessel of the Machine God, and he has two of them!" exclaimed the cardinal named Zhuo Xing.

You Jin, another cardinal, scratched his bearded jaw. "How could he still enter a restricted zone even after obtaining a part of the Machine God? Does anyone know?"

Silence filled the air. They were the beings in the Machine God Cult with the highest authority and greatest power. The only reason they hadn't yet gathered all the Machine God's parts to this day was that those with a part of the Machine God couldn't set foot into the other restricted zones.

They had tried once, but the moment they did, their Machine God part became berserk and sapped their Life Energy away. Thus, each cardinal only had a single part of the Machine God. This forced them to nurture new cardinals to invade the other restricted zones so they could gather all of the parts. Unfortunately, their success rate remained low even after many years.

The few success stories were already seated here as cardinals. Their previous mission to unlock the seal using the Mechmouse King had been close to fruition when Han Wu had interfered and disrupted their plan.

The one responsible for that plan, Tou Nao, couldn't endure his anger anymore. "That old coot used the self-detonating mechanical mice to escape with his teammate the last time I encountered him. I can't believe he's still alive! I was thinking of letting him live since we could still use him, but his continued existence is nothing more than an insult to me now. That old man must die!"

The remaining four cardinals silently pressed the button to agree. After all, Ji Dezhu was just a regular man now. There was no need for them to worry about the consequences of killing him.

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[1,182 words]

Chapter 613 - Mechmouse King

Yikra City was a small city on the outskirts of the Lawless Civilization. It was so desolate that even bandits ignored it, as there was nothing worthwhile to steal.

The Mechmouse King pulled a cart with Ji Dezhu acting as the coachman. He had purposely rebuilt the Mechmouse King to look like a janky automaton instead.

At the back of the cart, Ji Zhongyi lay struggling in his bonds. The uneven road was a nightmare for him. He didn't want to come to this forsaken place, but he couldn't defeat his father and was tied up as a result.

Just you wait, once I recover from my wounds, I'll escape and never come back! Ji Zhongyi swore to himself.

Ji Dezhu casually smoked while gazing at the road ahead with his old, failing eyes.

Suddenly, the Mechmouse King stopped. Ji Zhongyi almost rolled off the back of the cart, but Ji Dezhu's quick reaction just barely saved him from falling out.

“I’ve had enough! Let me go! I don’t want to follow you to that shitty place!” Ji Zhongyi snarled.

Ji Dezhu ignored him in favor of warily eyeing their surroundings, but nothing seemed out of the ordinary.

Carefully tapping the Mechmouse King, he asked, “Old friend, did you notice something?”

Despite being an automaton, the Mechmouse King was trembling. Realization flashed in Ji Dezhu’s eyes, and he quickly grabbed Ji Zhongyi.

“Wait, I’m just complaining. Why are you trying to hit me again...” Ji Zhongyi whined, assuming his father was about to lay into him again. When Ji Dezhu started untying the ropes, he muttered in confusion, “Old bastard, you...”

Ji Dezhu looked him in the eyes, a grave look on his face. “Leave now! Find your master! Do whatever it takes for him to accept you as his disciple!”

“What? Old man, what are you talking about?” Ji Zhongyi was utterly baffled. Any mention of Han Wu typically resulted in a thorough beating, so the abrupt change in tune caught him off guard.

“Stop talking and go! And bring the Mechmouse King with you!” Ji Dezhu instructed, releasing the ropes on the Mechmouse King.

Ji Zhongyi stared at his father, bewildered at his unusual behavior. Contrary to his previous defiance, he showed no excitement at his newfound freedom.

“Old...” Ji Zhongyi started awkwardly, voice trembling. “Old man. Are you alright? Did you knock your head, or am I dreaming?”

Ji Dezhu continued to urge his son to run like a maniac, “Go! Run away. Didn’t you want to leave? Do it now! Don’t come back.”

“Old man?” An unsettling feeling rose up within Ji Zhongyi. His gut told him that he would never see his father again if he ran.

When Ji Zhongyi still didn’t leave, Ji Dezhu hastily grabbed the titanium feather duster and slapped him. The pain convinced Ji Zhongyi to ride away on the Mechmouse King.

As they left, Ji Zhongyi glanced back at Ji Dezhu. His father had slumped onto the ground, expression twisted unsettlingly between laughing and crying. The details of his face became blurry and indistinct as they ran further away until all Ji Zhongyi could see was a head full of white hair.

Ten kilometers later, Ji Zhongyi had mustered a modicum of resolution. He wanted to know why Ji Dezhu had urged him to run. “Mechmouse King, take me back. I want to go back.”

The Mechmouse King ignored him, continuing to run as if short-circuited. Frustrated, Ji Zhongyi angrily smacked its head. Much to his dismay, all he got for his efforts was a throbbing hand. The Mechmouse King stuck firmly to Ji Dezhu’s directive.

As Ji Zhongyi was about to jump off its back, an explosion boomed behind him. Glancing back, he saw a huge mushroom cloud where his father had last been. A strange sensation of sadness and despair welled up from his heart.

“I need to go back. I want to go back,” he said desperately. “That old man—I’ll only leave on my terms. I won’t leave if you tell me to!”

Ji Zhongyi jumped off the Mechmouse King and ran toward the explosion, but the Mechmouse King turned to seize him by his clothes before continuing their escape.

“Let me go, you scoundrel! I said, let me go! You defective piece of shit! Why did you leave your master? Get away! I’m not your master, that old man is!” Ji Zhongyi wept, voice rising with a shrill note of distress. His scathing words were for both himself and the Mechmouse King.

The Mechmouse King stopped as if affected by his words—or perhaps it was simply a coincidental error. Tossing its head, it swung Ji Zhongyi onto its back and ran back toward Ji Dezhu.

Ji Zhongyi assumed that there was simply a delay in the Mechmouse King’s processing of his orders. Panic slowly overtook him as they neared where they had left Ji Dezhu.

The harsh smell of gunpowder lingered, and the charred ground was warm from the explosion. Torn limbs and body parts were scattered among the debris. Ji Zhongyi’s mind went blank as he stared at the site.

His eyes vacantly swept across the area when he spotted a half-buried mechanical leg. It was the one his father often used to catch up with him when he ran off.

A frantic, desperate hope filled him as he ran toward the mechanical leg, clawing at the ground with his bare hands. He dug it out, but the only thing attached to it was a few chunks of flesh stuck to the top.

“Old man... Old...” he hollowly repeated, clutching the mechanical leg close to his chest.

He stayed in that position until his hunger grew too overwhelming to bear. Still hugging the leg, he climbed up onto the Mechmouse King and headed for the nearest restaurant.

The waiter chased him away before he could even enter. “Go away, you beggar. *Shoo.*”

Ji Zhongyi did look like a beggar. He was wounded, thin, and dirty. However, the mechanical beast he had with him looked powerful. It was big and seemed suitable for labor.

Strangers approached, looking to seize the mechanical beast from Ji Zhongyi.

“I saw that first. It’s mine.”

“I saw it first!”

“Are you stupid? A mechanical beast only obeys its owner. We have to kill the owner first before taking it.”

All of them turned to gaze at Ji Zhongyi in unison.

“Kill that beggar. Whoever kills him gets the mechanical beast,” someone shouted.

Everyone made to attack, some pulling revolvers and others rifles. Ji Zhongyi stepped back in fear. He didn’t know what he had done wrong to be on the receiving end of such killing intent.

At this moment, he finally understood how stupid he had been in the past. He was nothing without Ji Dezhu’s protection.

Fortunately, the Mechmouse King acted before they could strike Ji Zhongyi. Several mechanical mice jumped out from the Mechmouse King and bit the assailants.

The Mechmouse King then quickly grabbed Ji Zhongyi and tossed him onto its back before fleeing once more.

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Chapter 614 - Meeting Ji Zhongyi Again

[1,156 words]

Chapter 614 - Meeting Ji Zhongyi Again

In a restaurant near the Weeping Mines, Han Wu was eating the specialty dish of the region, called ore biscuit, when a man with a discerning gaze entered the establishment and talked to the owner.

The owner pointed at Han Wu, and the perceptive-looking man approached him. "Excuse me, are you Mr. Han Wu?"

Stiffening, Han Wu eyed the man warily. Having killed Stark and destroyed the mechs from the Machine God Cult just a couple of days ago, Han Wu assumed the man before him was a cult member seeking revenge.

"Wait, I think you're misunderstanding something," the man said, sensing the tension in the air. "I'm an informant. I've received a request from a customer called Ji Dezhu to come and search for Mr. Han Wu."

Ji Dezhu's name put Han Wu at slight ease. The man had a grudge against the Machine God Cult. There was no way he would work with them to harm Han Wu.

"I'm Han Wu."

"That's amazing. Ji Dezhu is waiting for you at this address." The man handed him a piece of folded paper. "You must visit him."

With that, the man left. Han Wu opened the paper. Written inside was the name of a hotel and a room number.

"Is this a trap from the cult?" Han Wu shook his head. The cult dominated this region. They didn't need to use such convoluted methods to ambush him. They could easily just bomb the area he was in.

But didn't Ji Dezhu run away? Why does he want to meet me? Han Wu wondered.

Despite his uncertainty, he ultimately headed to the address on the paper. As he stood before the room door, he couldn't help but hesitate, unsure whether this was a trap. In the end, he decided to test his luck. The worst thing that could happen was a fight.

He knocked on the door, and a gravelly voice came from inside. "Who's there?"

"Han Wu!"

"Enter, quick!" the voice urged, tone betraying the owner's nerves.

The first thing Han Wu saw when he opened the door was the Mechmouse King's janky exterior. Glancing around, he then noticed Ji Zhongyi sitting on a chair, with Ji Dezhu nowhere to be found.

Ji Zhongyi looked horrible. His right arm and left leg were gone, and his body was littered with wounds. Blood seeped through his bandages, which looked as though they were about to peel off at any moment. Han Wu gulped, his previous dissatisfaction with Ji Zhongyi lessening at his pitiful state.

“What happened to you? Where’s your father?”

The Ji Zhongyi of before would never have recognized Ji Dezhu as his father, instead calling him the old bastard. This time, however, he no longer rejected the title.

“My father is dead,” he said, pointing at the mechanical leg at the side of the bed. That leg was the only thing that remained of his father at the site of the explosion.

Han Wu's heart sank. “I’m sorry for your loss.”

“My father told me to find you, that you can protect me,” Ji Zhongyi said with a sigh.

Han Wu scoffed. “Protect you? Why should I do that?”

In his eyes, Ji Zhongyi was unbecomingly of his attention.

Ji Zhongyi smiled plainly. “I’ve never listened to my father. Not even once. And I’m not planning to follow his instructions and run away this time either. But I was hoping that your friendship with him would convince you to help me.”

“What kind of help?”

“Can you tell me where the Machine God Cult is?”

Han Wu laughed. “How would I know? You should know better than I. You worked with them once before.”

Ji Zhongyi didn’t refute his words. Though crestfallen, he simply smiled bitterly. “It’s fine if you don’t know. Thank you for meeting me. Goodbye.”

With that, he turned to stare blankly out the window.

Han Wu had nothing more to say either, so he left. Before exiting the hotel premises, he summoned an avatar to stay behind and keep an eye on Ji Zhongyi. This way, he would know if Ji Zhongyi met anyone else and perhaps even figure out his end goal.

The avatar waited patiently, continuously expanding his senses into Ji Zhongyi’s room. He didn’t have to wait long.

A man in white robes soon entered with two large suitcases. This man was a doctor who specialized in attaching mechanical limbs for amputees, and the two suitcases

contained a mechanical right arm and a left leg. The doctor swiftly started attaching the mechanical limbs to Ji Zhongyi.

It was an agonizing procedure, but despite the excruciating pain, Ji Zhongyi didn't let out even a single whimper. He steadfastly endured the operation through sheer willpower.

Han Wu's displeasure toward him lessened at this show of strength. Silently enduring the pain of the procedure showed that Ji Zhongyi was a true man.

Considering both this and Han Wu's friendship with Ji Dezhu, Han Wu decided to help Ji Zhongyi. After all, he didn't exactly want Ji Zhongyi to die either. So, he sent the Life Avatar to infuse Ji Zhongyi with Life Energy, healing his wounds.

By the second day, Ji Zhongyi could move normally and immediately started familiarizing himself with his artificial limbs. He wanted to get used to them as soon as possible. Nevertheless, just having mechanical limbs wasn't enough for him to get revenge. He would need to become stronger.

Pulling out a small chest from his belongings, he opened it to reveal four level 10 chips: Bullet Time, Explosive Ape King, Weapon Manufacture, and Gaia Hammer. They were each worth a fortune, and equipping them required a suitable mechanical device or vessel.

However, Ji Zhongyi had a much more disturbing plan in mind. He wanted to implant them into his own flesh—a taboo in the Lawless Civilization, as biological matter didn't have the endurance of machines.

More than 80% of those who attempted this died during the process. Even if they succeeded, their body would be damaged, with the chip continuously leaking deadly toxins into the body forever. Implanting them into one's body was effectively suicide, but Ji Zhongyi was adamant. This was the only way he could think of to significantly increase his strength in a short time.

His mind was firmly set, and he called upon the doctor again to carry out the forbidden procedure. He was going to implant all four chips at once.

Even the experienced doctor had never done this before. It was risky enough to implant a single chip into the body. Even if it succeeded, the metal and pathogens within a single chip would cause the patient to suffer a long, drawn-out death, much less four of them.

The doctor tried to persuade him against this, but Ji Zhongyi was stubborn. He wanted the doctor to implant all four chips into his body immediately.

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[1,107 words]

Chapter 615 - Implanting the Chips

Ji Zhongyi's firm insistence and the allure of a fine reward eventually convinced the doctor to go ahead with the procedure. With the aid of dedicated machines, the doctor implanted the chips and connected them to Ji Zhongyi's nerves.

Bullet time was connected to the back of his neck, Explosive Ape King to his chest, Gaia Hammer to his new mechanical right arm, and Weapon Manufacture to his left arm.

This was the most arduous operation the doctor had conducted to date. Implanting all four chips had left him exhausted and drenched in sweat. He had done all he could. The rest was in god's hands.

The implantation of four chips cast a heavy burden on Ji Zhongyi's body. The survival rate of implanting a chip into one's body was less than 20%, and implanting all four further lowered that to a mere 0.16%.

His survival was nigh impossible. Every pump of blood through his veins sent the rare metals of the chips coursing through his body alongside it. His veins slowly turned black, visible through his skin.

Ji Zhongyi was determined to survive despite the odds. An intense desire for revenge blazed within him. He simply couldn't die yet. Not before he got his revenge!

Unfortunately, his condition was short-lived. Three hours later, he found himself teetering on the brink of losing consciousness. The poisoning from the chips was potent as ever, and Ji Zhongyi had reached his limit.

"Father, I'm sorry. If there's an afterlife, I want to become your father instead. Let me take care of you this time..." he mumbled, succumbing to the darkness.

Just as Ji Zhongyi thought he would remain in that oblivion for all eternity, a blip of light appeared. The light gradually grew, and with it came the sound of a voice.

"How can you be so reckless?" the voice muttered. "This is a major operation, but you didn't even use anesthesia."

He recognized the voice, but couldn't remember who it belonged to. As his eyes came back into focus, he finally laid eyes on its owner. The man was handsome and regal.

There were many words to describe the mighty man before him, but only one came to Ji Zhongyi's mind.

"Father..." Ji Zhongyi mumbled in a daze.

Han Wu frowned as he continued infusing Life Energy into Ji Zhongyi. If not for Ji Zhongyi impressing him with his reckless actions, he would've just left him to die.

But why did he have to call him father?! That was just rude. Han Wu decided to ignore him, but Ji Zhongyi persisted.

"Dad... Father... Father..."

Annoyed, Han Wu slapped him unconscious, but Ji Zhongyi continued to mutter even in his sleep, repeating those words on end as if it was all he knew. Han Wu eventually cut off Ji Zhongyi's voice box in a moment of frustration. He could just heal it after.

The infusion of abundant Life Energy ultimately saved Ji Zhongyi. The four chips had stabilized and no longer released toxic metals into his body. Unfortunately, this was only a temporary measure that would only last as long as he didn't use the chips. Upon activation, the chips would poison his body, and he would suffer a painful death.

Once Ji Zhongyi woke up, Han Wu made sure to explain this to him. Ji Zhongyi tried to respond but couldn't, and Han Wu realized he had forgotten to heal his voice box. After healing it, Ji Zhongyi thanked Han Wu earnestly.

Regardless of their decent relationship, Ji Dezhu was still dead, and Han Wu had no real obligation to extend his aid. Thus, Ji Zhongyi was grateful that Han Wu would do so much just to help him. Han Wu accepted his gratitude, knowing in his heart that Ji Zhongyi hadn't given up on revenge.

As expected, Ji Zhongyi asked him once more about the location of the Machine God Cult, but Han Wu truly didn't know. In truth, he was waiting for the Machine God Cult to attack him first, having since figured out a way to lure them out. However, he decided to keep this a secret from Ji Zhongyi. The youth had already suffered enough, and Han Wu didn't want to show him the path to death.

Ji Zhongyi remained silent after Han Wu denied knowledge of the cultists' whereabouts, and when he turned to leave, Ji Zhongyi simply thanked him once more before bidding him farewell.

A complex emotion stirred in Han Wu's heart. When they last met, Ji Zhongyi had been shameless and annoying, trying to push Han Wu into accepting him as a disciple and even calling him father.

This Ji Zhongyi was uncharacteristically well-behaved by contrast. The stark difference had even Han Wu's heart wincing with sympathy and pain. Han Wu couldn't shake that feeling off as he left Ji Zhongyi and the Mechmouse King.

Back in his residence, Han Wu waited for Kerry to return. Despite lingering in the Weeping Mines, the cultists had not sought them out. They needed to act first, but Han Wu didn't know what.

Han Wu's only plan was to head to the next restricted zone and destroy it. If his assumption was correct, the cultists were collecting different resources for the Machine God. Han Wu had two of the Machine God's parts and had been active even within their territories. They likely wouldn't be able to resist the urge to attack him.

Ms. Kerry nodded. "I'll follow your lead."

After traveling together for so long, she had naturally realized Han Wu's strength. Aside from his lackluster knowledge in mechanical engineering, he was indomitable in all other aspects.

Akanzor and Bart had no objections either. Over the course of their travels, the pair had also fostered a better relationship with Ms. Kerry. This, of course, had nothing to do with the fact that she had forged them a laser greatsword and a mechanical recurve bow, respectively.

The team was much more in sync than before. Gathering their suitcases and stowing them into Jumen, the group flew to their next destination.

Unbeknownst to them, they failed to notice someone lurking in a corner. Ji Zhongyi stared in the direction they had left before checking his map.

"If I'm not mistaken, they're headed to the Black Park. We could find clues of the cultists there. Old friend, will you come with me?" he asked the Mechmouse King. He wasn't sure if he was hallucinating, but he swore it nodded in response. Smiling, he commanded it to give chase, "Old friend, let us depart."

The Mechmouse King ran forward at full speed.

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[1,108 words]

Chapter 616 - Black Park

The restricted zone known as Black Park was shrouded in a thin veil of soot. It was impossible to tell what lay within—one had to enter to find out.

Han Wu stowed the flying vessels in Jumen once they approached the edge of Black Park. Not wanting a repeat of the tiny machines in the Weeping Mines, Kerry first sampled the soot in the air to confirm its composition.

After confirming that it was regular soot, she made four machines that could provide fresh air to the four biological life forms in their team. They then stepped through the veil of black soot and laid eyes on the restricted zone.

It had clearly once been an amusement park that had since been turned into an automaton's heaven. Every single automaton wore a large mascot suit, with some even handing out flyers.

Despite their appearances, it would be a fatal mistake to assume that they were weak. A quick check of their capabilities made plain that the automatons giving out flyers weren't as they appeared.

The colorful flyers were actually paper-like bombs that would explode in three seconds when tossed out. They could even detonate them at will. The explosion's strength was proportional to the number of flyers they held or were within a certain radius.

There were also some clutching onto cute toys. Closer inspection revealed these toys to be concealed guns instead. Their cute poses for the outsiders were merely an opportunity to aim for their heads.

There were many other automatons of different varieties, but Han Wu concluded that cuter meant more dangerous. The automatons crowded over when they noticed Han Wu and his group.

A huge number of flyers were tossed their way. Other automatons raised their toys and made cute poses. This was war.

Akanzor swung his new laser greatsword, generating wind blades that destroyed the flyer bombs with ease. Bart loosed numerous arrows on the mascots with his new recurve bow.

An automaton could function normally so long as its core was undamaged, so a mere arrow wasn't an issue. That was, until the arrows started beeping. The ensuing wave of explosions wrecked a huge number of mascots in one go.

Satisfied with the power of the explosive arrows, Bart gave Kerry a quick thumbs-up. Kerry smiled in response as she fired off consecutive Death Blows with her two revolvers. Each bullet exploded upon contact with the mascots' heads, releasing a cloud of gas containing Death Energy.

Touching the purple gas meant death. Even the automatons were no exception to this. The purple gas corroded their circuitry, and they collapsed to the ground as scrap metal.

The four automatons of the Black Rose Squad used their overwhelming firepower, a mix of heavy and light weapons, to suppress their enemies as usual.

Han Wu used his left cable arm to unleash a continuous barrage of Lightning Whips. Any automaton that approached was swiftly dealt with. At the same time, his right arm was in laser cannon form, which allowed him to annihilate automatons from a distance as well.

They destroyed an army of automatons within Black Park with ease. The commotion caught the attention of automatons further in the restricted zone, causing more waves to converge upon them, but they too were soon obliterated. Their only contribution was exhausting the energy of Han Wu's team.

However, even this had little effect. They hadn't had any issues with energy since receiving Luxun. The supportive automaton supplied them enough energy to go all out without worry.

They soon destroyed more than 10,000 automatons. With a wave of Han Wu's hand, over 20,000 Energy Parts and chips flew toward him, allowing him to store them safely in Jumen.

The automatons endlessly swarmed them. They had been coded to attack continuously and exhaust their enemy's energy. This previously surefire path to victory was useless against Han Wu and his team due to their unlimited supply of energy.

A long time passed in this never-ending battle. Han Wu and his team eventually annihilated 100,000 automatons. Their bodies piled up into mountains of scrap metal, yet the team still showed no signs of exhausting their energy.

As if angered by the sheer loss of its automatons, the ground of Black Park started to tremble. The buildings in the amusement park grew legs and converged around a single spot, fusing into a thousand-meter-tall automaton!

It had a haunted house for a head; two halves of the pirate ship for arms; a roller coaster track coiled around its body, carts still circling the track; and a Ferris wheel as its legs, allowing it to roll smoothly.

Though bizarre, it was undoubtedly the strongest core that Han Wu had encountered to date. The giant automaton tossed several bombs disguised as buggy cars. Each car exploded with a frightening force.

The automaton then grabbed the roller coaster track and used it as a segmented whip that left deep craters in the ground. Han Wu and his team repeatedly dodged the

attacks, but the others were already exhausted from the prolonged battle. Seeing this, Han Wu went all out.

He needed a large body to fight the massive foe. Clapping, his Divine Ring appeared. He then turned it into the Pressure Ring, and he used True Demon King Transformation.

Every movement of his ten-thousand-meter-tall demon king form could level the ground itself. The thousand-meter-tall automaton was but a dwarf to him now.

He raised his legs and stomped downward. The heavy weight of his massive body crushed the automaton in one go. Energy Parts burst out from the automaton. Unfortunately, Han Wu found neither the fire nor the blueprint this time either. There was only a single level 10 chip.

As he was about to undo his transformation, he noticed a swarm of flying vessels locking onto him. They started bombing him without warning, taking advantage of the massive target that was Han Wu at the moment.

Han Wu swiftly used Black Dragon King Transformation and turned his Pressure Ring into the Great Dragon Ring.

Dragon Fear shielded Han Wu like an invisible wall. The bombs and missiles detonated before coming into contact with him. Swiping with his claws, he smashed one flying vessel after another with ease.

Sensing that his true enemies were still hiding, Han Wu let out a roar, taunting them to come out and fight him.

Five powerful beings entered from outside Black Park and surrounded him. They each had a part of the Machine God. A powerful resonance emerged with the gathering of all seven parts.

The final battle for the Machine God parts had begun!

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Chapter 617 - Final Duel Against Five Body

[1,151 words]

Chapter 617 - Final Duel Against Five Body

Han Wu had finally lured the Machine God Cult out of hiding. It was time to end them once and for all.

“Come on!” he roared, releasing his overwhelming pressure and showing them his strongest form.

The Five Body reciprocated Han Wu’s battle spirit. As they activated their Machine God parts, the scrap metal of the destroyed automatons converged around them. Even the massive automaton that had been the core of Black Park split into five streams of metal scraps that flowed toward the Five Body.

With the scrap metal, they each constructed their own mech. Their mechs towered at ten thousand meters tall, though each was distinct, likely dependent on their respective Machine God part.

Tou Nao piloted a mech with a disproportionately large head. Its head and body matched at a one-to-one ratio.

Xiong Tang piloted a mech that specialized in defense. It wielded two dense shields that could form a ten-thousand-meter-tall tower shield when combined.

Liang Ji piloted a mech that specialized in mobility. It had two huge wings that allowed it to fly even though it was ten thousand meters tall.

Zhuo Xing and You Jin piloted two identical-looking mechs, though closer inspection revealed a subtle difference. Zhuo Xing’s mech leaned toward agility with swift but shallow attacks. You Jin’s mech leaned toward offense with slower, more powerful attacks.

As twin brothers, they had impeccable synergy, a special connection that made it possible for their mechs to fuse. Their merged form was actually stronger than the other three cardinals combined.

The Five Body had revealed their true strength. After the completion of their mechs, massive Divine Rings appeared behind them. Their Divine Rings were made from an unknown material, but they all had the same effect of amplifying all mechanical functions by a hundredfold.

The buff from their Divine Rings had elevated each of the Five Body to Han Wu’s strength. It would be a lie to say that Han Wu wasn’t panicking against the encirclement of five World life forms.

Han Wu was also a World life form, but fighting against five other World life forms at the same time was a stretch even for him. The Five Body had the numbers. Han Wu's only

chance was to deal with them one by one. Defeating even one of them would significantly lighten the pressure.

Glancing them over, he quickly decided his first target would be Liang Ji flying above. Liang Ji's parameters were overall more balanced than the other four, and he didn't have much going for him other than his flying capabilities.

Han Wu leaped up high and spread his sky-shrouding wings.

The Five Body attacked.

Tou Nao's mech opened its jaws and fired a massive auto-tracking missile toward Han Wu. Zhuo Xing and You Jin merged their mechs to boost their speed and jumping strength, leaping up after Han Wu to knock him down. Xiong Tang clasped his shields together to prepare against any unexpected attacks. Meanwhile, Liang Ji flew around and tried to attack Han Wu from above.

Han Wu swiftly countered, gathering energy in his torso and belching a dragon breath at the missile. The breath was filled with Dark Energy that corroded everything it touched. The missile's outer layer crumbled away, and its internal structures were destroyed, causing it to explode midair.

He then activated both his arms. Turning his left arm into its Cable Form, he tried to entangle Liang Ji, who was attacking from above. His right arm shifted into the largest laser cannon possible, allowing him to fire at Zhuo Xing and You Jin's combined mech.

The instant the five thick cables successfully entangled Liang Ji, Han Wu activated Electrocute, channeling most of his energy into a massive electrical discharge straight toward Liang Ji's mech.

Liang Ji's painful howls echoed from within the cockpit of the electrocuted mech. Unfortunately for him, no one could save him in time, and he soon succumbed to the electricity.

His Machine God part turned into a small ember before merging onto Han Wu's body. That was three out of seven parts in Han Wu's hands.

The other four cardinals continued to attack.

Xiong Tang raised his massive tower shield to block the laser from hitting Zhuo Xing and You Jin. The two brothers then jumped up into the air before transitioning into a high kick as they neared Han Wu. The strength of their combined mech and the amplifying effects of their Machine God parts were powerful enough to kick Han Wu back to the ground.

The impact of Han Wu's crash landing left a deep crater in the ground. As he stood up, he realized that his dragon wings had been injured. Blood dripped freely from them. It would take at least half a day for them to heal, and he had lost the ability to fly in the meantime. Thankfully, his only airborne enemy had already been dealt with.

Meanwhile, Tou Nao was still firing terrifyingly lethal missiles at him. Even Han Wu's Black Dragon King body couldn't withstand the onslaught of explosions, but dodging was difficult with Zhuo Xing and You Jin's flurry of attacks. Their kicks were incredibly hard to avoid, and Han Wu was growing increasingly frustrated at his dire situation.

At that moment, Akanzor grabbed his older greatsword and tossed it toward Han Wu.

Having received Akanzor's message through the strand of faith, he easily snatched the greatsword from the air with his claws. The greatsword was a God weapon, and under the influence of Han Wu's Divine Points, it grew until it became large enough for him to wield.

Things became easier once he was armed. He used the greatsword to proficiently block Zhuo Xing and You Jin's kicks, and even found the leeway to use Steelcutter from time to time.

Zhuo Xing and You Jin's combined mech fell to the ground after suffering a series of heavy blows. Han Wu seized this chance to finish them off. Two more wisps of flame left their corpses and entered Han Wu's body.

His legs, arms, and back were all imbued with parts of the Machine God. With five parts of the Machine God and only two more enemies, Han Wu couldn't help but look down on them.

However, he underestimated them. Landing the killing blow on the final two turned out to be more challenging than expected. The pair worked in unison, with one specializing in defense and the other in offense. Even with the God greatsword and liberal usage of Steelcutter, Han Wu still remained locked in a prolonged battle against them.

Tou Nao's incessant missiles distracted him from Xiong Tang. At the same time, Xiong Tang's powerful defense prevented him from attacking Tou Nao directly. After several bouts, Han Wu suffered several grievous injuries. If he didn't defeat them soon, he could be the one to fall.

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Chapter 618 - Machine God, Cyborg V

[1,105 words]

Chapter 618 - Machine God, Cyborg V

The battle raged on between Han Wu and the two remaining Five Body. Though the outcome of the battle initially appeared as though it could go either way, as time went on, it became evident that Han Wu was losing his advantage by the second.

In a corner of the Black Park, a figure watched the three ten-thousand-meter-tall mechs fight before rushing toward the battlefield. That figure was none other than Ji Zhongyi.

He knew that Han Wu was fighting the Machine God Cult and had deduced from the scale of the battle that Han Wu's opponents were the higher-ups. The flames of vengeance blazed in Ji Zhongyi's eyes as he silently swore to bring at least one of them down to accompany his father.

"Old friend, the battle would be very intense later. You should leave," Ji Zhongyi said, patting the Mechmouse King as they neared the battlefield.

The Mechmouse King understood his words, but it didn't retreat. Instead, it found the wreckage of one of the fallen Five Body mechs and started using the scrap metal to produce as many mechanical mice as it could.

Tears welled up in Ji Zhongyi's eyes. After Ji Dezhu's passing, he had learned to appreciate the bonds he had previously forsaken.

"Old friend—No, brother. If you refuse to flee, I stand with you. Together we fight. Together we fall. Until death takes us both!" Ji Zhongyi approached the same wreckage and activated one of the chips implanted in his body, Weapon Manufacture.

Using the material on hand, he made a huge number of bombs and tied them to each mechanical mouse. At the same time, the activation of the chip leached rare elements and toxic metals into his bloodstream.

His left arm gained a purplish black hue, but he refused to stop. His eyes held the wild spark of a fervent maniac. Soon, his entire left arm had turned purplish black, and the poison had reached his heart.

Ji Zhongyi had crafted tens of thousands of powerful bombs using the materials from the wreck. The Mechmouse King had manufactured the same number of mechanical mice in that time as well. If all the mice were to simultaneously detonate, the resulting explosion would destroy one of the massive mechs with ease.

The poisoning of the chips caused Ji Zhongyi's body to slowly shut down, but he held himself together with sheer willpower. "I'm not done yet. My revenge starts now!"

He ordered the Mechmouse King to send the mechanical mice to attack the two remaining Five Body mechs. Each mouse hoisted a bomb onto its back before charging forward.

The mechanical mice were small, with the largest being only a meter long. They were as small as ants compared to the massive mechs. Even if the two cardinals noticed them, they would've ignored them completely.

This was their fatal mistake. It only took one instant for the advantage that the Five Body had painstakingly built to be destroyed. The mechanical mice swarmed up Tou Nao's mech and invaded it through the joints.

"Detonate!" Ji Zhongyi commanded.

Explosions echoed from within Tou Nao's mech. With a large part of his mech's internal structure destroyed, Tou Nao found himself unable to keep his balance and collapsed to the ground, no longer able to attack as before.

Though confused, Han Wu wasn't about to let this chance go. The lack of suppressive fire meant he could focus all his attacks on Xiong Tang. He unleashed Steelcutter in quick succession. Between attacks, he even used his dragon breath to corrode Xiong Tang's massive shields.

Xiong Tang excelled in defense but not offense. When he tried to retaliate, he found himself unable to land even a single hit. Eventually, he gave up on attacking and focused on defense instead, hoping that he could endure the hits until Tou Nao's mech repaired itself.

Unfortunately for him, Tou Nao wasn't having a smooth recovery. It was taking a lot of precious time for him to repair his mech.

Suddenly, Ji Zhongyi jumped onto the mech, recklessly activating his other three chips. He transformed into the Explosive Ape King, with his right hand turning into the Gaia Hammer. Bullet Time, the chip implanted at the back of his neck, went into overdrive, helping Ji Zhongyi move faster than ever before.

He clambered onto a damaged leg and slammed Gaia Hammer down. The Explosive Ape King excelled in strength, and the power of the Gaia Hammer further amplified his strength.

Any progress in the repairs of the circuitry was undone with that single blow. This was the moment when Tou Nao finally took notice of the tiny Ji Zhongyi.

Tou Nao fired hundreds of micro-missiles at Ji Zhongyi using the remaining functions of his mech, but the effects of Bullet Time allowed him to evade them all with ease.

The missiles were launched through the mouth of the mech. Rushing toward the head of the mech, Ji Zhongyi smashed down on its lower jaw. A shallow crack appeared. He whaled down more hits with the Gaia Hammer. The internal circuitry soon became exposed, inciting him to jump into its mouth and unleash his fury.

By the time Ji Zhongyi's body gave up on him, Tou Nao's mech was damaged beyond salvation. There was no way it could repair itself fast enough to rejoin the fight.

Meanwhile, Xiong Tang's tower shield finally cracked under Han Wu's onslaught. Han Wu's Steelcutter cleaved Xiong Tang's mech in half, killing the man within. A wisp of fire flew out of his corpse before merging with Han Wu.

That was six out of the seven parts in Han Wu's possession. It was time for the final piece.

Han Wu dragged his injured body to Tou Nao's crippled mech and finished him off. The final wisp of fire merged into Han Wu—the head of the Machine God.

A strange sensation took root in Han Wu's body with the merging of the final part. A foreign consciousness invaded his mind.

[Submit to me. I will turn you into the strongest existence and construct an undefeatable nation of machines...]

The emotionless voice continuously echoed in his mind. Han Wu's head felt like it was splitting open from the pain. At the same time, a mechanical Divine Ring manifested behind Han Wu. A single Microcosm, filled with automatons and mechanical in structure, materialized as well.

[Submit to me. Submit to the great Machine God, Cyborg V.]

As the Divine Ring and the Microcosm materialized, Han Wu's body was turning into an automaton. He had become the Machine God, Cyborg V.

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[1,123 words]

Chapter 619 - Mechanical Possession

Han Wu opened his eyes and realized that he stood within his own consciousness. A boundless white space stretched in every direction, and an interface hovered before him, displaying what was happening outside.

Han Wu smiled bitterly. Only after he collected all seven parts of the Machine God and turned into a complete automaton did he understand what had happened.

“So it seems that the Machine God’s seven parts were deliberately separated to seal it, and now the Machine God has possessed me. Am I right, Cyborg V?” he asked.

[It’s an honor to become my vessel.]

Han Wu raised an eyebrow. “Did you know that someone once said those exact words to me?”

Cyborg V remained silent.

Han Wu chuckled. “You may control my body, but there’s something you still don’t know about me. I possess a power no one else in this world has. Want to see it?”

[Vessel, there’s no need to waste time with words that challenge my authority. I will take over your body and divine realm and bring you immeasurable success. Submit, and do not oppose me.]

Han Wu ignored it and continued, “This power is called Avatar Creation, and it’s the only power that I have. You have probably never seen it before. Let me show you.”

Han Wu activated Avatar Creation, and more than twenty avatars were created from Cyborg V’s core. In the next instant, they merged back into one.

Han Wu patted Cyborg V’s avatar. “You chose the wrong target to possess.”

Cyborg V tried to retaliate but froze in horror. Han Wu had already stripped away more than half of its strength after separating it from him. It was only as powerful as an Earthsunder life form now.

Han Wu easily grabbed Cyborg V’s fist. The latter searched for a way out of this mess and drained every reserve of energy, but there was no escape. Its processor overheated, and it couldn’t understand what had happened.

“Don’t think too hard. You did manage to possess me, but that was in the past. Now, you are just one of my avatars. One of many!” Han Wu said smugly.

[Curses. Cyborg V will not submit to you. You will gain nothing!]

Cyborg V’s cold mechanical voice echoed as it initiated its self-destruction sequence.

As the Machine God, it could abandon the physical body it possessed and transfer itself to another nearby mechanical unit or automaton. Even though reconstructing its frame would cost time and energy, that sacrifice was far preferable to being another life form's slave.

Han Wu sighed at Cyborg V's obstinacy. "Deactivate the self-destruction sequence. Remove all authority of Cyborg V from my avatar."

At his command, Cyborg V suddenly froze, and its destruction timer stopped.

[How can this be?]

Cyborg V was stunned. Han Wu's actions had exceeded the limits of its analytical capacity.

"You are one of my avatars, and I'm the owner of the avatar," Han Wu said matter-of-factly. "In other words, my authority surpasses yours. Understand?"

[You damned life form. You despicable life form! One day, I will return and reclaim everything that belongs to me.]

Han Wu frowned. Cyborg V was a ticking time bomb that would never obey him. Unlike the Origin of Mutation, which he could reason with, Cyborg V wasn't only stubborn, but it also didn't possess any emotions to exploit. Its current consciousness existed as the product of vast, consolidated data.

Imprisonment would not solve the problem, and destruction would squander Han Wu's efforts. The Machine God had great potential, and now that it was one of his avatars, destroying it would mean losing a portion of his own power as well.

Only one option remained. He would keep the Machine God's frame and erase Cyborg V's memories.

"Reformat Cyborg V. Remove all related data," he commanded.

[You can't do this. No!]

Cyborg V resisted, but it was futile. Its authority was second to Han Wu.

The avatar convulsed, then went rigid. Silence followed. From that moment on, it was no longer Cyborg V. It was the Machine God alone, now part of Han Wu's power.

After dealing with Cyborg V's rebellion, Han Wu absorbed the Machine God back into himself.

Kerry and the others hurried over. "Han Wu, are you all right? I noticed something was wrong with you just now."

"I almost got possessed by the Machine God," he said. "But don't worry. It's under my control now."

Kerry remained uneasy but said nothing. Once they returned to the college, she would file a report on the incident and arrange a full examination to confirm that Han Wu wasn't possessed.

Akanzor and Bart approached their God and reported, "Glorious God, the brat named Ji Zhongyi is close to death. He wishes to see you one last time."

Han Wu had actually noticed Ji Zhongyi earlier, when he was destroying Tou Nao's mech. Ji Zhongyi had accomplished a feat that made it possible for him to defeat the Five Body this time.

He moved to him at once. Ji Zhongyi's complexion had turned a purplish black, the chips' toxin seeping into every cell. Even Han Wu's Life Aspect couldn't rescue him now.

Seeing Han Wu at his side, Ji Zhongyi forced a smile. "Mas...ter."

This time, Han Wu didn't reject him and replied, "I'm here."

"Master... you finally accepted me. I just... don't know... if I can... learn from you..." Each word came slowly and faintly, as if every breath drained what little Life Energy he had left.

"Master, I'm going to see... My father... My... brother... Master... Please take care..." Ji Zhongyi couldn't even raise a hand to gesture toward the Mechmouse King. His eyes alone pointed the way.

Han Wu placed his palm over Ji Zhongyi's heart and felt his heartbeat. "I understand."

"Master... I'm beyond saving... You don't have to save me..."

"I'm not trying to." Han Wu's voice remained calm. "I'm going to end your life instead."

He drove his hand and crushed Ji Zhongyi's heart, dispersing the last traces of Life Energy within him.

Ji Zhongyi died with a smile, as if he finally found release.

Kerry recoiled and quickly put some distance between herself and Han Wu. She suspected that the Machine God had taken him over. Otherwise, he wouldn't have killed a benefactor.

"Why did you kill him?" she demanded.

"He was beyond saving," he replied. "He had no more than a minute or two to live. I decided to end his life and free him from the suffering."

"But he helped you before!" she argued. "How could you kill him?"

Han Wu smiled plainly. "Why not? If he didn't die, I couldn't bring his soul into the cycle of reincarnation."

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[1,206 words]

Chapter 620 - Peak Automaton

Kerry remained suspicious of Han Wu. She kept her distance throughout the battlefield cleanup and watched him with open wariness. She feared that he would backstab her.

Han Wu didn't want to explain himself, since any explanation would just sound like an excuse. From the Five Body, he recovered the remaining blueprints of the BD series he had been seeking.

With the Machine God, he took one look and understood the difficulty of constructing them. Although he already possessed the required Energy Parts, the ruined site wasn't a suitable place for such delicate work. He decided to collect more Energy Parts and construct them when the time was right.

Before departing, he took the Mechmouse King with him. It appeared like and was an automaton, but it possessed a soul. That was why it feared Han Wu. Even so, Ji Zhongyi's soul was in his possession, so it had to follow him.

After dealing with the Five Body, they refused to spare the remaining members of the Machine God Cult. Without the powerful Five Body, even the bishops were powerless against him.

Due to the Machine God, he could suppress all mechanical devices. He dismantled their defenses with minimal effort, then seized control of the base and unlocked the vault, where he discovered a vast supply of Energy Parts.

Even though Jumen had Spatial Storage, its capacity had limits. There were too many treasures within the vault, and he couldn't bring everything with him. As such, he stationed Bart and Akanzor to guard the vault while he constructed the remaining five BD-series automatons inside.

With the Machine God's power, he completed the work within a day. Each automaton bore a distinct name and fulfilled a different function.

[BD-01, Tanlang. Rating: X. Function: Accelerated Energy Condensation. Additional Function: Multi-chips (0/20, can equip chips up to level 10)]

[BD-05, Lianzhen. Rating: X. Function: Reverse Polarity. Additional Function: Multi-chips (0/20. Can equip chips up to Level 10)]

[BD-03, Wenqu. Rating: X. Function: Energy Shield. Additional Function: Multi-chips (0/20. Can equip chips up to Level 10)]

[BD-06, Wuqu. Rating: X. Function: Physical Shield. Additional Function: Multi-chips (0/20. Can equip chips up to Level 10)]

[BD-07, Pojun. Rating: X. Function: Overclock. Additional Function: Multi-chips (0/20. Can equip chips up to Level 10)]

Combined with the two previous BD-04 Luxun and BD-02 Jumen automatons, he now had all seven of them. They floated above his head, and he sensed a faint awareness among them, as if they were holding a silent meeting.

When all seven gathered in one place, a hidden resonance awakened. An energy link formed, connecting them together. Then a new prompt appeared before Han Wu, asking him whether he wanted to combine them.

He had learned from the Machine God that automatons often possessed a hidden ability to merge. The strongest trait of the automatons lay in combination, which allowed different elements to integrate perfectly and operate as a unified whole.

Han Wu agreed, and the seven automatons merged into one tiny box called BD-Prime Beidou. Its rating jumped from X to EX. It retained all seven functions, and its Multi-chips function received a major upgrade. Its load limit increased to 145, and the chip level's limitation had vanished.

The result stunned Han Wu. BD-Prime Beidou was too powerful, surpassing the seven automatons in their separated forms. It stood at the pinnacle of all automatons. After combining, its overall functions had improved. For example, the capacity of the Spatial Storage function had expanded enough to store every treasure in the vault.

After transferring them inside, he reduced the Machine God Cult's base to ashes. Even though he knew that a second and a third base would rise even after this one fell, he could do nothing to stop it. All he could do was focus on what was in front of him.

Once the base was destroyed, nothing remained to keep him there. They boarded their flying vessel and returned to the entrance they had used before.

Kerry paid the toll to open the gate again. This time, Han Wu used the Machine God's senses and realized that Kerry didn't pay with standard currency. Instead, she offered a rare gear forged from rare metals.

The tollkeeper accepted the payment and opened the gate.

As they attempted to leave, Han Wu suddenly noticed something wrong. The others passed through without issue, but he couldn't!

He quickly checked the cause and reached a bitter conclusion. The massive wall surrounding the Lawless Civilization, forged from dense crystal and metal, existed for a single purpose: to seal the Machine God. It was a prison designed to keep the Machine God confined.

Han Wu was the Machine God now, which meant he had become the designated inmate. He had broken free from the seven restricted zones, but he was still trapped here.

Although he could separate the Machine God with Avatar Creation, allowing him to escape, the Machine God Avatar would remain inside forever. He couldn't accept that outcome. He had painstakingly fought through numerous battles, only to find himself unable to take it with him. It felt like a complete scam!

He needed another way out.

While he was still searching for a solution, a huge man wrapped in a black cloak approached them rapidly. The man tore away the black cloak midstride, revealing his true identity. It was the ninth guard that had escaped from Imperial College!

Han Wu was confused. *Why is he here?*

The ninth guard fixed his eyes on Han Wu, his expression sharp with the satisfaction of a hunter finally tracking down his prey.

"You liar! I've been waiting here for a month, and at last you showed up. Because of you, I misunderstood Eldest Brother. Today, I will kill you and appease his soul!" the ninth guard barked.

Han Wu could not make sense of it. The ninth guard had escaped on his own. *Since when did I deceive him? He is delusional!*

The ninth guard had no interest in explanations. He expanded, and the Runic Divine Ring appeared behind him. No one could tell how many layers of runes had condensed within it.

He gathered his strength and threw a punch at Han Wu. The latter quickly retreated from the gate and closed it.

The ninth guard's fist slammed into the Lawless Civilization's wall, and the impact sent pain tearing through him.

Even so, the ninth guard didn't give up. "Do you think you can escape me just by hiding inside the barrier?"

He activated his Divine Ring and plucked several runes from it. A strange power concentrated within his fist.

"Boundary Breaker!" the ninth guard shouted.

The force meant to shatter all barriers converged in his fist, and he punched. The wall that could block blows from a World life form started to crack. Fractures spread rapidly until the entire section of the wall shattered.

Han Wu froze at the sight of the wall shattering. He looked at the ninth guard with gratitude. He had struggled with the issue of leaving this place with the Machine God, yet the ninth guard resolved it for him.

Han Wu walked through the shattered wall and finally tasted freedom. He, the Machine God, was finally free!

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