

When God 181

Chapter 181 White Lotus_3

"I can sense it, but I can't sense its name or level, which has never happened outside before. I've seen S-class magical spirits outside and could sense their level and name," said Chu Jun.

"Most of the magical spirits outside are ordinary, and naturally can't compare to those in the Land of Trial. Your sensing skill can only detect names and levels; it's normal not to sense high-quality magical spirits." Li Xiu glanced at Chu Jun's still bleeding finger. "Let's head out first; your wound needs treatment, and there's nothing here to treat it."

"No need, I can handle it myself. If you hadn't mentioned it, I would've almost forgotten," said Chu Jun, extending his palm, from which a white lotus bloomed.

The white lotus floated above Chu Jun's wound, emitting a strange white light. Under the illumination of that light, Chu Jun's body also glowed white, and his wound gradually stopped bleeding.

"Is this your Symbiotic Contract?" Li Xiu looked a bit intrigued, amazed that a Symbiotic Contract like this could heal wounds.

"Its name is White Lotus; it can only heal external injuries, not much use. I was almost depressed to get such a Symbiotic Contract." Chu Jun said with a wry smile.

"No wonder Chu Jun has never shown his Symbiotic Contract. With his personality, if he had a cool Symbiotic Contract, he wouldn't have been able to hold back from using it until now." Li Xiu inwardly chuckled.

But in Li Xiu's opinion, Chu Jun's White Lotus was quite useful; things like medicine couldn't be brought into the Land of Trial. With Chu Jun's White Lotus, even if they got hurt, they could treat it promptly without leaving the Land of Trial.

The healing ability of the White Lotus wasn't bad, and in no time, Chu Jun's wound had scabbed over. Once scabbed, the White Lotus's effect wasn't as significant, so Chu Jun simply retracted it.

"To fully heal the wound would take too long; let's check out what's outside the other city gates first," Chu Jun said to Li Xiu.

"Let's rest a bit first." Li Xiu estimated it was almost two hours; the next wave of Black Death Demons should be coming.

Li Xiu sat down to rest and took out the Seven-Colored Talent Gemstone, dropping blood on it.

Bewilderment (Growth Talent): D-Class, keeps one's mind stable, less prone to outside confusion, with a certain chance to see through illusion techniques.

Li Xiu was somewhat surprised; he didn't expect it to be a Growth Talent.

Currently, Li Xiu possesses one growth skill and two growth talents.

Li Xiu estimated more than two hours had passed, yet there was no sign of Black Death Demons, making him curious.

"Is it possible that entering Black Death City normally doesn't have a two-hour interval for Black Death Demon raids?" Li Xiu muttered to himself, waiting a bit longer, sure that they had been in Black Death City for over two hours.

"How strange, is this Black Death City the one where I was pulled into by the Godslayer Shrine?" Li Xiu started doubting his previous judgment.

"City Lord, could I fight alongside you?" While Li Xiu was pondering, Ye Yuzhen suddenly appeared in front of him, looking intently at Li Xiu.

"Aren't you already fighting with me now?" Li Xiu responded.

"I mean, fighting magical spirits like you do. I know I'm still weak and not much use to you, but please believe me; I will become someone useful to you. Please let me fight with you," Ye Yuzhen said earnestly.

"Do you know the story of the mouse learning to fly?" Li Xiu said, looking at Ye Yuzhen.

"No," Ye Yuzhen shook his head.

"A mouse had its family eaten by a cat. One day, it saw a bat flying in the sky and was overjoyed, thinking it could fly like the bat, which looked similar to it, and it wouldn't fear cats anymore. So it started learning to fly. Do you know the end of the story?" Li Xiu continued, looking at Ye Yuzhen.

Ye Yuzhen's face turned pale, and his fists clenched tightly, knuckles turning white.

"Li Xiu, that's too harsh," Chu Jun couldn't bear it anymore and said aloud.

"Harsh, but life-preserving. The Land of Trial is fraught with peril; even Trial Takers with exceptional talent and strength can lose their lives if not careful. Are you truly prepared?" Li Xiu said calmly.

Inside, Ye Yuzhen's heart was bleeding. All along, he only hoped his sister could make something of herself.

Because his sister had the talent of a Magic Armor Master, while he did not. So he was willing to sacrifice himself for everything that Ye Xiyuan needed.

But today, after traversing the Dark Maze with Li Xiu and slaying Black Death Demons, he suddenly realized how formidable a Trial Taker could be.

Although he lacked the talent of a Magic Armor Master, if he put in his utmost effort, he might be as strong as Li Xiu and the others someday.

Yet, as soon as this glimmer of hope arose, Li Xiu dashed it with a cold dose of reality.

"Do Trial Takers also need talent? Is talent that important?" Ye Yuzhen said bitterly.

"Yes, talent is crucial. A mouse cannot ascend to the sky, wild grass can only serve as fodder for sheep, and talent dictates what you can and cannot do," Li Xiu replied with some indifference.

"I understand," Ye Yuzhen said dejectedly, sitting down.

"No, you don't understand," Li Xiu said coldly.

"Li Xiu, isn't this enough? Must you be so discouraging?" Chu Jun said, frowning.

Ignoring him, Li Xiu looked at Ye Yuzhen, saying, "A mouse can't fly, and grass can't eat sheep, yet are mice extinct? Aren't there grasses that even beings stronger than sheep dare not touch?"

Ye Yuzhen abruptly lifted his head, staring intently at Li Xiu.

"It seems you haven't figured it out yet. When you do, come find me," Li Xiu stood up, called out to Chu Jun and Ah Fei, "Let's go, let's check the other city gates."

Chapter 182: Ring of Agreement

Li Xiu and his companions chose the direction opposite to the previous city gate and arrived at another gate.

Before they could get near the gate, they heard ghostly cries faintly drifting to them.

The sound was a mix of sorrow and resentment, like the mournful cries from the netherworld, sending shivers down their spines.

"Could there be female spirits outside?" Chu Jun's eyes lit up.

"There are definitely no female spirits, but there might be female magical creatures. Why, do you have any ideas?" Li Xiu looked at Chu Jun and smiled.

"When I was young, my grandfather often told me stories about female spirits repaying kindness. Hearing so many, I couldn't help but fantasize a bit," Chu Jun said unabashedly, chuckling.

"I always thought only men who weren't very good-looking would have such thoughts. I didn't expect a handsome fellow like you to think so too," Li Xiu laughed.

"Dare you say you've never had such thoughts?" Chu Jun exchanged a look with Li Xiu, and everything was understood without words, both chuckled.

"Dirty-minded," A Fei said coldly.

"Let's see what's outside," Li Xiu said to Chu Jun.

Chu Jun nodded and used his Inspiration Skill to sense the outside.

After a while, Chu Jun's expression became somewhat strange.

"What's the matter?" Li Xiu asked with a frown, seeing Chu Jun not speaking.

"It seems like there are magical creatures outside, but at the same time, it seems like there aren't any... could it really be ghosts..." Chu Jun said with a peculiar expression.

"Sigh, is your Inspiration Skill reliable or not?" Li Xiu sighed.

"I used to think it was reliable, but today I'm not so confident," Chu Jun said thoughtfully. "Let's put it this way, I sensed a magical creature outside, but I can't detect its level or name. It appears in my range of perception sometimes, but then suddenly disappears, and after a while, it's back again..."

After listening, Li Xiu turned and walked away: "Let's go check the gates in other directions."

The three of them ran to another city gate, and Chu Jun used his Inspiration Skill again.

"How is it?" Li Xiu and A Fei both looked at him.

"I sensed it. There are many magical creatures outside the city gate, at least a thousand. Let me sense more carefully... E-grade... D-grade... C-grade, all of them... Goodness... Even B-grade and A-grade are there... Inside my sensing range is full of magical creatures, I don't know if there are any beyond that range..." Chu Jun said.

"Is this really reliable?" Li Xiu listened, finding it difficult to imagine that there could be so many magical creatures outside when it was so quiet.

"If you don't believe it, go out and see for yourself," Chu Jun pouted.

"There's only the last city gate left," Li Xiu turned to leave, not wanting to risk his life.

With thousands of magical creatures outside, if the gate were opened and they all rushed in, there might not even be time to put out the lights.

The three of them moved to the last city gate again, where it was also quiet, without a single sound.

Chu Jun leaned against the inner side of the city gate for a while before standing up to say to Li Xiu, "Nothing, within a kilometer's range, there's not a single magical creature."

Li Xiu and A Fei looked at him but said nothing.

"Don't look at me like that, there's really nothing. Anyway, I didn't sense a single magical creature. You have to trust me," Chu Jun said a bit anxiously.

"Open the gate," Li Xiu summoned the Jedi Knight, Demigod Shana, and Love God Shooter, arranging them in a line inside the gate, just in case something rushed in when the gate opened.

"Am I really that untrustworthy?" Chu Jun said, feeling frustrated.

"If I didn't trust you, I wouldn't open the gate," Li Xiu said, smiling as he turned the gears with A Fei.

"But your actions make me feel like I'm not being trusted," Chu Jun pouted.

"That's your psychological issue. You have to learn to overcome your psychological barriers." As they spoke, the city gate slowly rose. Outside, it was quiet, and nothing happened.

"Huh!" Chu Jun lay on the ground, looking outside through the gap, and uttered a sound of surprise.

"What's wrong?" Li Xiu, hearing Chu Jun's voice was surprised rather than terrified, didn't rush to lower the gears.

"It's so strange, come have a look yourself," Chu Jun beckoned to Li Xiu.

Li Xiu had A Fei secure the gears, came to the city gate, and looked outside, also uttering a surprised "huh" upon seeing the scene.

Inside Black Death City, it was an endless night, with no light except the furnace fire.

But outside the city gate, the setting sun was casting its rays, the red sun hanging over the horizon, painting the clouds like a fiery sky.

Outside, the vast yellow desert was also covered in a layer of red under the setting sun, with tall cactus-like plants standing silently, resembling a beautiful desert-themed oil painting.

After A Fei secured the gears, he also came over and was stunned by the scene outside.

Inside and outside the city seemed like two different worlds, one was a pitch-black night, and the other a sunset-lit desert.

Chu Jun looked at the sky inside the city and then outside, and said with a strange expression, "Is this the same sky?"

"It doesn't seem like it," A Fei said.

"Is there a sea in the desert?" Li Xiu suddenly asked.

"I don't know, I've never seen an ocean in the desert, at most there might be a lake," Chu Jun understood what Li Xiu meant, walked out of the city gate, looked left and right, and said, "It's really strange, why can't I see that Black Sea from here?"

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"I'm afraid the four gates here lead to different places." Li Xiu told A-Fei to stay inside and guard the winch as he stepped out, looking around and said.

All he could see was desert. Unfortunately, wearing the Dark Mirror made him unable to look too far.

He took off the glasses and looked again; all he saw was yellow sand and nothing else.

"This makes it difficult. It seems there are no demon spirits nearby, and we don't have any positioning tools. If we just walk out, getting lost in the desert would be disastrous." Chu Jun pondered and said, "Four gates: the seaside is too dangerous, there are no demon spirits visible here, one gate has a female ghost outside, another has thousands of demon spirits outside. They're not planning to give us a way to survive."

Li Xiu wandered around near the gate, not daring to stray too far and didn't find any traces of demon spirits.

Chu Jun followed Li Xiu closely, continuously using the Inspiration Skill to sense, similarly finding no sign of demon spirits.

Li Xiu initially wondered if the demon spirits could be hiding under the sand. But it seemed that wasn't the case; there genuinely were no demon spirits nearby.

"Let's go to the gate with more demon spirits. You mark out their positions and levels." Li Xiu returned inside, lowered the gate, and said to Chu Jun beside him.

"Okay." Chu Jun knew their best choice now was to go out and hunt the demon spirits, or else they'd have to head back.

By the gate, Chu Jun sensed as he drew on the ground, mapping out the distribution of demon spirits outside, using B, C, D, and E to represent positions.

"It's roughly like this." Chu Jun mapped out the main positions of the demon spirits.

"Not roughly, be precise; mark every demon spirit's position, even the E-grade ones." Li Xiu said.

"Okay." Chu Jun nodded and continued drawing on the ground.

"City Lord, I've thought it through." Ye Yuzhen approached, looking at Li Xiu and slowly said.

"Thought what through?" Li Xiu stood up and asked Ye Yuzhen.

"I will continue on the Trial Taker's path. My Symbiotic Contract isn't good enough, without demon spirits, but these are issues I can rectify. If the Symbiotic Contract doesn't work, I'll seek out a Parasitic Contract. Though it's hard to nurture, I will find a suitable Parasitic Contract. No matter how difficult, I will find every way to make it grow." Ye Yuzhen looked at Li Xiu and continued, "Right now I can't help you much, so I won't hinder you. If there's something I can do, feel free to ask."

Then, Ye Yuzhen approached Li Xiu and whispered, "My Symbiotic Contract is called the Ring of Agreement, it's not a combat-type weapon, it has no attack capability, but it can contract with any demon spirit and let them serve me."

Li Xiu looked at Ye Yuzhen, thinking, "Does he misunderstand the quality of Contracts? If such a contract isn't considered good, then what contract could be considered good?"

"The Ring of Agreement has a limitation; only contracts personally defeated by me can be made. What kind of demon spirit can I defeat now?" Ye Yuzhen explained, seeing Li Xiu's thoughts.

"Can you use external items?" Li Xiu asked quietly.

"Contract and demon spirits both must be mine." Ye Yuzhen said.

"What about Demon Armor?" Li Xiu asked again.

"I don't have the Magic Armor Master talent." Ye Yuzhen said bitterly.

"If the demon spirit you defeat is already half-crippled?" Li Xiu thought and asked again.

"I thought about that too but haven't had the chance to try it."

"Easy then, you'll have a chance soon enough." Li Xiu pointed at the diagram Chu Jun drew on the ground and said, "Remember those demon spirit positions clearly; it might come in handy soon."

"Okay." Ye Yuzhen went over and began memorizing the positions marked on the ground.

Chu Jun labeled all the demon spirits' levels and positions he could sense. After completing, he plopped down onto the ground, "This is more exhausting than fighting a demon spirit."

"Soon, you'll get to fight a demon spirit." Li Xiu said laughing.

"Really? Do you truly want me to charge out too? Are you sure I won't die? My combat ability is weak without your protective demon spirits..." Chu Jun widened his eyes at Li Xiu.

"You don't need to charge out; you need to help guard the gate. With so many demon spirits, I might miss some. If any charge through, you need to help hold the gate and not let them in." Li Xiu said.

"I'll do my best. We don't even know what grade the outside demon spirits are; if a Radiant Demon Spirit charges through, I can't hold it off." Chu Jun said.

Li Xiu smiled; Chu Jun was dependable, not reckless, and did only what he could, never taking on more than he could handle.

"Alright, just do your best." Li Xiu nodded with a smile.

"Guard the gate well, I'm going to take a look. Open the gate now." Li Xiu said.

"You asked me to draw so intricately, and you're not even going to look closely?" Chu Jun pointed at the map.

"No need." Li Xiu approached the gate, without first summoning demon spirits.

Chapter 184 Ring of Agreement_3

He lay next to the door while A Fei and Ye Yuzhen together turned the capstan, slowly raising the stone door, and Li Xiu peered outside through the crack.

Outside, it was a bright morning; the sunlight was somewhat dazzling as it hit, but luckily, the Dark Mirror allowed Li Xiu's eyes not to fear the sun, though visibility wasn't that clear.

But once he saw the situation outside clearly, Li Xiu was stunned.

The imagined group of demon spirits did not appear; let alone a thousand, not even a single demon spirit was there.

Outside lay a canyon, its ground fairly flat, with nearly ninety-degree vertical mountain walls on both sides, at least several hundred meters high.

"Strange, why aren't there any demon spirits?" Chu Jun, who was also looking out while lying prone, became instantly less confident.

Since arriving at Black Death City, his confidence had been repeatedly battered.

Li Xiu said nothing, merely summoning the Black Death Demon and sending it charging forward.

The Black Death Demon had barely rushed out a short distance when a skull emitting green fumes suddenly emerged from underground.

To call it a skull isn't quite accurate; the thing more resembled a metallic mechanical skeleton, much like the half-human, half-skeleton demon spirit Li Xiu had slain before.

This skeleton lacked the human half; its entire body was metallic and mechanical, emitting green fumes, with a green heart encased within its chest.

Its hands remarkably clutched a giant metal syringe.

Yes, the sort used by doctors for injections, except this syringe was enormous, as thick as an arm, with its piston rod drawn back. Combined with the needle at the front, its length was at least 1.2 meters.

Green smoke was still wafting from the needle tip's aperture.

Once the Black Death Demon had emerged, it was like stirring a hornet's nest, with bizarre mechanical skeletons climbing up from the canyon floor.

Their appearance was almost uniform, all clutching metal syringes.

Fortunately, they lacked any radiance; not even a Flowing Color Demon Spirit, just ordinary demon spirits.

The foremost mechanical skeleton demon spirit charged directly, raising its metal syringe to stab the Black Death Demon.

The Black Death Demon burst his shackles apart; the severed Black Crystal Chain morphed into a Light Whip, striking the mechanical skeleton demon spirit and splitting it at the waist.

The Black Death Demon demonstrated his mighty prowess, whipping the mechanical skeletons into fragments; no mechanical skeleton could withstand a single lash from him.

Suddenly, four metal arms extended from beneath the Black Death Demon, two gripping his left foot and two his right.

The Black Death Demon struggled forcefully, yet couldn't break free.

During this moment of distraction, a C-level mechanical skeleton charged from the side, driving a syringe needle into the Black Death Demon.

Li Xiu didn't call for other demon spirits to rescue, merely watching calmly.

"I told you to carefully look at the map, but you didn't listen," Chu Jun sighed.

Li Xiu remained silent, knowing every mechanical skeleton's position; he knew there were mechanical skeletons underneath, and the Black Death Demon's step wouldn't fall there if deliberately controlled.

Despite knowing there were demon spirits, Li Xiu deliberately let the Black Death Demon step forward, wanting to discover what was in those metal syringes.

He wouldn't send other demon spirits into combat before figuring out what the syringe's contents were.

Theoretically, since the Black Death Demon didn't possess a flesh body, merely a shell of armor encasing clouds of black mist, it shouldn't fear poison.

If the metal syringe contained poison, it shouldn't affect the Black Death Demon.

However, when the metal syringe pierced into the Black Death Demon's body, and the mechanical skeleton pushed the piston rod to inject its contents into the Black Death Demon, a bizarre scene unfolded.

Green fumes erupted from the punctured area; while a lash of his whip severed the C-level mechanical skeleton's arm, the green fumes on his body continued to spread.

One could see green patterns starting at the puncture site spreading across the Black Death Demon's armor.

Wherever the green patterns spread, the Black Death Demon's formerly black armor began gradually metallicizing into green metal.

"The contents of the metal syringe can metalize other lifeforms?" Li Xiu was somewhat astonished.

He had seen demon spirits capable of using Demonic Light to metalize substances before, but it was his first time encountering demon spirits capable of metalizing life using syringes.

Though these demon spirits weren't high-level, lacking any grade, the syringe's contents were surprisingly potent enough to affect even a Radiant Demon Spirit.

Green metal spread across the Black Death Demon's body, though slowly, showing no signs of stopping.

The Black Death Demon was still fighting as Li Xiu summoned him back with a thought.

Transforming into a Demon Spirit Ring, the Black Death Demon returned to Li Xiu's finger; on the black crystalline ring surface, there was a speck of green, metallic in texture, and it continued to spread.

"This is some amazing stuff!" Li Xiu summoned the Demigod Shana and the Love God Shooter, without calling the Jedi Knight.

Being melee in nature, the Jedi Knight wasn't suited for this scenario.

Both the Demigod Shana and Love God Shooter could attack purely at range, denying the mechanical skeletons any chance.

The two demon spirits stood guard at the city gate, crazily firing at the swarming demon spirits charging forth.

At first, Chu Jun and the others worried the mechanical skeletons were too numerous, fearing the two demon spirits might not manage.

But seeing the Demigod Shana taking out one with each shot, consistently blowing the mechanical skeletons' hearts apart, and the Love God Shooter instigating the mechanical skeletons into mutual conflict, Chu Jun's eyes widened in astonishment.

"These demon spirits are... incredible..." Chu Jun nearly drooled with envy.

The impact on Ye Yuzhen was even greater; videos of Magic Armor Masters slaughtering demon spirits could be easily found online.

But this scenario involved demon spirits slaughtering demon spirits under the command of a human, a scene he had never encountered.

The Demigod Shana's dominance and the Love God Shooter's bizarre Light Arrows deeply impressed Ye Yuzhen, solidifying his resolve to continue walking the path of the Trial Taker.

Magic Armor Masters still needed to fight directly, but Trial Takers need only summon their demon spirits to resolve all issues.

"Trial Takers... can also be powerful... powerful enough to leave same-level Magic Armor Masters trailing behind..." watching the silhouette at the city gate, Ye Yuzhen's gaze grew increasingly determined.

Chapter 185: Heart of Steel

Li Xiu looked at the Black Death Demon Ring on his hand, and the metal transformation continued bit by bit rather than stopping after retracting the Black Death Demon.

"What a powerful thing, even the Radiant Black Death Demon can't resist this kind of metal transformation." Li Xiu summoned the Black Death Demon again, then fed him a few Demon Cores obtained from killing previous Black Death Demons.

Even after eating them, the Black Death Demon showed no improvement; the metal transformation was still ongoing.

Li Xiu didn't retract it but left it outside to observe what consequences might arise after complete metal transformation.

The mechanical skeletons crawling from underground had been cleared by Demigod Shana and Love God Shooter, yet Li Xiu was very aware.

The mechanical skeletons in the valley weren't all killed, with some still hiding underground and not coming out.

If it weren't for Chu Jun's earlier provided coordinates, going out recklessly now might make returning alive a question.

Li Xiu directed Demigod Shana to advance, who moved forward while shooting at the ground.

Bullets drilled into the ground, quickly causing green gas to emerge, as mechanical skeletons struggled out from underground.

Just as they surfaced, Demigod Shana shot to blow off their heads, blasting their skulls.

Chu Jun and Ye Yuzhen stationed at the city gate watched as Demigod Shana walked and fired, each shot effortlessly killing or wounding underground mechanical skeletons, never missing a single shot; their expressions were somewhat odd.

They wondered whether this was Demigod Shana himself discovering the locations of the demon spirits or Li Xiu had already memorized the coordinates, controlling Demigod Shana to kill those hidden demon spirits.

If Li Xiu had memorized all the coordinates, such memory would indeed be terrifying.

Chu Jun himself couldn't remember the coordinates he drew and needed constant inspiration sensing to determine where mechanical skeletons hadn't emerged.

"Chu Jun, follow me," Li Xiu called Chu Jun, heading towards the valley.

Li Xiu had memorized the positions of mechanical skeletons within a kilometer; beyond a kilometer, detecting more skeletons would require Chu Jun's sensing.

Demigod Shana had already dashed out hundreds of meters; Chu Jun needed to go further to sense if there were any more mechanical skeletons.

Chu Jun walked and sensed: "Further out, there are some demon spirits, but not as many; their level is similar to these, at most B-level. Currently, no A-level demon spirits found."

The whole valley stretched about two thousand meters, generally just a straight line. As they continued, Chu Jun reported positions, and Li Xiu controlled Demigod Shana to kill.

Nearing the valley entrance, Chu Jun suddenly said, "Hold on, there are A-level demon spirits ahead."

"The position," Li Xiu said, staring in the direction of the valley entrance.

After Chu Jun reported the location, Demigod Shana fired a shot from afar towards that spot.

With a "bang," a bullet hole appeared on the ground, yet no green smoke emerged this time.

Bang!

A mechanical skeleton crawled out from underground, its size two or three times bigger than ordinary mechanical skeletons, standing about five or six meters tall.

Its entire body was green metal, with shimmering green patterns on its metallic skeleton; a heart in its chest glowed with green light, and a gigantic metal injector had flowing green light lines.

"An A-level Flowing Color Demon Spirit, does your Radiant Demon Spirit handle it?" Chu Jun observed Demigod Shana's lower level, voicing concern.

"Let's give it a try," Li Xiu calmly replied.

Li Xiu estimated Demigod Shana's combat power; though just E-level, his bullets inflicted considerable damage on ordinary B-level demon spirits.

If hitting the weak points, instant-killing ordinary B-level demon spirits was possible. If not hitting the weak points, bullets still caused significant damage, but instant-killing required using a greatsword.

Against ordinary A-level demon spirits, quick slaying might not be easy; in terms of strength and speed, the Radiant Demon Spirit is likely inferior to ordinary A-level demon spirits.

Now it's facing an A-level Flowing Color Demon Spirit; Demigod Shana is likely not a match.

Bang!

As the A-level mechanical skeleton crawled out, Demigod Shana fired successive shots hitting its head, only leaving dents without causing much harm.

"Indeed, the level is still too low, somewhat strained." Li Xiu was prepared, showing no surprise, saying to Chu Jun, "You go back first."

Chu Jun turned away, understanding to keep distance from the spectacle to avoid becoming an obstacle; accidental harm should be avoided.

After the Flowing Color Mechanical Skeleton emerged, raising its gigantic metal injector, it pushed the plunger towards Demigod Shana in the distance.

Green light, like high-pressure water, sprayed from it, streaming toward Demigod Shana.

Demigod Shana swiftly retreated, dodging the green light spray, while continuing to shoot at the mechanical skeleton's chest.

The mechanical skeleton's weaknesses are its head and heart; this one's head is too hard; Demigod Shana can't break its defense and must target another weak point, the heart.

Bang bang bang!

Bullets hit the green heart wrapped in metal skeleton; some bullets struck the metal skeleton, exploding into blue fireworks, while others hit the green heart, causing a green light shield around it, with bullets exploding yet failing to harm the heart.

Chapter 186 Heart of Steel_2

Li Xiu rode the Pink Nightmare and quickly retreated, while the Mechanical Skeleton took long strides with its metallic legs, charging toward Demigod Shana and spraying green light from a metal injector.

Demigod Shana fought while retreating, bullets constantly striking its body, but with little effect.

Seeing that Demigod Shana's retreat wasn't fast enough and that it was about to be caught by the Mechanical Skeleton, a blue-violet Light Arrow flew in from afar, hitting the Mechanical Skeleton's chest.

A blue-violet heart-shaped light mark stamped itself on the metal skeleton, and the Mechanical Skeleton was momentarily stunned.

However, it only lasted for a second before the heart-shaped mark on the chest frame of the Mechanical Skeleton disappeared, and it chased after once again.

This second allowed Demigod Shana to widen the gap once more, and the Mechanical Skeleton took a bit more time to charge up again.

Just as it started moving, another Light Arrow flew over, striking its head and causing the Mechanical Skeleton to pause once more.

Demigod Shana seized the moment and unleashed a barrage of bullets, several shots piercing through the metal chest frame and striking its heart, only to be blocked by the green Light Shield.

When the Love God Shooter shot a third Light Arrow, the Mechanical Skeleton had already adapted and dodged it, then continued to chase Demigod Shana, its injector flashing with green light again.

"What are you waiting for? Come back quickly!" Chu Jun had already rushed back inside the city gate, shouting at Li Xiu from within.

Li Xiu wasn't in a hurry to return, contemplating something as he watched the Mechanical Skeleton.

He had understood the Mechanical Skeleton's abilities. The green light from the injector was indeed terrifying; once touched, the body would start to metalize.

Its strength and speed were superior to Demigod Shana, and it also had good immunity to the Love God Shooter's Light Arrows.

The Light Shield on its heart was likely another skill, which thoroughly protected its weak point.

The Mechanical Skeleton seemed invincible, at least with the power Li Xiu currently possessed, it seemed difficult to effectively deal it a heavy blow.

"If that's all, then it's worth a try." Li Xiu's thoughts stirred, and Demigod Shana, who had been retreating rapidly, suddenly stopped in its tracks.

Taking advantage of the Mechanical Skeleton dodging the Light Arrow from the Love God Shooter, under Li Xiu's control, it charged towards the left side of the Mechanical Skeleton.

Upon discovery, the Mechanical Skeleton immediately sprayed green light at him.

Demigod Shana seemed to have accurately calculated, stopping abruptly to dodge the Mechanical Skeleton's anticipated spray, then sped up again, while continuously shooting at the Mechanical Skeleton's eyes with its gun.

The Mechanical Skeleton's eyes glowed green; though the bullets didn't inflict damage, they impaired the Mechanical Skeleton's vision.

While it raised a hand to block the bullets, a Light Arrow from the Love God Shooter struck its body, making it pause for about a second once more.

Demigod Shana sped up, reaching within a dozen meters of the left side of the Mechanical Skeleton, circling around it while firing its gun.

The Mechanical Skeleton turned, chasing Demigod Shana, while the Love God Shooter continued firing arrows from behind, forming a pincer attack with Demigod Shana.

Their attacks, however, had little effect on the Mechanical Skeleton, and it seemed unlikely they could slay it.

Suddenly, Li Xiu squeezed his legs, and the Pink Nightmare shot out like a pink lightning bolt, charging toward the Mechanical Skeleton.

Demigod Shana no longer retreated; as the Mechanical Skeleton charged at it, it opted for close-quarters combat.

Demigod Shana's footwork changed, dodging the Mechanical Skeleton's attacks time and again; the body technique unmistakably was Li Xiu's Angel's Wings.

While Li Xiu controlled Demigod Shana to engage with the body technique, the Pink Nightmare's speed reached its limit as it quickly closed in on the Mechanical Skeleton.

Though the Pink Nightmare was only B-class, its speed rivaled, if not outpaced, the Mechanical Skeleton.

"Li Xiu, what are you doing?" Chu Jun gasped in shock, trying to stop Li Xiu, but there was no sign of him halting.

As the Pink Nightmare was about to catch up with the Mechanical Skeleton, they were engaged in battle with Demigod Shana. Suddenly, the Mechanical Skeleton turned and sprayed green light toward Li Xiu and the Pink Nightmare.

It seemed Li Xiu had anticipated this move for a long time; the moment the Mechanical Skeleton turned, the Pink Nightmare leaped, vaulting over the green light and soaring toward the Mechanical Skeleton.

In midair, Li Xiu suddenly drew the Fire Lotus Sword, hurling it directly at the Mechanical Skeleton.

The Fire Lotus Sword flew straight as a red streak of light, piercing toward the eye socket of the Mechanical Skeleton.

The Mechanical Skeleton reached up to grab, seizing the Fire Lotus Sword, but as it did so, it felt a numbing sensation over its entire body as if electrocuted—this was the paralysis effect of the Super Exciting.

Just as the paralysis effect wore off, another Light Arrow struck its body.

The Light Arrow from the Love God Shooter turned into a heart-shaped mark, making the Mechanical Skeleton pause while holding the Fire Lotus Sword.

A figure descended from the sky, with the Jedi Knight wielding a blood-red Samurai Sword, striking down on the Mechanical Skeleton's head. The Mechanical Skeleton hadn't yet recovered, forced to watch with wide eyes as its head...

The blood-red Light Blade fiercely struck the skull, blood-fanged sword light clashing and grinding against metal, forcing open a crack in the metallic skull, with the sword embedded inside.

Bang!

The Pink Nightmare, which charged through the air, kicked its front hooves into the Mechanical Skeleton's body, causing it to stagger backward, dropping the metal injector and the Fire Lotus Sword to the side.

Chapter 187 Heart of Steel_3

After the Mechanical Skeleton fell, it let out an angry roar. As it got up, it grabbed the Samurai Sword stuck in its skull and directly pulled it out, ready to throw it at Li Xiu, when it heard two bangs beside it.

The blue Light Bullets shot into the crack in the skull created by the Samurai Sword, instantly causing green goo to splash out. The Mechanical Skeleton held its head and howled in pain, dropping the Samurai Sword from its hand.

The Jedi Knight picked up the Samurai Sword and another Blood Light Slash was aimed at the Mechanical Skeleton's face. In its agony, the Mechanical Skeleton instinctively reached out to block it.

The sword was indeed blocked, but on the other side, Demigod Shana's bullets kept pouring in; Light Bullet after Light Bullet shot into the crack in its skull, causing more green goo to gush out continuously.

The Mechanical Skeleton staggered backward repeatedly, finally falling on its back and hitting the ground heavily.

Streams of green light rose from its body, and the green light in the metal injector also surged out, gathering above its body quickly into a green fluorescent ring.

Ding!

As the ring fell to the ground, the body of the Mechanical Skeleton also disintegrated, and a Demon Core shimmering with green light rolled out from its shattered heart.

"This is just too powerful!" Chu Jun exclaimed excitedly.

Ye Yuzhen stared blankly at the figure in the valley, not saying a word.

"Yes, it really is too strong. An A-class Flowing Color Demon Spirit was killed just like that, and not by a Magic Armor Master, but by a human. The true Trial Taker is indeed very strong." The spark of fire in Ye Yuzhen's heart burned even brighter.

Li Xiu picked up the ring and the Demon Core, his gaze shifted forward to the valley's entrance, which was blocked by a building.

The building, like Black Death City, was constructed from black stones and stood several dozen meters high. Its architectural style was very peculiar.

A long row of huge structures, resembling a dam of a hydropower station, yet the front row of giant black columns and spire-like rooftops looked like ecclesiastical buildings.

Li Xiu glanced at the building and turned back towards Black Death City.

He wouldn't assume he was invincible just because he killed an A-class Flowing Color Demon Spirit.

In this eerie place, any careless action could cost him his life.

Without understanding the situation of that building, Li Xiu would never rashly venture inside. Even if he had to go in, he would need to prepare thoroughly for exploration first.

"Li Xiu, your companion pets are indeed too powerful. I'm a bit envious myself. The guy using a gun-sword, the one shooting arrows, and that peculiar samurai of yours—if I had so many powerful companion pets, I wouldn't come to such a terrifying place for adventure. I'd gather enough gemstones to raise them all to S-class, and then bring them into the Land of Trial, slaying gods when meeting gods, defeating ghosts when encountering ghosts..." Chu Jun said with an envious look on his face.

"The premise is that you need to have Demon Spirits first." Li Xiu laughed and said, "Stop dreaming here, take a rest for a while, and then come with me to check the building at the valley entrance."

"Ah, I'm almost becoming a scout; you need to know that I'm also a true Trial Taker." Chu Jun sighed.

"The next Demon Spirit is yours to handle." Li Xiu said.

"Forget it, I don't have that many Top-Grade Demon Spirits. Why don't you tell me where all your Demon Spirits come from? When I get some Top-Grade Demon Spirits, I'll take you flying in the Land of Trial." Chu Jun looked at Li Xiu with anticipation.

"As long as you're rich enough, Demon Spirits are not a problem." Li Xiu laughed and said.

"Money, this thing, I actually have a bit of it." Chu Jun adjusted his clothes, looking seemingly respectable, and said.

"How much do you plan to spend?" Li Xiu asked.

"That depends on what kind of Demon Spirits I can get." Chu Jun replied.

"Interested in a Radiant Black Death Demon?" Li Xiu had quite a few Radiant Black Death Demon Rings.

"Of course, but let me tell you, having a Radiant Black Death Demon at your disposal is a waste; how can you let it act as a scout..." As Chu Jun spoke halfway, he suddenly realized that among Li Xiu's Demon Spirits, the Black Death Demon seemed the most useless.

"Uh, forget what I just said, do you still have a Radiant Black Death Demon Ring?" Chu Jun asked as he looked at Li Xiu.

"Yes, I'll give it to you once we get out." Li Xiu toyed with the ring and Demon Core in his hand as he spoke.

The ring was clearly a Skill Ring, but unfortunately, it wasn't a Demon Spirit Ring. Li Xiu was quite interested in this Mechanical Skeleton.

Its injector can metallize other creatures, and even a Radiant Black Death Demon couldn't resist. This ability is quite terrifying.

Li Xiu glanced at the Black Death Demon nearby; the portion of its body that had turned metallic was already the size of a palm, and it was still spreading.

The injector of a regular Mechanical Skeleton was already this formidable, and this Flowing Color Mechanical Skeleton must be even stronger. Unfortunately, it didn't produce a Demon Spirit Ring, so Li Xiu's interest was useless.

"With so many Demon Spirits, you don't need to fight yourself. Why not sell me this Skill Ring?" Chu Jun's eyes were fixated on the Skill Ring.

"Sure, since we formed a team to come here, part of the bounty is yours too. But how do you plan to compensate us?" Li Xiu tossed the Skill Ring directly to Chu Jun.

The Mechanical Skeleton's skill was just that one, and Li Xiu didn't need to think to know that this Skill Ring must be the Light Shield skill to protect the heart.

He wasn't very interested in this skill, so if Chu Jun really wanted it, it didn't matter to give it to him.

"Really for me?" Chu Jun caught the Skill Ring, looking surprised at Li Xiu.

"Not giving, allocating. Our portion of the compensation is still required from you." Li Xiu said.

"No problem, we'll settle it when we get out." Chu Jun couldn't wait to put the ring on his finger, while also dripping his own blood on it.

Soon, the ring transformed into a green imprint on his finger, and after receiving the skill information, Chu Jun said with delight, "A-class Heart of Steel skill, not only can it protect the heart from harm, but it can also resist metal death rays to a certain extent. With this skill, what more can those Mechanical Skeletons do to me? Do you regret it yet?"

Li Xiu glanced at Chu Jun; this poor kid still didn't understand that only by surviving could he clear the path ahead.

Chapter 188 Ghost Mask Modification Completed

Li Xiu and a few others sat inside the city gate to rest, while Ye Yuzhen sat beside them, preoccupied with heavy thoughts.

In this group, he felt like he was much like Afei — seemingly useless. He couldn't pinpoint what his true strengths were.

"Did you look at the map?" Li Xiu asked Ye Yuzhen, who was somewhat confused.

"I did." Ye Yuzhen didn't understand why Li Xiu was asking about this.

"Did you remember it?" Li Xiu inquired again.

"I did remember." Ye Yuzhen had memorized it seriously earlier, but Li Xiu didn't need his help for anything, leaving him feeling worthless.

"Since you've looked at it and remembered it, why are you sitting here? If you want something, you need to fight for it yourself. Are you waiting for someone to bring it to you?" Li Xiu said calmly.

Ye Yuzhen was momentarily stunned, then his mind began racing. He stood up, went to the city gate, and after carefully observing the valley outside the city, everything became clear to him.

"I'm going now." said Ye Yuzhen as he briskly ran out of the city.

"What's going on?" Chu Jun asked, puzzled.

"It's nothing." Li Xiu leaned against the city gate, watching the direction where Ye Yuzhen had gone.

Ye Yuzhen's memory was indeed exceptional; he had understood Li Xiu's meaning.

According to Chu Jun's map showing magical creatures, there were a few scattered locations where Li Xiu hadn't gone, and underground mechanical skeletons were hiding there.

With Li Xiu's reminder, Ye Yuzhen realized that the mechanical skeletons not disturbed by Li Xiu were rated E, D, C, and D — one at each level.

Undoubtedly, Li Xiu had intentionally left them for him, not because he forgot their existence.

Ye Yuzhen took a deep breath and headed towards the location of the E-rated mechanical skeleton, wanting to see if he could use the Ring of Agreement to tame it.

Although he had been diligent before, he was never willing to fight for himself, only hoping to gain more resources for Ye Xiyuan.

But this time, he wanted to take a risk for himself.

Ye Yuzhen already knew the mechanical skeleton's abilities and attack patterns. After contemplating for a while, he took a deep breath, approached a certain distance, picked up a stone, and threw it towards the ground where the E-level mechanical skeleton was hiding.

The mechanical skeleton was startled and immediately crawled out from underground.

As soon as its upper body emerged, Ye Yuzhen kicked over, sending the metallic injector in the mechanical skeleton's hand rolling aside.

Ye Yuzhen's prowess was quite impressive. After all, he had become a Trial Taker solely through self-reliance, with exceptional mind and skills.

He only lacked a bit of self-confidence and the desire to grow stronger.

"Will he be alright?" Chu Jun asked worriedly, watching Ye Yuzhen fight with the mechanical skeleton.

"He should be fine." Li Xiu chuckled.

The three watched Ye Yuzhen battle the mechanical skeleton while taking a break. Eventually, Ye Yuzhen managed to slip his hand through the gap in the metallic ribcage and grasp the green heart of the mechanical skeleton.

The next second, a breathtaking scene unfolded; the mechanical skeleton seemed pulled by some force and compressed, disappearing into Ye Yuzhen's hand in an instant.

"Success!" Ye Yuzhen looked at the Ring of Agreement with a green gemstone added to his finger, feeling a joy he never experienced before.

With a thought, the green gemstone on the ring transformed into a mechanical skeleton in front of him.

Suppressing his excitement, Ye Yuzhen headed towards the location of the D-level mechanical skeleton.

Using his previous method, he attempted to kick off the D-level mechanical skeleton's metallic injector first. But just as his foot moved towards it, the D-level mechanical skeleton grabbed it.

Fortunately, he was prepared. The E-level mechanical skeleton under his control was right behind the D-level mechanical skeleton and directly lifted the metallic injector, stabbing it into the D-level mechanical skeleton's hind brain.

After a battle, with the help of the E-level mechanical skeleton, Ye Yuzhen finally seized the heart of the D-level mechanical skeleton again.

The D-level mechanical skeleton, like the E-level one, was absorbed into the ring, transforming into a green gemstone.

However, his ring could only accommodate one gemstone. When the D-level mechanical skeleton occupied the ring, the gem formed by the E-level mechanical skeleton was covered.

"Can he only control one magical creature?" Li Xiu seemed slightly disappointed to witness this, expecting Ye Yuzhen to unleash a magical creature army.

Ye Yuzhen put away the D-level mechanical skeleton and, after resting for a while, advanced to the location of the C-level mechanical skeleton.

However, this time he didn't succeed. The moment the C-level mechanical skeleton's upper body emerged, it swung its metallic injector horizontally, sending Ye Yuzhen and the D-level mechanical skeleton flying to the ground.

Ye Yuzhen attempted to get up but saw the C-level mechanical skeleton already raising its metallic injector for a stab.

Bang!

In the silence of a gunshot, a Blue Light Bullet blasted off the C-level mechanical skeleton's arm and metallic injector.

Ye Yuzhen knew Demigod Shana had saved him, quickly rose, and charged at the C-level mechanical skeleton, aiming for its heart.

But this time, Ye Yuzhen couldn't capture the C-level mechanical skeleton. Even as its heart was crushed, the contract between them wasn't fulfilled.

Ye Yuzhen was not disappointed. Although he couldn't rely on others for growth, he had found a target and a method to grow, and that was enough.

Chapter 189 Ghost Mask Modification Completed_2

Ye Yuzhen didn't go back to the place where the B-level Mechanical Skeleton was. Instead, he returned to the city gate and thanked Li Xiu.

"From now on, you can only rely on yourself." Li Xiu said to Ye Yuzhen, and then stood up: "We've rested enough, it's time for us to get to work."

"Not bad, you can do it." Chu Jun said to Ye Yuzhen when he walked next to him, then caught up with Li Xiu, following him towards the building at the end of the valley.

Outside the building, Chu Jun walked back and forth so many times he lost count.

"This is strange." Chu Jun stopped and lowered his head in thought.

"Can't sense the demon spirit?" Li Xiu asked.

"No, I sensed the demon spirit inside, but something feels off." Chu Jun paused, organized his thoughts, and continued: "How should I put it, I feel there is a demon spirit inside, and it seems to sense my presence too. Wherever I go, it follows."

"Is there a problem with that? You have the Inspiration Skill, so it's not surprising if the demon spirit has a similar skill and can sense you." Li Xiu replied.

"That's not the problem. The problem is, at different locations, I sense this demon spirit at different levels. Sometimes it's E-level, other times it's B-level or even A-level. Once, I even sensed it as S-level." Chu Jun said helplessly, "It seems there's something wrong with my skill."

"What if it's not your skill that's malfunctioning?" Li Xiu pondered and said.

"How is that possible? How can a demon spirit be S-level one moment and E-level the next? Are you suggesting it can disguise its level?" Chu Jun questioned.

"Is there a possibility that at different locations, it has different levels?" Li Xiu examined the long building and said, "Why don't you walk around again and see if its levels change at different spots?"

Prompted by Li Xiu, Chu Jun immediately got up and moved closer to the building, walking back and forth several more times.

"That's exactly it. When I move to different spots, its level varies. Each spot's change is consistent." Chu Jun thought carefully and said, "I see two possibilities. First, there isn't just one demon spirit; I can only sense the one at my position, not ones in other locations. The second possibility is that this demon spirit changes its level depending on the location."

"Since you can sense the demon spirits inside, the first possibility is less likely." Li Xiu glanced at the tightly shut door of the building and said, "Map out the levels for each location for me."

Chu Jun agreed and started drawing on the ground.

The building was about five to six hundred meters wide. Chu Jun divided this distance into fourteen sections: one section where the demon spirit was S-level, three A-level sections, four B-level sections, three C-level sections, two D-level sections, and one E-level section.

Li Xiu compared Chu Jun's drawing with the building's door, then cross-referenced them.

"The entrance area is A-level, and moving to each side is B-level..." After careful comparison, Li Xiu discovered the S-level section was on the far left, while the E-level section was on the far right.

"If there's only one level-changing demon spirit in there, as soon as you get inside, just head to the right; when you reach the far right, it'll be at its weakest." Li Xiu recalled something and looked up at Chu Jun asking, "What's the name of this demon spirit?"

"The Last Fanatic." Chu Jun thought for a moment and said.

"Interesting, this needs further investigation. Let's head back." Li Xiu led Chu Jun away.

Although there might only be one demon spirit inside, its true level was unknown. If it were Radiant Level, or even just Splendid Level, it would still be difficult for Li Xiu to handle during its B-level and A-level states.

To reach the far right, one would have to pass through several B-level and A-level sections, and the environment inside was unknown, making it extremely dangerous to enter.

After thinking it over, Li Xiu decided not to enter the building yet, opting to wait until he became a true Trial Taker.

This expedition's gains were decent; Li Xiu acquired a growth-type talent, Chu Jun acquired an A-level skill, and Li Xiu shared some Demon Cores with Ah Fei and Ye Yuzhen.

Of course, they were distributed according to contribution, not equally.

As they prepared to leave before extinguishing the light, Li Xiu gave Ah Fei a knowing look, to which she nodded in understanding.

Before Li Xiu extinguished the light, she quietly used the Abstention Skill.

All four returned to the Hero Trial Ground's entrance. After parting ways with Chu Jun and Ye Yuzhen, Li Xiu looked at Ah Fei.

Ah Fei slightly nodded and said, "It's usable."

"Your skill is really incredible." Li Xiu marveled, regretting not getting the Abstention Skill along with the Ice Heart talent.

...

"Madam, do you have instructions for me?" Inside the Red Sand City Lord's Mansion, a Trial Taker approached the City Lord's wife, a middle-aged woman, and bowed slightly.

"Mu Yu, I need you to go to Zhongshan City for me." The City Lord's wife said coldly, biting her lip.

Chapter 190 Ghost Mask Transformation Complete_3

"Madam, you should know that I need to protect the City Lord's safety and cannot leave Red Sand City at will," Mu Yu said, frowning.

"Have you forgotten who brought you to Red Sand City in the first place, who gave you the opportunity to become a Trial Taker, and who provided you with the resources to achieve your current status?" The City Lord's wife stared at Mu Yu and spoke each word deliberately.

"Madam, what do you want me to do?" Mu Yu sighed inwardly, knowing that this day would come sooner or later.

"My younger brother was killed by a Magic Armor Master. He is now occupying Zhongshan City, and I want you to go to Zhongshan City to kill him and avenge my brother."

"For this matter, you should ask the City Lord to act." Mu Yu said.

"If he were willing to act, would I still need to come to you? Mu Yu, do you want me to kneel and beg you? If that's what you really want, then I will beg you." The City Lord's wife said as she stood up and was about to kneel before Mu Yu.

Mu Yu quickly held up the City Lord's wife, smiling bitterly, "Madam, I can't accept this. I have what I have today because you gave me the opportunity. I will handle this matter properly."

"I have only this one brother, and my family only has this one man. If he dies, our family has no future. This debt of blood, I cannot leave unavenged." The City Lord's wife spoke with a grieving expression.

"Please rest assured, Madam, I will set off for Zhongshan City immediately. No matter how strong that Magic Armor Master is, as long as he's not wearing his Demon Armor twenty-four hours a day, I will definitely be able to kill him." After speaking, Mu Yu turned and left.

The City Lord's wife watched Mu Yu leave, and the knot of tension in her heart eased a bit.

She knew Mu Yu's ability. Although he was not a Magic Armor Master and did not have the strength to fight high-level Magic Armor Masters head-on, one does not necessarily have to fight to kill a Magic Armor Master.

Killing a Magic Armor Master without their armor is what Mu Yu is best at.

Among the Trial Takers under the Red Sand City Lord, no one was better at assassination than Mu Yu.

...

"I've spent so much funding, and all you produced for me is this?" Li Xiu looked at the Ghost-faced Magic Armor that Ximen Guan had modified for him and felt he might have indulged this old man a bit too much.

The current appearance of the Ghost-faced Magic Armor can no longer be described with the word 'ugly'; it has far exceeded the limits of human aesthetic appeal.

No person could make something this ugly.

The previous Ghost-faced Magic Armor was so cool, with a black base and purple edges, it was like a walking armored Demon God.

But now, the Ghost-faced Magic Armor looks like a pile of rusty scrap metal, its design having been drastically altered by Ximen Guan until it reached a shocking level of ugliness.

How to describe it, it's really like a set of rusty iron armor for a villain's minion from a low-grade movie.

"Young man, you can't just judge a book by its cover. I admit it doesn't look great, but there's nothing we can do, given the limited budget," Ximen Guan said with an easy calmness.

"Limited budget? Old Guan, over half the income of the entire Zhongshan City has been poured into your hands, and you're telling me funds are insufficient?" Li Xiu's mouth twitched, feeling an urge to hit someone.

"This small place has nothing. If it weren't for the equipment and materials left by the previous City Lord of Zhongshan being barely usable, the money you gave me wouldn't even be enough to buy materials. I've been frugal and stingy, and this is the result..." Ximen Guan shamelessly lamented his poverty.

"Alright, just tell me the performance parameters." Li Xiu felt mentally exhausted, unwilling to waste more words.

"Parameters are only for reference and have no practical meaning. Like a top-tier Magic Armor Master like yourself, once you wear it, you'll know how much effort I put into it. I guarantee you'll be satisfied," Ximen Guan chuckled.

"Cunning old man, probably didn't even test it, just using me as a guinea pig." Li Xiu couldn't be bothered to argue further and directly walked over to the Ghost-faced Magic Armor, reaching out to grab the activation device.

The next moment, the Ghost-faced Magic Armor turned into a box in Li Xiu's hand.

To Li Xiu's surprise, the previously suitcase-sized Ghost-faced Magic Armor, whose semi-finished version had been the size of a backpack, had now shrunk to only the size of a seventeen-inch laptop, small enough to fit into a larger briefcase.

"Old Guan, not bad, your technique is impressive." Although the performance was still unknown, the space-saving design alone was quite something, surely involving special technology and materials to achieve this.

"Heh heh, for me, it's nothing, just a small effort. Try it on," the old man said with an increasingly smug expression.

Li Xiu acted as if he hadn't seen him, grabbing the activation device and activating the Ghost-faced Magic Armor again.

The Ghost-faced Magic Armor adhered directly to Li Xiu's chest, its shell seemingly coming to life, spreading over Li Xiu's body and quickly encasing him completely, leaving not even a trace of a gap.

"Although it's a bit ugly, its performance is pretty decent." Li Xiu had already noticed the differences in this set of Ghost-faced Magic Armor.

General Magic Armor consists of many components that join together when worn, and the Ghost-faced Magic Armor used to be structured like that as well.

The current Ghost-faced Magic Armor is almost one piece, expanding over Li Xiu's body, enveloping him with fewer joints, enhancing its defense and reducing the likelihood of damage.

"Don't praise it yet; try it out first, and then your compliments will be more gratifying," Ximen Guan quipped, arms crossed and looking smugly punchable.

Li Xiu activated the power system of the Ghost-faced Magic Armor, and the iron-rust-like dark red shell suddenly lit up with purple Light Patterns.

The parts without Light Patterns turned black under the purple glow, filling the entire Magic Armor with a mysterious, eerie aura, like a ghoul emerging from the Netherworld.

Just the activation of the Demon Light Pattern made the once ordinary Ghost-faced Magic Armor seem as if it had undergone a complete transformation.

Especially the hellfire-like purple patterns on the black and red face mask, replacing goggles and visors, making it look like the face of a wicked spirit escaped from Purgatory.