

## **When God 201**

### Chapter 201 Brain Cognitive Time\_2

Li Xiu wasn't disappointed because the Demon Spirit Gemstone was a rare find, and acquiring it was likely even harder than the Demon Spirit Ring.

Li Xiu walked into another gemstone shop. Seeing the owner sitting at the counter with his phone, Li Xiu began browsing the store on his own.

Mu Yu had already been in Zhongshan City for several days without finding an opportunity to enter the City Lord's Mansion to get close to Li Xiu. After hearing about Li Xiu's hobby of visiting gemstone shops, Mu Yu opened one in Zhongshan City, planning to wait for him.

The moment Li Xiu entered the shop, Mu Yu already knew who he was.

He wasn't anxious at all and took the opportunity to observe Li Xiu, noticing that he wasn't carrying Demon Armor.

However, for Mu Yu, it didn't matter even if Li Xiu had Demon Armor, as he wouldn't give him the chance to use it.

As Li Xiu looked at each counter and was about to reach Mu Yu, Mu Yu's palm suddenly produced a dagger that he slashed at Li Xiu's neck.

His strike was so swift that it was almost unseen, the dagger shimmering with a haunting green light, resembling a flash of cold green electricity.

Mu Yu was certain that even a D-level Trial Taker like him couldn't dodge that strike, let alone someone who was merely a Magic Armor Master without Demon Armor.

If the opponent wasn't prepared, even if he was, at such close range, what could be seen couldn't be avoided. That strike was not just fast; the Wood Forest dagger was coated with lethal poison that ensured death upon contact.

Slashing the throat wasn't necessary; even a small wound would suffice to be fatal.

This was his Symbiotic Contract, enhanced by an S-level Flash Skill. He had even assassinated C-level Trial Takers before, who could only watch as Wood Forest cut their throats.

Li Xiu saw the flash of cold green electricity and sensed the danger, but his body couldn't react in time. There was no time to retreat; it was too quick, only allowing Li Xiu to lower his head slightly.

This lowering of his head made Wood Forest's aim miss his neck, striking his forehead instead.

To Mu Yu, it made no difference—cutting the forehead would still be fatal.

Just as Mu Yu thought he had succeeded, he suddenly noticed a black light shooting from Li Xiu's lowered left eye.

Bang!

The green electricity formed by Wood Forest was hit by the black light, making Mu Yu's palm holding Wood Forest feel numb.

Gripping the dagger tightly, Mu Yu straightened, and Wood Forest swiftly slashed at Li Xiu's chest once more, impossibly fast.

Bang!

A red rapier appeared in Li Xiu's hand, coming to block Wood Forest's unavoidable path.

The dagger and rapier collided, and Li Xiu's Fire Lotus Sword flew out of his grasp, the enormous force pushing Li Xiu back several steps uncontrollably, his hand trembling and powerless.

Mu Yu ghosted out from behind the counter, Wood Forest transforming again into cold electricity aimed at Li Xiu's heart.

He hadn't expected Li Xiu to be someone with a contract after all, but it didn't matter now, as Li Xiu had lost his balance and couldn't possibly fend off the strike.

Bang!

A blade with intense red glow blocked Mu Yu's dagger, and a samurai demon spirit clad in dark red armor stood before Li Xiu.

"Demon Spirit..." Mu Yu was startled, retreating quickly, but he had only taken a step when the samurai's sword, glowing blood red, slashed toward him.

Mu Yu hurriedly raised his dagger to block, but saw the samurai sword unleash a crescent blade light like a blood moon.

"Talent Skill!" Mu Yu was horrified, with no room to retreat.

Wood Forest collided with the blood-red crescent blade light, being severed, along with one of his arms.

Mu Yu endured the pain, a Skill Brand appearing on the fingers of his other hand, and he leaped like a cannonball through the roof, attempting to escape.

Bang!

Mu Yu heard a gunshot, then felt a sharp pain in his knee; as he landed, that leg failed him, causing him to fall through the hole he'd smashed.

A transparent blue sword rested against his neck.

"Radiant Demon Spirit!" Mu Yu saw the owner of the transparent blue sword and cried out in shock.

Bang Bang!

Demigod Shana fired two shots, shattering bones in Mu Yu's other leg and arm, then the gun was collected back by Li Xiu.

Seeing Mu Yu, now incapacitated, Li Xiu stood behind the Jedi Knight and asked with a smile, "What's your name?"

Mu Yu never expected that a Magic Armor Master not only was a contracted Trial Taker but also possessed a Radiant Demon Spirit.

"Just kill me, no need for talk." Mu Yu, unable to use his hands and feet, couldn't even commit suicide.

"I don't like killing." Li Xiu took out his phone to call A Fei, who soon arrived by car to take Mu Yu back to the City Lord's Mansion.

Mu Yu was locked in a cell, his wounds temporarily treated to prevent him from dying of excessive blood loss quickly.

Li Xiu looked at Mu Yu in the cell, calmly saying, "Did the wife of the Red Sand City Lord send you to kill me?"

"Stop wasting your efforts, if you want to torment me, just get on with it," Mu Yu lay on the ground with his eyes closed.

"Do you have family?" Li Xiu asked with a smile.

"My family is all in Red Sand City, try bringing them here to threaten me, if you can do that, I'll tell you whatever you want to know." Mu Yu sneered.

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"I heard that the Red Sand City Lord is a violent and extremely suspicious person. If I heal your wounds and then let you go politely, what do you think the Red Sand City Lord will think?" Li Xiu said slowly.

Mu Yu's expression changed immediately: "You can try, it might work."

"Alright, let's do it that way. A Fei, I'll leave him to you. Heal his wounds and send him back to Red Sand City." After saying this, Li Xiu got up, ready to leave.

"Your skills are still too shallow. My arm is already useless, and the City Lord won't be swayed by you," Mu Yu said through gritted teeth.

"Then I don't know. Anyway, you're just a tool. I don't care whether you live or die. If the Red Sand City Lord really trusts you that much, then congratulations on getting a second chance. But you'd better hope the City Lord doesn't think your severed arm is just a ruse. I think his tolerance should be enough for that, right?" Li Xiu replied.

"I can commit suicide," Mu Yu said, clenching his teeth.

"Well, that's another story then. The assassin who tried to kill me is still alive, yet he didn't return to Red Sand City and ended up being highly valued here in Zhongshan City. Would the City Lord really believe such a script?" Li Xiu said as he turned and left the cell.

"Wait a second," Mu Yu suddenly struggled to the iron bars, staring intently at Li Xiu, and said, "If I tell you, can you guarantee my family's safety?"

"I can't. I can only assure you that you will be considered dead in this world, someone who died trying to assassinate me. Whether there's a chance to save your family in the future depends on if you're worth the risk to me. Think it over," Li Xiu said, then left directly.

A Fei called a healer to start treating Mu Yu.

Mu Yu remained silent for a long time, until the healer left, and A Fei was about to leave as well when Mu Yu suddenly spoke, "Can I trust him?"

"You should ask yourself if you trust the Red Sand City Lord. Does it matter if he can be trusted?" A Fei said.

Mu Yu was slightly taken aback, then laughed bitterly: "You're right, if the City Lord could be trusted, I wouldn't be in this situation. What do you want to know?"

Mu Yu knew very well that as the close guard of the Red Sand City Lord, intentionally or unintentionally, he was privy to some of the City Lord's affairs.

If anything happened to him, with the City Lord's character, he would never spare Mu Yu's family.

"Didn't he just say that the value you offer determines the treatment you receive," A Fei said calmly.

While Li Xiu was packing his things, A Fei approached: "I have good news and bad news. Which one do you want to hear first?"

"I want to hear the good news first." Li Xiu stopped and sat on the bed, looking at A Fei.

"The good news is that I learned some things about the Gate of Purgatory from Mu Yu, who is the Trial Taker that attempted to assassinate you. It might help with your journey," A Fei said.

"And the bad news?" Li Xiu asked again.

"The bad news is that the information I obtained from Mu Yu about the Gate of Purgatory might be disadvantageous to you," A Fei answered.

"Isn't that just one piece of news?" Li Xiu was a little speechless.

"Hmm, you could put it that way," A Fei nodded seriously.

According to Mu Yu's account, the information given by the Red Sand City Lord about the Gate of Purgatory was mostly accurate, but slightly distorted.

In fact, the Red Sand City Lord later conducted a major experiment involving more people entering the Gate of Purgatory.

In a remote mountain village, over two thousand people were secretly captured by the Red Sand City Lord and sent into the Gate of Purgatory, regardless of age or gender.

This time, one person came out alive, and it was a child with cerebral palsy, with extremely low intelligence, under the age of ten.

"The Red Sand City Lord is truly ruthless, not even sparing a child like that," Li Xiu sighed.

"To him, such a child is the least valuable, the most deserving to die," A Fei said coldly.

"So, did they confirm that the Gate of Purgatory affects the brains of those Trial Takers, causing mental issues?" Li Xiu asked.

"No, they came to another conclusion. It's possible that the people who entered the Gate of Purgatory actually spent hundreds of years inside," A Fei revealed a shocking answer.

"Why would they come to such a conclusion?" Li Xiu asked, puzzled.

"The child's condition worsens over time, but this process is very slow. When he entered, he could move like a normal person, though his intelligence was low, with misaligned eyes and slurred speech. Under normal circumstances, it might take years, over a decade, or even decades for his bodily functions to be affected, leading to loss of bodily control, which would worsen over time."

"The child only spent three days inside, yet when he came out, he was almost completely paralyzed. Based on research done by experts in Red Sand City, his brain wasn't affected by external factors; it naturally deteriorated to this extent. So they inferred that it's very likely that while they were inside, their perception of time spanned decades or even centuries."

"Perception of time in the brain?" Li Xiu was confused by A Fei's terminology.

"Yes, essentially, their bodies might have only experienced three days, but their brains perceived it as decades or centuries. Being trapped in a void for decades or centuries would drive anyone insane," A Fei explained.

"But going insane doesn't mean dying. Why did only two survive?" Li Xiu still had doubts.

"I'm not sure about that. That's all Mu Yu knows, and I believe it's credible," A Fei replied.

"Then I'll decide after I've met the survivor." Li Xiu was becoming increasingly intrigued by the Gate of Purgatory.

#### Chapter 203 Gate of Purgatory

In a room fitted with a one-way mirror, Chu Jun and Li Xiu were watching a person inside through the mirror.

Inside the prison-like room, the walls, table, chairs, bed, and even the sheets and cups were all black.

The person sat in a chair, staring at the teacup on the table, muttering quietly to himself, so softly that it was impossible to hear.

Li Xiu and Chu Jun had been watching for more than half an hour, and during that time, the person simply kept staring at the cup and muttering, never standing up, his body exhibiting a bizarre Parkinson's-like tremor.

"Mr. Chu, he's always like this, except when eating, drinking, and sleeping," a Red Sand City official accompanying Chu Jun said with a smile.

"Can we go in and talk to him?" Chu Jun asked.

"Of course, but he's quite out of touch and doesn't understand human speech, so communication might be difficult," the official said and led Li Xiu and Chu Jun to the locked door, opening it: "Please, come in."

Li Xiu and Chu Jun walked over, but the person ignored them and continued muttering at the table.

"Apa, you have visitors," the official called out to the man, but he still didn't respond.

"Mr. Chu, I'm sorry, it's just how he is. Ask him anything you want; if you're lucky, he might say something crazy. If not, he won't acknowledge you at all," the official remarked.

Li Xiu glanced at Chu Jun, then approached the man and studied his face.

Just a young guy in his twenties, handsome, but in his eyes, Li Xiu saw no vibrancy expected of youth, only hollowness, ash-gray, and deep fear.

Li Xiu did not ask him anything but crouched down to hear what he was muttering.

"189,647,764... 189,647,763..."

Upon hearing, Li Xiu realized he was counting, slowly and meticulously, taking over ten seconds for each number, with intervals lacking any pattern.

Obviously, the numbers he counted didn't seem to be for timing purposes.

But if not timing, what could they signify? Just what was he counting?

Li Xiu followed his gaze to the cup, a purely black cup with no patterns, nothing to count.

"One... Two... Three... Four... Six..." Li Xiu did not ask anything and instead attempted counting beside him.

After a few counts, the man suddenly turned his head, smiled creepily, and said, "You counted wrong..."

"Where did I count wrong?" Li Xiu asked.

The man did not reply, turning back to continue counting seamlessly from the previous number.

Li Xiu continued counting his numbers, even louder, trying to overshadow the man's voice.

But the man seemed unfazed, counting steadily as Li Xiu listened for a while, realizing his interference was futile and the man's count was spot on.

"107... 109..." Li Xiu deliberately skipped a number.

"Wrong... You're wrong..." The man turned again and grinned at Li Xiu, a spine-chilling smile.

"What happens if it's wrong?" Li Xiu asked.

The man ignored him and resumed counting.

"Sir, you can try asking something else; perhaps he might reply," the official suggested with a smile.

"No need, let's go," Li Xiu gazed at the man for a while, then rose and left the room.

"Sir, are you sure you don't want to ask anything more?" the official asked puzzledly.

"No need, he's so far gone, no point in asking," Li Xiu said and then asked the official, "Has he ever said anything else before?"

"All the records are handed to Mr. Chu, everything he said is documented; you can view them," the official replied.

"Alright, let's go," Li Xiu and Chu Jun left this prison-like place together.

"Why not ask a few more questions?" Back at their lodgings, with no one around, Chu Jun asked curiously.

"If there was anything worth asking, the experts in Red Sand City would've found out. No matter how much I ask, I won't be more professional than them," Li Xiu replied.

"What do you think? Should we still go to the Gate of Purgatory? After seeing that guy, I feel a bit creepy, quite uneasy," Chu Jun said.

"No, I want to go to the Gate of Purgatory and see for myself." After encountering this man, Li Xiu had already made up his mind, deciding to head to the Gate of Purgatory.

The trials of the Gate of Purgatory are unrelated to physical fitness but linked to the mind, favorable for Li Xiu.

Furthermore, he faintly felt that the trial at the Gate of Purgatory might be connected to the numbers the man was counting.

"If that's the case, we'll proceed as planned. Your trip to the Gate of Purgatory will be arranged for tomorrow, and our family will arrive at Red Sand City in three days for the transaction. If all goes well, you'll be out by then," Chu Jun said and still uneasily added, "I just find that person odd, giving a feeling of unease."

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"Don't worry, since someone was able to come out alive, I will definitely be able to come out alive," Li Xiu smiled and comforted Chu Jun.

"That's right, if it's you, there should be no problem," Chu Jun, seeing Li Xiu's determination, said nothing more.

After resting for a night, early the next morning, the official who had received Li Xiu and Chu Jun yesterday took them onto a bus, carrying them out of Red Sand City, along a highway, into the deep mountains.

The bus twisted and turned along the mountain road, which was in very poor condition, narrow and broken, with potholes and some areas even having water pits.

Several times, Li Xiu thought the bus would veer off the mountain path, but it only turned a corner.

Fortunately, Li Xiu's mental fortitude and physical condition were good, otherwise, even if he wasn't shaken nauseous, he might have faced a recurrence of heart problems.

The bus descended a mountain and ascended another; when the sun was overhead, the bus finally stopped at a mountain hollow.

The official got off with two soldiers and said to Li Xiu and Chu Jun on the bus, "From here on, we can only walk; the highway hasn't been built to that side yet."

Li Xiu picked up his backpack and got off the bus with Chu Jun, leaving the highway, heading along a mountain trail.

The path was difficult to walk, but for the Trial Takers, it was nothing much; an hour later, they arrived at a simple base built against the mountain.

Outside the base, there was an electric fence, guarded by fully armed soldiers; the official presented the pass, and the soldiers inside let them in.

Under the guidance of the official and an officer inside the base, Li Xiu and the others passed through the base, leading to a cave behind the base.

At the deepest part of the cave, a black stone door was embedded in the mountain rock, the door was black, without any pattern or carvings; if not for the seventy-two grooves, it would be hard to recognize it as a Trial Gate, only as a smooth rock wall.

"Mr. Chu, this is the Gate of Purgatory," the official said, panting and wiping sweat; the walk had worn out his obese body, and his forehead was covered in sweat.

Chu Jun nodded, glanced at Li Xiu, then walked to the stone wall, took out a small pouch from his bosom, inside were rubies and sapphires, around three carats each; it seemed the gemstones to open the Gate of Purgatory were provided by Chu Jun himself.

According to the information provided by the Red Sand City Lord, the Gate of Purgatory could not be opened using a Trial Badge, only with gemstones.

Li Xiu said nothing, even if these gemstones were provided by Red Sand City, it was exchanged by the Chu Family's transactions, he was still indebted to Chu Jun, making no difference.

"Bring the people over," the officer shouted, and soldiers with guns drove a group of dozens of people over to the Gate of Purgatory.

Seeing Chu Jun halt his actions and look at those people, the official smiled and said, "Mr. Chu, the trial of the Gate of Purgatory doesn't limit the number of participants, and each person's trial is individual, with no interference among them. You have only one person going in; it's truly a waste. Would it be alright if a few people from my side also went in?"

Though this seemed like a plea, it actually didn't allow Chu Jun to refuse; people were ready, even if Chu Jun didn't consent, once the door opened, they would rush inside, and there's no way Chu Jun could stop them.

Chu Jun looked at Li Xiu, Li Xiu nodded slightly, so Chu Jun said nothing more and continued placing the gemstones into the grooves.

Thirty-six rubies and thirty-six sapphires were embedded on each side, with quite good quality, all over three carats; the cost of opening the Gate of Purgatory was quite significant.

When all seventy-two red and blue gemstones were fully embedded, they began to shine on their own, lighting the two doors in blue and red hues.

With a rumble, the two doors slowly opened, revealing a gap.

There was no light emanating from the gap, different from the Trial Gate Li Xiu had entered before, it was pitch black inside, nothing was visible.

Even with the Dark Mirror on his face, Li Xiu could still see only a deep blackness.

"Sir, please go ahead," the official gestured for Li Xiu to proceed, urging him to enter quickly.

Li Xiu didn't enter, so the people from Red Sand City naturally couldn't enter either.

Li Xiu looked at Chu Jun, Chu Jun said, "I'll wait for you here to come out, and we'll go back together."

"Alright," Li Xiu nodded slightly and walked into the darkness beyond the gate.

After Li Xiu entered the gate, the officer sent soldiers to drive the dozens of people inside; before long, the door closed slowly, isolating the inside world completely from the outside with a rumble.

In a white room, Li Xiu was observing everything inside.

This place was about the same size as the rooms in the Dark Maze, also an all-white room, but this room had no doors.

The entire room was like a sealed box, with nothing in it but Li Xiu.

Suddenly, a light screen appeared on the wall, along with a familiar cold voice.

"Welcome to the Purgatory Gate Trial Ground; S-level trial is about to begin, the rule is: survive until the trial ends."

The rule was just one sentence, survive until the trial ends, nothing else.

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No time limit, no rules limit, nothing specified, just survive.

As the countdown of the trial ends, the trial officially begins.

Li Xiu waited inside the room for a long time, but nothing happened. The silence in the white room was terrifying.

"Is it really just surviving until the trial ends?" Li Xiu muttered to himself but found he couldn't hear his own voice.

Li Xiu frowned slightly and tried kicking the white wall, initially just to see if he could make a sound, but after the kick, he discovered he couldn't feel any pain in his foot.

He kicked a few more times, still feeling no pain, but after taking off his white shoes, he found his foot was already somewhat swollen.

"This trial has deprived me of hearing and touch." Li Xiu sniffed at his arm and found he couldn't smell anything.

He licked his arm; his taste was gone too.

"Only sight remains," Li Xiu thought silently to himself.

He tried summoning the demon spirit but couldn't. He tried drawing the contract but couldn't, just like in the normal Trial Ground, where contracts and demon spirits can't be used.

He tried using skills; skills could be used, no difference from the usual Trial Ground.

Li Xiu sat in the center of the room, calmly observing the room with his eyes. The room was all white, no patterns or gaps, no visible changes.

In such an environment, it's easy to become mentally fatigued, making one want to sleep.

Li Xiu didn't sleep, silently counting in his mind. From the moment the trial began, he was counting, from the start, now over a thousand count.

There's nothing, nothing to do, no knowledge of when the trial will end; Li Xiu just sat there counting.

Time passed, second by second, Li Xiu counted, unlike a madman; each count corresponded to a second.

Later, because numbers got too long, each count corresponded to several seconds, effectively timing.

In Li Xiu's timing, he had been here for six hours but oddly found he wasn't hungry at all.

"Been six hours, still no hunger. Is my brain moving time fast, or have my body's sensations disappeared?" Li Xiu stood up, walked to a white wall, and used Passionate Blood, punching the wall.

The wall showed no response, Li Xiu felt nothing, but his fingers were bloodied, seemingly with broken joints.

Li Xiu didn't stop the bleeding, then slowly walked around the room, tapping the walls as he walked.

But with no touch and no hearing, even if the walls were empty behind, he couldn't differentiate like this.

"Is it possible that there is an exit in this room, but we can't find it due to only having sight?" Li Xiu looked at his hand wound, its healing speed seemed the same as outside.

Because of the demon spirit larva inside him, his wounds would heal quickly.

But Li Xiu roughly knew the healing speed; it's similar to outside, proving the time flow inside isn't altered, not like the mythical one day in Heaven equals a year in the Mortal World.

Li Xiu marked the position, punched the wall again; he wanted to see if there was a way out inside this room.

Every punch hurt him; even though his body could quickly heal, with no pain, Li Xiu clearly understood that healing these wounds required consuming energy.

Not consuming his energy but the demon spirit larva's energy, energy must be consumed.

And he now felt nothing, even if his body's blood ran dry, before death, he'd feel nothing.

Li Xiu strongly doubted the previous Trial Takers who entered here. Surely some tried to pound walls with their bodies like him, hoping to find a possible exit.

But he felt nothing, maybe not even realizing he was dead after pounding to death.

Li Xiu dared not let himself bleed too much; that would make his body unable to persevere. He marked some points, only needed to probe those, couldn't test every position in the room.

Time passed for a long time; Li Xiu finally tested all the marked points, but none of the walls could be pierced, not even a hint of a mark left.

"Looks like this room has no way out." Li Xiu sat down again.

He didn't have high hopes initially; the trial rule just said to survive till the trial ends, not saying there's a way out, the chance of leaving was low to begin with.

But if waiting like this means passing the trial, how did those people die?

Could they have gone mad after staying too long here and all committed suicide?

It's indeed possible; a person locked in such a place for years without knowledge of when the trial ends might despair enough to commit suicide.

"Is it really going to be years?" In Li Xiu's timing, twenty-four hours had passed; if the trial didn't end in three days, it indeed would be problematic.

No matter if the body spent years or only the brain felt years, enduring that isn't easy.

Li Xiu noticed that although he felt nothing, he could feel tired, wanting to sleep.

Li Xiu forced himself not to sleep, continuing to count in his mind.

One day... two days... three days... four days...

On the fourth day, he already knew, Chu Jun's description wasn't wrong; his brain's perception of time might genuinely have issues, might genuinely be decades or even years here to complete the trial and leave.

Fifteen days, Li Xiu was still alive, confirming that the body's experienced time and the brain's experienced time are definitely different.

The human body, even feeling nothing, can't survive fifteen days without water; definitely, the brain's time judgment is faulty.

"What exactly went wrong?" Li Xiu frowned, pondering.

#### Chapter 206 Crossing the Line

The methods that affect the brain are none other than those few: personal emotional factors, external stimuli, chemical agents, and some form of energy affecting the brain.

Personal emotional factors can be ruled out, as although Li Xiu is trapped here, his emotions are very stable, and very few things can cause significant emotional fluctuations for him.

External stimuli have also not been discovered as anything that could stimulate him; the room is empty, and there won't be a donkey kicking him in the head. It's purely environmental factors, which basically can't affect Li Xiu.

Regarding chemical agents, Li Xiu is not too sure. There are many gases that are difficult for the human eye to discern, and he might not even see them. Currently, he has no sense of touch or smell, making it probably difficult to discover.

The last and most difficult to detect is whether a magnetic field, energy resonance, or radiation is affecting his brain. He feels nothing, and this is also very hard to detect.

Li Xiu carefully contemplated the information he knew. The child with cerebral palsy survived, but his condition rapidly deteriorated within three days, yet the child with cerebral palsy never mentioned he had spent a long time inside.

Of course, at that time, he no longer had the ability to speak, and even his fingers couldn't move.

The madman claimed to have stayed in that room for a very long time, whether it be years or even a hundred years; it was certainly not just three days.

Also, what Li Xiu currently encountered: a disappearance of feel, leaving only visual functionality.

Li Xiu could probably confirm that there is some kind of power affecting the brain, causing it to malfunction, thus resulting in his loss of sensation.

If the brain is affected, making that madman feel it lasted many years, why did everyone else die while only he survived?

Why was it that the child with cerebral palsy survived while the strong Spiritual Force Trial Takers could not?

Why did the madman continue counting? He was terrified while counting, so scared he dared not make a mistake in the numbers. Even when counting beyond a billion, under Li Xiu's interference, he still made no error.

Li Xiu pondered all this, thinking about various possible connections.

According to Mu Yu's account, the child with cerebral palsy survived because his brain was damaged, affecting his bodily functions. His body gradually became beyond the brain's control, beginning with facial muscles, then the mouth and eyes, later the speech function, and eventually leading to total paralysis.

Such a brain-damaged child, if indeed invaded by some brain-affecting energy, should have been unable to escape.

Yet his condition worsened, and he escaped.

Li Xiu suddenly thought of a possibility. Perhaps this so-called trial had no temporal end, and the time they perceived in their brains was deliberately distorted, creating an infinite time loop within their brains.

Those affected brains would be trapped in endless time cycles, meaning the trial could never end unless they committed suicide.

The reason the child with cerebral palsy survived was that his brain was already damaged, affecting certain brain functions, thus preventing the infinite time loop that only affects the brain from forming.

So, he survived and escaped, not because he was stronger than others, but because his brain was defected.

However, due to that energy's influence, the already damaged brain was further damaged, leading to total paralysis.

This already illustrates a crucial problem: that energy is merely the key to opening the brain's time loop. It is ultimately one's brain that traps them in time.

But what about the madman? His brain was neither ill nor damaged, theoretically making it impossible to break free from the brain's time loop.

Li Xiu thought of this and had a sudden inspiration: "Could it be that he discovered the problem of the brain's time loop and figured out a method to break it? By not harming his brain, that method was certainly not feasible, as he didn't know which part of the brain needed damage to break the time loop. Carelessness might even kill him, and even if not, becoming paralyzed isn't much better than death."

"His method should be related to those numbers he was counting, but breaking the brain's time loop by counting seems far too simplistic." Li Xiu felt it probably wasn't just the numbers; the madman counted for some specific purpose.

"What purpose was he trying to achieve?" Li Xiu mused over this question.

He knew that if he couldn't figure out this problem, he would forever be trapped here: one hundred years, one thousand years, ten thousand years. As long as he lived and didn't commit suicide, he would continue the trial endlessly.

The brain caused his perception of time to almost stop. No matter how much time he felt had passed, for those outside the Gate of Purgatory, not much time had elapsed.

One can imagine the agony experienced by those who participated in the trial, trapped for one hundred, one thousand, ten thousand years in a place devoid of time, sensation, and everything else—such immense horror.

There was once an experiment conducted where a person stayed in an absolutely silent room for a period in exchange for a considerable sum of money, enough to prevent a poor person from worrying about livelihood for years.

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However, many people were invited to participate in the experiment, and none of them could withstand the duration set by the experiment. Normal humans find it hard to adapt to absolute solitude.

Li Xiu forgot how long that experiment lasted, but it definitely wasn't a year; maybe only a month or even shorter.

In such a short time, humans couldn't endure it. For thousands or tens of thousands of years, could anyone endure it?

Even if they could endure it, there were still hundreds of thousands or billions of years. When they realized they could never end the trials, that kind of despair and fear is simply unimaginable.

An empty room is more terrifying than any physical hazard trial; it's a challenge to the human mental limits.

Death, or staying here forever, there is no third option.

From the beginning until now, Li Xiu had been counting silently, but he still hadn't discovered how counting helped the current situation.

It's certain that just counting won't allow escape; there's something else here that he doesn't know.

"Why did that lunatic count? What was he trying to do? Normal people can't remember such long sequences, and errors will inevitably occur in continuous counting. My Spiritual Sense is too strong, combined with the Absolute Order talent, so I can count without any mistakes. How did he manage it? Could it be like me, with naturally strong Spiritual Sense? If so, he should have already been a famous Magic Armor Master, so why was he sent here as cannon fodder?" Li Xiu pondered and then suddenly froze.

He realized he had overlooked one issue: counting was too simple for him, but for normal people, it was definitely not simple.

The lunatic was just an ordinary person, but he managed to reach the same level as Li Xiu. Could his brain cope with it?

Maybe now it can, but perhaps not before.

"Could it be that he drove himself mad using this method?" Li Xiu thought over and over and seemed to find this the only possibility.

Or rather, it wasn't called madness, but the lunatic forcibly achieved absolute concentration, with his brain engaging in no other mental activities besides numbers.

When he achieved absolute concentration, completely abandoning other thought activities, the time loop completed by his brain naturally also became non-functional.

So the lunatic got out, but precisely because of the absolute concentration, his thinking was trapped within those numbers.

No matter how others disturbed him, no matter what happened around him, he wouldn't count wrong, so theoretically, he wasn't mad, just that his thinking was self-trapped.

Li Xiu found it hard to imagine what level a person had to reach to completely refrain from thinking about anything and remain in a state of absolute concentration.

Although Li Xiu knew the lunatic's method to break the brain's time loop, he couldn't do it. One has to admit, that lunatic was a genius, albeit a somewhat crazy one.

If you let Li Xiu multitask, he could handle several different things orderly, but absolute concentration was something he just couldn't achieve.

That's the advantage of strong Spiritual Sense, which now had turned into a disadvantage.

Of course, Li Xiu didn't plan to use this method either; he didn't want to trap his thinking and become a lunatic who only knew how to count.

However, judging by that lunatic's state, his thinking was still slowly recovering, just who knows when he could actually free himself from self-imposed confinement.

"Though I can't achieve absolute concentration, it doesn't mean I can't stimulate my brain in other ways." Li Xiu looked at his fingers, activating the Super Exciting skill.

The S-level Super Exciting skill could double his physical qualities and also had the effect of paralyzing enemies.

However, when using this skill, his own body would have to endure an electric shock-like pain.

Although Li Xiu didn't feel the pain now, this stimulation was effective for his whole body, and naturally included the brain.

This time, when Li Xiu used the Super Exciting skill, he didn't feel the previous pain, only that his body was uncontrollably trembling.

The Super Exciting was continuously taking effect, yet Li Xiu still didn't feel anything.

As he watched his body's tremors grow more intense, and even the hairs seemed to curl and scorch, Li Xiu stopped hurriedly.

"Isn't it possible? It seems I can only use mental stimulation to achieve breaking the brain's time loop without damaging it." Li Xiu was slightly disappointed; he knew continuing would be effective, but dare not proceed further. Going on would lead to more than brain damage but directly meeting Buddha in the western paradise.

If he actually met Buddha, and Buddha asked how he died, what would he say? That he stimulated himself to death? Moreover, with the Super Exciting?

Li Xiu felt that this was somewhat inappropriate, and besides, he wasn't a believer and probably wouldn't see Buddha anyway.

"Imprisoning myself with my own brain is indeed quite creative. Then let's see who's really in charge of this brain." Li Xiu took a deep breath, calming his stimulated mind, and then slowly closed his eyes.

What is the most important thing for a Magic Armor Master? Of course, it's the brain; without a powerful brain and Spiritual Force, how could one control such complex Magic Armor?

Magic Armor aren't machines; it's not as simple as pressing buttons, turning a steering wheel, or shifting gears, but rather brain-controlled thinking.

Chapter 208 Crossing the Line\_3

You could say that the Demon Armor is like a second body to the Magic Armor Master, with the only shared organ being the brain.

The stronger the Magic Armor Master, the stronger the mental power of the brain. The so-called Spiritual Sense is actually the external manifestation of the brain's mental power.

There aren't many people with the talent of a Magic Armor Master; having a few out of a thousand is rare. However, with billions of people in the world, despite the rarity, there are still some S-Class Magic Armor Masters to be found.

At least every year, there are a hundred S-Class Magic Armor Masters on the rankings of the Magic Armor Master list.

With so many Magic Armor Masters, why has Li Xiu taken the top spot for three consecutive years? Previously, Magic Armor Masters rarely held the top spot consecutively, and two-time consecutive tops are rare.

Some Magic Armor Masters have reappeared on the list after several years, but Li Xiu is the only one to achieve a three-year streak, with no second to match him.

The deepest reason those Magic Armor Masters didn't earn three-in-a-row is due to the instability of their Spiritual Sense.

Spiritual Sense is actually the mental power of the brain, which doesn't equate to intelligence; it is easily influenced by thought fluctuations.

Love, hatred, emotional turmoil, life, death, sorrow, and joy can all affect the strength of Spiritual Sense, causing it to fluctuate greatly.

Hence, few Magic Armor Masters maintain their peak Spiritual Sense every year, often being defeated by those with similarly strong Spiritual Sense and Magic Armor Control, but better conditions.

Ultimately, it's because their brain's mental power isn't strong enough to surpass their opponents by a level.

Li Xiu lacks both of these failure factors.

His Spiritual Sense never fluctuates, because his absolute order allows him to control his Spiritual Sense to the desired level. As long as he doesn't want it to fluctuate, it remains like a straight line.

As for the strength of Spiritual Sense, up to now, Li Xiu himself has no idea of its true limit.

Once Spiritual Sense becomes strong enough, it can reach a ceiling, the reason why many S-Class Magic Armor Masters' Spiritual Sense is similar. They've reached that ceiling point and can't become stronger, hence all are quite similar, whoever is in a better state wins.

Li Xiu, however, can cross that ceiling and continue to increase his Spiritual Sense strength.

Each time he crosses the line, it makes Li Xiu feel very uncomfortable, not physically, but psychologically.

Crossing that line, Li Xiu feels that his emotions grow increasingly dull, losing interest in everything, sometimes he feels more like a robot, increasingly lacking humanity.

Fortunately, no Magic Armor in this world requires him to cross the line to activate, so Li Xiu rarely goes beyond the line.

Today is different; Li Xiu must break the mental time loop to exit here.

As Li Xiu closed his eyes, it felt as if a string in his brain snapped.

In the next moment, Li Xiu opened his eyes, but his sharply contrasting black-white eyes showed no black pupils, only white eyeballs.

Even more eerie, a white thin line appeared on his brow, seeming to emit light from beneath the skin and bone.

Upon closer look, one might think a closed vertical eye of white light had grown on his forehead.

Despite pupil-less sight, Li Xiu could see everything in the room clearly, even the sensations he had lost returned, yet he observed the room coldly, his expression remained unchanged.

Then, with a thought, time seemed to speed up rapidly.

Of course, this speeding of time was merely a feeling within his mind, time itself wasn't accelerated, just that Li Xiu personally felt time had sped up.

After breaking through that line, Li Xiu realized a problem with his brain.

Contrary to his previous judgment, it wasn't infinite mental time looping, but rather his brain's sense of time had been slowed down incredibly.

Thus, one second felt as if a long time had passed in his brain's perception.

Since the trial had slowed the perception of time, by speeding it up in his brain, he naturally counteracted the trial's effects.

Li Xiu adjusted his brain's sense of time back to normal, yet still didn't see the trial's end prompt, so he slightly sped it up again.

In Li Xiu's mind, it was only a flicker of time, but in reality, three days passed, and the light screen finally emerged again, announcing the end of the S-Class trial, randomly generating.

Li Xiu roughly calculated that with the trial's brain time perception, he would endure a billion years internally.

Whether anyone could endure a billion years without breaking or committing suicide, Li Xiu didn't know, but he wasn't interested in wasting a billion years there.

The reward appeared on the light screen; surprisingly, despite being an S-Class trial, the screen showed only one reward.

An entrance ticket, such a challenging S-Class trial, with only an entrance ticket as a reward.

Li Xiu had adjusted his brain's sense of time back to normal, his Spiritual Sense gradually receding and weakening, his black pupils returned, the white line between his brows vanished. Though his body appeared to be back to normal, his facial expression was somewhat indifferent, completely unconcerned with any other rewards, directly choosing the entrance ticket reward. One entrance ticket sufficed for him, as he initially came for it.

The half-red, half-blue ticket projected before Li Xiu, transforming into a vortex, pulling him in.

Copper Lamp, stone table, no Metal Coffin, apparently only Sea Heaven Trial Ground had Metal Coffins, none were seen at other Trial Grounds.

Through the Dark Mirror, Li Xiu clearly saw another item on the stone table, upon understanding its form, Li Xiu couldn't help but pause slightly.

#### Chapter 209 Evil Spirit Token

On the table, there was only a card the size of a playing card, standing upright on the stone table without any support.

The card was black, with a red pattern on one side and a blue pattern on the other.

The red pattern was a red human figure, and the blue pattern was a blue human figure.

Both human figure patterns had the same posture; the lines outlined a simple human form with distribution resembling blood vessels inside.

However, the intricate network of lines inside was somewhat different, and one was red-lined while the other was blue-lined.

"What is this?" Li Xiu was somewhat puzzled as he looked at the card, unsure what kind of contract this was.

Time was short, so Li Xiu couldn't think too deeply. He reached out to grab the card, intending to take it up and then figure it out.

He jumped directly onto the table, bent down, and grasped the card with both hands, trying to pull it up with all his might like pulling a carrot.

Yet the card stood firmly without moving, surprising Li Xiu slightly.

His current physical strength was not what it used to be; even without using any skills, his physical strength could reach the level when he was holding the Blood Pattern Revolver. He couldn't even make the card budge slightly, indicating it was far heavier than the Blood Pattern Revolver.

Without hesitation, Li Xiu activated the S-grade Blood Boil, gripped the card, gritting his teeth, and continued pulling upward, yet there was no response—the card was terrifyingly heavy.

He confidently used Super Exciting, doubling his strength, which greatly enhanced his physical attributes; his fingers gripping the card were almost deforming due to overexertion, and his cheeks quivered.

He felt the card seemed to move a bit, but it did not leave the table—as if a strong magnet was holding it beneath.

Li Xiu's teeth were nearly crushed from clenching them, and the card only slid a distance on the table, never able to leave the surface.

Li Xiu released his grip, gradually taking deep breaths; the Super Exciting effect had made his scalp tingle.

"My physical strength has reached the limit before I became a Trial Taker, yet I can't pick it up. Could it be that this contract can only be obtained by those who have truly become Trial Takers?" Li Xiu was unwilling to give up, drawing out his Fire Lotus Sword from his waist, and cutting a line on his finger, letting the blood drip onto the card.

When taking the Blood Pattern Revolver earlier, his blood seemed to make the revolver lighter once dropped onto it; perhaps it would work on this card too.

Once the blood dropped onto the card, it immediately disappeared, and the red and blue lines on the card seemed to brighten somewhat.

Li Xiu noticed and tried again, feeling it seemed somewhat lighter, yet he still couldn't pick it up.

Thus, Li Xiu resolutely cut his palm, wiped blood directly onto the card, then gripped the card with both hands and pulled upward with all his might.

The card slowly lifted off the table, and both the red and blue lines simultaneously lit up, appearing as if two transparent figures were glowing red and blue inside.

Before Li Xiu could react, the red and blue lights on the card flowed into his left and right hands, and the card disappeared without a trace.

Li Xiu felt scorching heat flowing from his left hand into his body, as if he was being burned by a fierce fire.

Meanwhile, a chilling cold flowed from his right arm into his body, making him feel like he'd plunged into an ice cellar centuries old.

The two energies each traversed their paths within his body, allowing Li Xiu to experience what was known as the sensation of ice and fire, the ninth heaven.

Finally, the icy and fiery energies rushed into his heart simultaneously, and then everything vanished, with a surge of information flooding into Li Xiu's brain.

Li Xiu: Trial Taker.

Level: E.

Primordial Embryo Quality: 1.

Symbiotic Contract: Evil Spirit Token (Brilliant E-grade).

Symbiotic Talent: Twin Souls.

Parasitic Contract: Fire Lotus Sword (Dazzling E-grade), Dark Mirror (Resplendent E-grade).

Trial Skill: Blood Boil (E) Blood Boil (S) Fly's Eye (C) Super Exciting (S) Dark Curse (E-grade) Black Death Pupil (E-grade, growth potential)

Trial Talent: Ice Heart (S) Night Pupil (E) Heart (A) Undying (B-grade, growth potential) Unfazed (D-grade, growth potential).

Spirits: Demigod Shana (Brilliant E-grade), Love God Shooter (Resplendent E-grade), Pink Nightmare (Dazzling B-grade), Jedi Knight (C-grade), Masked Emperor (Resplendent D-grade), etc...

Many things previously unclear became straightforward in this moment in Li Xiu's mind.

Without acquiring a Symbiotic Contract, one isn't a Trial Taker, not even qualified for training; after becoming a Trial Taker, the body can be called a Primordial Embryo, meaning raw material.

In trials, constantly training the Primordial Embryo is akin to forging steel, strengthening the body progressively—that's the path a Trial Taker walks.

To enhance the Primordial Embryo Quality, essentially the physical ability, there are two paths: one is to enhance physical ability through the Trial Ground, the other is to augment oneself and the Symbiotic Contract's capabilities.

How to enhance the Symbiotic Contract's capabilities depends on the Symbiotic Talent.

Different contracts will have varied methods due to differing talents; however, they generally cannot deviate from energy.

Chapter 210 Evil Spirit Token\_2

Things that can provide energy to a Symbiotic Contract are probably just those few types, like Demon Cores, Gems, and the like, depending on which one the Symbiotic Contract needs.

Li Xiu's Symbiotic Contract is called the Evil Spirit Token, and the Symbiotic Talent is Twin Souls, a talent that both Li Xiu and the Evil Spirit Token now share.

In other words, whatever the Evil Spirit Token needs to level up, Li Xiu also needs the same things to increase his level, and their energy is shared. Whoever absorbs it, it's essentially the same, indistinguishable from each other.

After researching the Twin Souls talent, Li Xiu's expression became peculiar.

Li Xiu originally thought the Evil Spirit Token would require Ruby and Sapphire to upgrade, but it seems that's not the case now.

The Twin Souls talent doesn't need any gemstones to grow, but it requires another Symbiotic Contract.

Normally, a Trial Taker can only have one Symbiotic Contract, but after acquiring the Twin Souls talent, Li Xiu can have one more Symbiotic Contract. Combined with the Evil Spirit Token, he now has two Symbiotic Contracts.

But the Evil Spirit Token as a Symbiotic Contract seems to be completely useless, except for providing the Twin Souls talent to Li Xiu; it has no other abilities.

The growth of the Evil Spirit Token completely relies on another Symbiotic Contract and the energy Li Xiu provides to it.

"Isn't this thing just a parasite?" Li Xiu felt like he was dealing with a parasite.

Not to mention being parasitized by a Demon Spirit within his body, now there's another parasitic-like contract, plus the Godslayer Shrine entangled with him, Li Xiu wondered if he had done many wrongs in his past life, and these are the debtors from then.

Fortunately, the Twin Souls talent allows Li Xiu to contract one more Symbiotic Contract, which is a blessing amidst misfortune.

Although he will have to search other Trial Grounds for contracts, at least now he is truly a Trial Taker, and his physical attributes can continue to improve.

What puzzled Li Xiu was why he completed the Symbiotic Contract as soon as he picked up the Evil Spirit Token, without any prompt or choice from the voice.

Once he became a true Trial Taker, Li Xiu immediately felt a lightness all over, and the weight of the Dark Mirror and the Fire Lotus Sword on him suddenly dropped to a level he could easily carry, no longer a burden to Li Xiu.

"Hey, shouldn't you take me to the Land of Trial now," Li Xiu shouted at the Copper Lamp.

But the Copper Lamp did not respond at all, puzzling Li Xiu, as everything here seemed peculiar, unlike any place he had been before.

Li Xiu reached out to grab the Copper Lamp. Though heavy in hand, it was within a normal range. He held the Copper Lamp as he circled the stone table, walking towards the darkness ahead.

Bang!

After taking just a few steps, he felt he collided with something, almost breaking his nose. Upon careful inspection, he found a stone wall in front of him, with no path leading to the Land of Trial.

The light of the Copper Lamp seemed unable to illuminate, and after Li Xiu threw it to the ground, its flame extinguished by itself.

Then Li Xiu felt darkness before his eyes, and when light reappeared, he was already in front of the Gate of Purgatory.

"You finally came out!" Chu Jun was overjoyed upon seeing Li Xiu.

Li Xiu had been inside for over three days, longer than the previous two who came out, which terrified Chu Jun.

He waited here with a glimmer of hope, and it really paid off.

"I'm fine, just delayed a bit inside," Li Xiu said with a smile.

"How was it inside? Can I go in and have a look?" Seeing Li Xiu come out unharmed, neither insane nor dumb, Chu Jun was suddenly curious.

"Better not go in. I'll explain in detail after we return," Li Xiu replied, noticing soldiers nearby on guard, and shook his head.

Chu Jun knew this wasn't a place to talk, so he pulled Li Xiu to leave.

"You really scared me. Three days, not a single person out—I thought you wouldn't come out either..." Chu Jun said as they walked.

Li Xiu turned to look at the tightly closed Gate of Purgatory, feeling an indescribable strangeness. This Trial Ground was indeed odd, different from the Sea Heaven Trial Ground.

As Li Xiu and Chu Jun walked out, the soldiers and officers guarding the Gate of Purgatory looked at him strangely.

They had seen many who entered the Gate of Purgatory never to come out again, but very few survived, and Li Xiu was the only one who could walk out like a normal person.

The bus had already been driven away by an official who assumed Li Xiu had died inside, and without the patience to wait, he returned to Red Sand City first.

The officer found a jeep and had a soldier drive Li Xiu and Chu Jun back.

After the two left, the officer quickly dialed a phone number.

"Are you sure he's completely normal?" An elderly man, who appeared somewhat emaciated, sat on a sofa, with a young woman kneeling at his feet serving him.

After hearing the officer's report, the old man's murky eyes gradually brightened somewhat.

"Yes, sir. I even spoke with him briefly, and he seemed very normal," the officer quickly replied.

"Understood. Keep a close watch on the Gate of Purgatory, and don't let anyone near it," the Red Sand City Lord hung up the phone and muttered to himself, "To come out unscathed, how did he accomplish it?"