

## Wow 621

Chapter 621: Thousands of people, thousands of faces!\_2

"Pfft!"

The sword light, as white as snow, shredded the intertangled and wriggling intestines before it.

The throne made of bones collapsed, with only the mortal who challenged the gods offering up the sword blade that slaughtered the divine.

The heart flow surged into a frenzy!

"Bang!"

"Bang!"

"Bang!"

Blood and flesh flew everywhere, the sweet, putrid smell of blood nearly pervading every inch of space within the castle.

The heart flow spread Bai E's strike across the entire field. Faced with the strongest strike that bore all of Bai E's abilities, those fragile shadows burst like bubbles upon contact, instantly disintegrating.

Damage from the shadows seemed to significantly affect their true form as well; with all shadows shattering in an instant, the true body of the great demon "Thousand Faces, Thousand Forms" also trembled momentarily.

[The soul-devouring demonic blade has absorbed a small amount of the target's essence, special attack effect upgrade in progress 2850/3000.]

However, such slaughter seemed to bring the opponent even greater pleasure from the so-called "abuse."

When faced with another sword strike from Bai E, the spire-like body covered in countless arms opened its embrace, as if waiting for the attack to descend.

[Your attack successfully hit the target. Under the effect of some peculiar rule, the target's health points +100.]

Feeling the intensity of Bai E's lash, the demon body covered in countless faces revealed endless sounds of ecstatic groans.

Seeing this, Bai E promptly stopped the rhythm of his attack.

He had encountered such a monster for the first time, and the combat information he had acquired so far was popping up one ability after another.

Only after discovering them could he read the specific explanations of these abilities.

Before the opponent relied on the same abilities in combat, he could only plan his fight based on his own reactions.

In the instant his consciousness became clear, the frenzied state that had surged through Bai E invisibly dissipated from his body.

"..."

Bai E slightly paused, and instantly, he discerned the demon's intentions.

This was its purpose!

This kind of demon seemed to possess a wealth of relevant experience against his particular abilities, deploying powers with extreme targeted effectiveness.

"Damn it!"

As they watched the War God of the military district fall into confusion under the endless abilities of "Thousand Faces, Thousand Forms," the spiritual energy users outside instantly grew anxious.

"Thousand Faces, Thousand Forms" possessed the most unique abilities.

War demons are fierce, and desire demons are strange.

Demons are the most special beings, the greatest enemies of mankind.

The more powerful the demon, the less people should know about it.

The more one knows about a demon's detailed information, the easier it is for them to hear the evil whispers of temptation from the demon.

Are some of the dark thoughts that flash through one's mind the result of demonic temptation? Who can really tell?

Therefore, information lockdown on high-level demons is also a strategic policy adopted by humanity in their battle against demons.

However, this also means... when humanity's lower ranks encounter these demons, their understanding of the target's specific abilities is extremely limited.

Those present did not know how many powers "Thousand Faces, Thousand Forms" had displayed in that battle, nor the specific effects and weaknesses of each power. Regarding "Thousand Faces, Thousand Forms," they only knew one thing—

The answer lies on the surface of the mystery.

The name "Thousand Faces, Thousand Forms" itself is the greatest exposition of its abilities!

However, their anxiety was of no use; even if they knew in detail every characteristic of "Thousand Faces, Thousand Forms," at this moment, it was difficult to get information to Bai E through the barrier of the void.

"You can't lose!" Aglaya clenched her fists tightly, determined to impart all the knowledge of spiritual energy in the city to Bai E as soon as he emerged.

Such an exceptional talent was the opportunity bestowed by the universe for the empire to reunite once more.

In comparison to his radiance, even Morphie and Kiro Lan by his side seemed a step behind.

After all, facing such a greater demon, Morphie on the same side could hardly launch an offensive at all but could only protect Kiro Lan as they huddled in a corner, continuing to trace the Array.

Lines of light and shadow were drawn, the luminous lines imbued with spiritual energy gradually occupying half of the wall in the first-floor hall.

Bai E didn't think that the outcome of the battles between the great demons could fully affect the final outcome.

Only the Demon-Expelling Grand Array that she had engraved could truly save the fallen castle from the high-dimensional space!

However, as more and more black breaths were devoured, Kiro Lan's condition grew increasingly strange.

As Spiritual Energy ebbed and flowed, the aura fluctuated in strength.

Morphie, who stood guard with his sword at her side, could do nothing but watch as Kiro Lan pressed almost her entire weight on the carving knife in her hand, her face pale as gold leaf, her arm trembling slightly.

"This is too forced!" Morphie frowned deeply, wanting several times to forcefully stop Kiro Lan's actions, but hesitating to reach out his hand and then pulling back.

He knew Kiro Lan's temperament; if he forcibly interrupted her at this time, she would hate him for a lifetime...

"You are paying with your combat experience to comprehend and memorize the array that the target has depicted..."

"Target successfully completes a node, node record +1."

"Can you hold on?" Bai E, having just shattered a withered bone arm with a single slash, asked Kiro Lan in passing.

"Still... can!" Kiro Lan said with a pale little face, her hands pressing the carving knife forward.

No training session in the past had ever pushed her limits as much as this.

She could feel her Spiritual Body burning fiercely within the high-dimensional space.

Yet, as if the an eternal cold sun was burning close by, its brilliance concealed her own, so that until now, not a single high-dimensional demon had stretched forth its sinful claws towards her Spiritual Body.

Even though she was equipped with the protective Spiritual Energy artifacts issued by the Arbitration Place, she naturally couldn't withstand too many hits.

The War God was protecting her!

Kiro Lan was clear about this.

What she had to confront was just these black desires.

These desires, stemming from the dark side of the city, with centuries of gloomy thoughts steeped into every inch of the castle's land.

Conquer it! Conquer them!

As long as she could keep going, her level of Spiritual Energy would leap unimaginably.

As long as she could keep going!

As long as she could keep going!

"If you can, then hold on." Bai E's nearly merciless words were the last encouragement for Kiro Lan.

If not, he would at any time lead the two youngsters to cut their way out!

Even if it really came to the high-dimensional space, Bai E didn't think it would definitely be a road to certain death.

In this chaotic era, if humans truly wanted to control their own fate, relying solely on oneself was far from enough.

Seizing every opportunity to train oneself to the limit, to grow to the point where one can face any challenge, was something everyone should do.

"You are paying with your combat experience to comprehend and memorize the array that the target has depicted..."]

"Target successfully completes a node, node record +1."]

"Collection of nodes is approaching 50%, you will soon be able to deduce on your own, please keep up the good work."]

'Almost there... almost there...' Bai E occasionally glanced back at Kiro Lan with a flicker of encouraging hope in his eyes.

It's almost time.

Just a little bit more, then let me take over your duty!

...

"He really is heartless!"

"I knew it! It must be he who taught these kids to embark on such daring ventures!"

"Just because he's powerful, he recklessly thinks he can challenge everything!"

Bai E's orders to Kiro Lan, translated by those adept in lip-reading among the Spiritual Energy users, only then made everyone realize who had orchestrated this extremely adventurous operation.

However, even among the infuriated remarks, there were only those who called him arrogant, none who decried his strength.

Aglaya silently watched the struggling figure, feeling that from the character and spirit shown by the other, he didn't seem like someone arrogant and ignorant.

'Whatever trump card you have, use it quickly!'

Chapter 622: Exorcism!

"[You are paying with combat experience to understand and memorize the Array depicted by the target...]"

"[The target has successfully completed a node, record of nodes +1.]"

"[50% of nodes have been collected, you may either pay 10,000 points of combat experience to deduce the rest on your own or choose to continue observing others' demonstrations.]"

Observational learning costs far less experience than direct payment, but at this moment of life and death, Bai E simply didn't have the luxury to conserve that bit of experience.

Pay directly!

"[You have mastered all the key nodes of the Demon-Expelling Grand Array; from now on, you can set up the 'Exorcism Magic Circle' anytime and anywhere, and as long as sufficient Spiritual Energy is injected based on the situation, the Array can be activated to exert its power.]"

"Kiro Lan, that's enough."

Bai E, who had just sliced through a blast of black evil aura, suddenly said.

It was unknown what level of demon they were facing, and while in their home field, the demons' power seemed inexhaustible.

Despite continuously dealing damage to it, Bai E still couldn't see the end of its health bar.

It was as if Bai E was always facing just a void shadow, even the so-called "true body" appeared just the same.

The approach of resolving everything through combat wasn't absolutely effective against high-dimensional demons. Only the right methods could purify the original demons birthed from the world's ripples.

And right now, the "Exorcism Magic Circle" was his only option.

Upon hearing Bai E's voice, Kiro Lan's body shook, and she quickly looked in the direction of Bai E.

With a somewhat weak voice, she stubbornly responded, "I can still hold on!"

Bai E, having cut through bindings of flesh and vines, arrived in front of the two youngsters.

"Trust me, you've done everything I needed you to do."

Facing Bai E's calm and confident eyes, Kiro Lan bit her lip, her grip on the engraving knife gradually loosened.

As the engraving knife fell to the ground, her body seemed to lose all its supporting strength at the same moment.

Bai E caught the girl from behind immediately, the palm on her back transferring a warm bundle of Spiritual Energy, soothing her unsettled will.

Under the nourishment of Bai E's Spiritual Energy, Kiro Lan slowly opened her eyes, her young face filled with a heart-wrenching determination.

"I'm sorry..."

She knew that with her current capabilities, setting up a Demon-Expelling Grand Array that enveloped the entire fortress was still too much of a stretch.

Her earlier statement was just bravado.

Bai E probably noticed she was running on empty, which is why he comforted her and suggested she give up.

Right now... the lord might be planning to abandon this place, right?

Making a decision that goes against his nature...

"It's okay, leave the rest to me." Bai E gave her a gentle smile, then turned to shout at Morphie, "Morphie, protect Kiro Lan."

"Got it!" Hearing that Bai E was willing to let him take Kiro Lan and leave first, Morphie felt a bit excited, yet also a bit resentful.

If he knew the task was impossible to complete, he shouldn't have taken the risk. Why wait until everyone was in poor condition before thinking of running? What if there was an unforeseen event and they couldn't escape?

A fallen castle, let it fall into a high-dimensional space then.

According to his original thought, if he took Bai E and left, wouldn't everything be taken care of?

As for whether the city lord would hold them accountable because his son died... that was a matter for later.

Considering the potential they had shown, the city wouldn't move against them.

As long as you're alive, anything is possible.

Is there anything more important than staying alive?

What about the other survivors who might still be alive inside the castle?

Important? What do they have to do with them?

'This decision should have been made earlier.'

"Let's go!"

Bai E took the lead, his sword cleaving through the demons.

Once Bai E exited the state of "Fervent Emergence," the spire-like monster split into endless copies again.

The screen filled with attacks was dizzying, only the sword light spinning like a ball of light protected the surroundings.

The Spiritual Energy practitioners in the outer area grew excited at this turn of events.

"He's finally come to his senses!"

"Exactly! They should've run when they couldn't beat them."

"As long as they can get out, it's okay. Even if Weslin dies, it's not the end of the world, but these two cannot afford to have any accidents."

People always make compromises.

When the whole team was at risk of downfall, the death of a Weslin seemed somehow acceptable.

"No! He doesn't seem to have given up on Weslin."

As the changes inside the fortress unfolded, everyone's eyes widened.

Bai E, having fought through a host of demons, took back Weslin from Dai Lian and the others, covered the rear by himself, and threw Weslin to Morphie, "Take him and go!"

"My lord?" Morphie was taken aback and looked at Bai E, confusion filling his eyes.

The lord's intent was clear, sacrifice himself to let them escape with Weslin.

Despite Morphie's difficulty accepting that Kiro Lan had always regarded the lord as more important than her own life, the thought of having to part from the lord forever was filled with unwillingness and sorrow.

"Come with us!" With one arm holding Weslin's limp body, Morphie looked at Bai E's silhouette, trying to retain the lord with his plea, "The city lord won't do anything to us!"

"My lord..." Kiro Lan, too weak to say much, simply called out softly.

She knew that once the lord made up his mind, it was irrevocable; nobody else could change it by even a smidgen.

But...

Bai E, sword in hand, had an endless array of bloody tendrils reaching out behind him.

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On his face was still the same confident and calm smile as always, "It's just a bit of a predicament, I will lead them out of here. Weslin's condition isn't right, you guys take him and go first. I promise you, I'll come back!"

The spiritual energy adept who was good at lip-reading repeated word for word what Bai E said to the two children.

Together with Bai E's actions, this fact was crystal-clearly displayed before everyone's eyes.

"He's not leaving?!"

"And he still chose to bring Weslin out in the end?"

For a time, everyone's hearts were filled with mixed emotions.

If Bai E had just died straightforwardly at the start, then there would naturally be no controversy over the choice between him and Weslin.

Yet this War God of the military district wasn't just the pillar of their military; even on the battlefield against demons, he had displayed unimaginably terrifying strength.

It also caused a sliver of indecision that shouldn't have existed to rise in everyone's hearts.

But now...

This War God of the military district, who had showcased his personal strength and charisma, still chose to sacrifice himself for Weslin at the last moment...

Only one of the two little ones could be taken away; when Weslin was brought out, the remaining people could only die inside.

There was even no chance left to turn the tables.

One could only say that the thought imprint of artificial humans is terrifying indeed.

"Didn't he say he had a way?" Some officers were confusedly voicing their doubts.

Watching Bai E fight against the great demon inside, this officer, who had immersed himself in the fight against demons, found his first semblance of faith.

Believers can do anything!

"What could he possibly do?" An older officer laughed helplessly, his smile tragic.

"Buzz!"

A dazzling white light flashed through the twisted barrier.

Morphie, holding a longsword and leading the way, struggled to crawl out of the gap, and Kiro Lan, who had been providing support, also staggered out.

Weslin's limp body was thrown to the ground, and the myriad officers from the Arbitration Place rushed over to tend to him as they noticed the commotion.

Morphie fiercely drove his battle blade into the ground before him, his face full of unwillingness.

If Bai E died in there like this, then he could never surpass Bai E's image in Kiro Lan's heart for a lifetime!

The last bit of Kiro Lan's strength was completely drained, and returning to the present world from that spiritually energetic interlayer made it feel as if the last bit of supporting power had left her already threadbare spiritual energy.

Lying on the ground, she looked at the parallel ground with a look of despair in her eyes, a cold and silent stillness.

"Quick, save him! Save him!"

On Weslin's body, faint tentacles could already be seen writhing around, a typical sign of demonic corruption.

If they didn't address it quickly, the Lord's Son who was hardly brought back to the present world would still be treated as a fallen demon.

In the midst of a chaotic panic, only Aglaya's calm eyes continued to stare at everything inside the castle.

Seeing the only likely savior sent by the Arbitration Place truly leave, even those inside who had always been protected completely despaired.

However, the leader who made all the decisions seemed not to have given up resistance because of this.

Bai E, who was being chased by endless fleshly tentacles and black miasma, did not attack the great demon itself as he had done before.

Through the long process of combating demons, he should have learned the special characteristics of this great demon by now.

A thousand faces for a thousand people... in addition to a thousand abilities, it also has a thousand lives!

This was why the great demon was so hard to kill.

Aglaya knew everything but could not actively disseminate this detailed knowledge.

Within a short time, Bai E could not possibly clear these thousand lives.

His purpose... lay elsewhere.

"Swish, swish, swish!"

The sparks struck by the sword tip against the wall flashed past in her eyes, and bright trails of light moved along the curious patterns infused with spiritual energy.

Aglaya, suddenly hit by a terrifying possibility, truly lost her composure for the first time, her eyes wide open and her whole body trembling in shock.

'He wouldn't...'

'He wouldn't...'

'How could that be possible!'

Her mind was in turmoil.

She had thought of countless possible responses Bai E might choose, but she had never considered this utterly impossible possibility!

"Lady Aglaya! Kiro Lan and Morphie are unharmed!" The children's tutor rushed to bring the good news as soon as he discovered the kids were fine. However, noticing that something was off with Aglaya, he called out softly with curiosity, "My lady? My lady?"

After calling out twice without a response, the tutor finally followed Aglaya's gaze towards the barrier that everyone had deemed a hopeless situation.

At a glance, there was a new, warm stone sculpture in place.

"Shushushushu!"

Sparks flew!

On the hard castle walls, the sword tip danced like a dragon.

The Spiritual Energy infused within it was like a capricious dragon-snake, leaving behind mysterious and magnificent patterns on the walls.

The Exorcism Magic Circle lines, which were difficult for Kiro Lan to manifest, now seemed like merely a few simple words under Bai E's hand.

An endless stream of black aura poured into Bai E's body along the blade, yet not a single abnormal reaction could be seen on that ever-expressionless face.

"Shushushushu!"

It seemed that the great demon, sensing Bai E's intent, became even more frenzied in its assault.

Yet, as the Longsword swept across the walls, Bai E managed to block every attack from the demon.

The speed of the Longsword's swings was so fast it seemed inconceivable that attention could be divided, as if two sides were engaging simultaneously.

So rapid that the Array could not even discern if the tracing of the lines had ever been interrupted.

In the flurry of sword movements to the front, back, left, and right, there emerged a sense of utmost beauty as if it were a dance.

"What, what, what... what is he doing?"

More and more people began to notice everything that was happening inside the barrier.

The sword light, pure as snow, continued to glitter, leaving behind walls aglow with luminous patterns.

Patterns infused with magical power flickered like breaths, and a peculiar aura that could be felt even through the impenetrable Void Barrier touched everyone's hearts.

"What is that?"

"Is that... an Exorcism Magic Circle?"

"It looks a bit like it..."

Most of the people here had never seen a real Exorcism Magic Circle, but just moments ago Kiro Lan had demonstrated it in front of them all.

"He studied the Exorcism Magic Circle too?"

"Is he also from the Arbitration Place?"

Endless speculations instantly arose.

Aglaya and the tutor exchanged a silent glance filled with a glimmer of shock.

The Exorcism Magic Circle was a closely guarded secret of the Arbitration Place... Of course, it wasn't that they didn't want to teach it, but rather that there were simply too few capable of learning it.

They would have wished for everyone to learn it, ideally even a demon to expel itself. That would have been the best possible outcome.

But the reality was that nobody could.

Every Spiritual Energy wielder who could learn the Demon-Expelling Grand Array was a precious gem to them.

Bai E's name had never been among them.

In fact, before Helen's research came out, no one even knew this warrior possessed Spiritual Energy.

So the only answer was...

'Kiro Lan had used it in front of him just now...'

And he hadn't even used the complete form!

Realizing this, Aglaya felt a darkness looming before her eyes.

Only at this moment did she recognize just how ludicrous her initial decision had been.

But what followed was a tide of joy enough to sweep everything away.

Thankfully he had learned the Exorcism Magic Circle, and fortunately, this formidable warrior was not an enemy of humanity and bore significant goodwill towards people.

Sword Dance, Dragon Snake!

In just a short while, the walls on the first floor of the castle were covered with mysterious and magnificent patterns carrying a mystical aura.

An infinite Spiritual Energy flowed in cycles within them, a vast aura like tidal waves purifying the entire space progressively.

Just a bit more...

Just enough Spiritual Energy was needed to fully unleash this cleansing tide!

Bai E stood at the focal point of the Array, his Longsword swinging to ward off the evil spirit, now placed behind him, as an endless flow of Spiritual Energy gathered in the palm of his hand.

Kneeling on one knee, his will already connected with the Array, he drew in a tumultuous surge of Spiritual Energy, the bright light nearly submerging Bai E completely...

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Spiritual Energy was being extracted so violently that even through the twisted barrier, people outside could imagine a thing or two.

To drive such a powerful Array, the required Spiritual Energy was immense beyond imagination.

The lowest historical requirement to drive an Array in Blackwater City demanded Spiritual Energy of the third order.

This was the real reason everyone thought the plan was unfeasible from the start.

Even with his exceptional talent, Kiro Lan couldn't possibly have broken through to the second order just recently and then make another breakthrough to the third order in the midst of this calamity.

The will of the soul could not withstand such a terrifying impact.

However, what no one had anticipated was that this artificial human War God, who had never before displayed the slightest inkling of Spiritual Energy talent, could easily supply it.

"Is it... done?"

"How can he possess such vast Spiritual Energy?"

The powerful gleam of Spiritual Energy penetrated everything, no longer confined within the barrier.

The supreme power of the Array even pierced through the isolation of the barrier, enveloping the entire location of the castle within it.

When the Array was fully activated, waves of purifying white light swept over the space where the castle stood from the Spiritual Energy level.

The endless dark aura was forced out like mites being squeezed from the skin, emerging from every inch of the castle's walls.

And under the blazing white light, it melted like snow under the sun, leaving not a single trace of its existence.

The tentacles and flesh that had been proliferating wantonly on the walls of the castle also vanished inch by inch until finally, all that remained was a clear and clean ancient castle.

The barrier that excluded everything flickered in and out of visibility, and at a moment when no one was conscious of it, the barrier suddenly vanished.

The surviving humans who belatedly realized this, upon regaining their senses, saw the Arbitration Place's enforcers who were nearly "within arm's reach" standing guard outside.

"Quick, save them!"

Upon receiving the command, the enforcers nearly surged into the castle.

The grand demon "Thousand Faces," whose projections had filled the entire castle hall, also completely disappeared under the cleansing force of the Array.

What remained was only the silhouette of its main body.

However, as the castle began to depart from the higher-dimensional space and return to the real world, the silhouette of the great demon also flickered in and out of existence, as if about to vanish at any moment.

A great demon unsupported by the rules of higher-dimensional space could not manifest in the real world without a substantial sacrifice of humans.

Yet the greed for the real world is etched into the instinct of every demon; "Thousand Faces" let out a series of silent roars that shook the heart, and every creature that "heard" it felt their souls tremble endlessly, gradually drifting away from their bodies.

Lower-ranking enforcers only felt their arms and lips numbing from the vibration, while those ordinary survivors who had been protected by War God Bai E inside the castle seemed to experience no discomfort at all.

Only at this moment did they truly understand, even without mentioning his combat strength, just how powerful War God Bai E's protection over those around him was.

It's difficult enough to be strong oneself, but even harder to protect those around you.

"Stay focused, don't let it snatch your soul! Hold on, it won't last much longer," the instructor roared.

This was "Thousand Faces"' massive group attack tactic on living beings.

If the soul was shaken out of the body, it would be captured and taken to the higher-dimensional space, to become another lowly grunt in the army of desire.

The rules of the real world were rapidly expelling the great demon, but amid the endless trembling, already some people couldn't help but clutch their heads as if they could see their own bodies...

"Swish!"

The cold sword light tore through the silent roars, and the great demon "Thousand Faces" let out one last scream from the depths of everyone's heart, filled with joy and yet tainted with unwillingness and pain.

"Whoosh!"

The raging suction once again acted upon everyone's souls!

"Swoosh! Swoosh!"

Two insubstantial shadows flashed by right in front of Bai E, heading towards the vortex at the center of where "Thousand Faces" was disappearing.

Realizing this, Bai E instinctively reached out, but some innate trait was a step faster.

"Hiss~"

The last thing thrown towards Bai E from the vortex seemed to be a pair of eyes filled with an eerie charm of desire.

The great demon, unable to snatch anything from the real world through Bai E's hands, was filled with resentful unwillingness, and a deep craving for Bai E's very existence.

"Phew~"

With the real disappearance of the great demon, everyone on site finally relaxed a little.

This great demon's past feats were quite exaggerated; at first within the barrier, it seemed helpless in front of Bai E, leading them to believe that the recently revived "Thousand Faces" had already lost its former terrifying dominion.

However, after manifesting in the real world, a mere minor ability shook many souls out of their bodies in an instant, making them realize the great demon's power was still terrifying.

Even more terrifying, however, was simply the power of War God Bai E of the military district.

"Check the castle! Search for any other survivors!"

They could only see survivors on the first floor within the archway's view, but within the many levels of the entire castle, who knew if there were any other survivors.

This intense external erosion differed from the voluntary plunge of humans; the invasion of demonic aura into humans resembled a kind of corrosion from the outside in.

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If discovered quickly, there's still a chance to save people.

And even those individuals who can't be saved... For example, low-level demonic grunts like "Lust Slaves" need to be cleared out as soon as possible.

It's to prevent these demons from taking the opportunity to hide, thereby infiltrating human society.

"Thousand Faces" such powerful demons can't exist in the real world without sacrifices or other special circumstances. However, low-level demons won't be repelled by the laws of reality, and there are certainly more of these low-level demons on the other floors.

"Wait a moment!" Morphie, who had been watching everything, suddenly tensed and remembered something.

"The auction house!"

The Thousand Faces are the Thousand Faces, but the situation at the auction house doesn't seem to stem from the same source.

"There's also a special situation there, one that Kiro Lan and I find difficult to deal with. You'd better be careful!"

"Understood, rest up for now!" The instructor soothed Morphie, then turned and led by example, heading toward the interior of the castle and up the stairs.

The castle had returned to the real world, and even demons as powerful as the "Thousand Faces" had been repelled back into higher-dimensional space by the realities of this world. Therefore, the only demons that could remain were either common foot soldiers or they couldn't stay at all.

Morphie's concerns might not be necessary.

But to prevent the presence of elite demons that fall between the foot soldiers and the powerful, he still took the lead, aiming to minimize the casualties among the regular enforcers.

Bai E also appeared concerned about the survivors that had come out with him and moved closer to the players, such as Dai Lian.

"Where's Kuang Xin?"

The voice of spiritual communication penetrated directly into their minds; Gong Yan, being uniquely gifted with this technique, softly replied, "Still at the auction venue."

Not dead?

Bai E nodded his head as a sign that he understood.

The players had only appeared at the end, which meant they must have been in the auction house all along, trying to rescue their comrades.

That Morphe and Kiro Lan could reach them probably meant they had entered the auction house's domain after breaking through the barrier.

But now, even Morphie said that place had something troublesome, potentially as threatening as that spire-shaped monster.

At this thought, Bai E took the initiative to approach a man who was overseeing everything and seemed to be the leader from the Arbitration Place.

However, a woman with tall stature, blue-purple hair, and wearing a grey-white coat suddenly blocked his path.

"General Bai, I am Aglaya, you should remember me." The newcomer's face bore a gentle smile.

As a core figure in the Spiritual Power Managers Center, which oversees all the spiritual energy users in the city, even Weslin, the regional marshal, was cautious and eager to please her.

However, when facing Bai, the regional general, Aglaya's demeanor was exceptionally gentle.

In any place, strength is the foundation of status.

Moreover, a natural basis for friendship existed between them, with the connection of Kiro Lan and Morphie.

"Thanks to you for this incident, otherwise this castle would undoubtedly have been erased from the map."

Having a piece taken out of the real world is far less trivial spoken than done.

The consequences of a large area of the castle suddenly vanishing... would be the surrounding space rushing in like water.

The overall effect wouldn't be like a water cistern that's been scooped out and lowered by a layer, but more like diluted air.

It would still fill the "space" that should have been there, just at a decreased density.

This drop in density on the scale of the entire universe wouldn't even amount to a fraction of a billionth of a billionth of a billionth, yet the impact on the real world would undeniably be permanent and negative, meaning the force of the laws governing the entire real world would be weakened by the same proportion.

Of course, such far-reaching effects might not be of immediate concern to the city, but the city could face even greater dangers.

Space flowed like water, and how would human architecture fare amidst it?

It would only present itself in a twisted form when influenced by the influx of space.

This predicament was far more troublesome than an earthquake.

In an earthquake, as long as the building structure was robust enough, the damage could be minimized.

But when space contorted and flowed, what talk was there of any substance's solidity?

Consider that this place was the very bottom layer of Blackwater City, an unimaginable chain reaction would be triggered by the surrounding space influx.

Unthinkable, uncontrollable, and even unpredictable.

Worse still, it could potentially affect the foundational structure of the entire city.

Aglaya, who had intended to educate Bai E on some basics of Spiritual Energy, the world, and even the laws, condensed her lengthy explanations into a few essential words with the power of Spiritual Energy, enabling Bai E to grasp her meaning.

Upon learning these details, Bai E's eyes narrowed slightly, "If not for this castle, none of this would have happened."

During the recent delineation of the Exorcism Magic Circle, he had gone through the same experiences as Kiro Lan.

Though he could ignore the corrosion his body suffered from the black mists, thanks to his various abilities, Bai E had "seen" everything that had happened in the city over the centuries within the walls of the castle, imbued with the desires of darkness...

Endless phantom shadows, like silhouettes of time, flickered before him one scene after another.

Scenes of wailing and laughter hardened Bai E's fists at times, stirring in him an urge to smash to smithereens the past happenings within the castle all the way back to their origins.

Beneath endless indulgence lay increasingly rampant hidden dangers.

Human desires have no end, and indulgence only leads them to chase after even more depraved "entertainments."

Even in a world where high-dimensional Evil Gods existed, these pleasure-seeking individuals still hoped that a cage of Mithril Refined Gold, coupled with the protection of Arbitration Place enforcers, would keep their endless desires safe.

The roots of the castle reached into every corner of the entire city, and every person aware of this place and tacitly accepting its existence without an attempt at overthrow was nourishing it.

When a mishap occurred, only the likes of Kiro Lan and Morphie, who were blissfully ignorant, qualified to carve out a path of resistance against everything.

If a similar event were to occur again, would anyone be able to survive?

And if he had known of the castle's existence beforehand and momentarily lacked the capital to overturn it, would he not also become one of those silently supplying power to its presence?

After this battle, Bai E felt an even greater dread of those high-dimensional demons.

Even a momentary weakness of compromise could become a channel for them to tear through reality.

Aglaya's gaze turned steely as she nodded solemnly to Bai E, "I assure you, such a situation will never arise again!"

After this incident, all the influential figures in the city who knew of the castle's existence would have to reassess the danger level of this place.

The Spiritual Power Managers Center and Arbitration Place would never again allow a massive loophole within the city that high-dimensional demons could exploit at any time.

"Boom!"

A massive impact suddenly emanated from the upper levels of the castle, and Bai E, who had just exchanged a few words with Aglaya, narrowed his eyes and moved instantly.

The auction house was where he had been at the start of the incident, and the three "slaves" confined with Kuang Xin could very likely be the focal point of this abnormality.

The sound of a great commotion coming from there indicated that it might be linked to the last stir caused by the three "slaves."

"What's happening? What's going on up there?" Arnold from Arbitration Place, clutching a walkie-talkie outside the castle, asked loudly into it.

Amid the "sizzling" static, only the messy sounds of collisions and the loud replies of the two junior instructors could be heard, "There's one more inside... can't identify the source!"

Upon hearing this news, Arnold's expression turned complex, instinctively looking in the direction where Bai E had been.

But in a flash, Bai E had already vanished from the spot.

Chapter 626 Evil Stare

When Bai E arrived, the battlefield was already in a fervent and intense state.

Spectral shadows flitted through the air everywhere, and even without the support of high-dimensional spatial rules, there was still a thick black fog that left visibility nearly nonexistent.

This fog affected everyone's spiritual perception and sensory realities, leaving them to grope blindly within it.

The headsets worn by everyone rapidly exchanged information, and Bai E's "Heavenly Eye" Spiritual Energy easily intercepted part of it, inserting itself into the conversation.

"Physical bombardment is ineffective; we must find the entity emitting these 'spectral souls'!"

"We must act quickly, we can't let this phenomenon spread."

"But this place has already corroded into a mix of illusion and reality, our spatial awareness is greatly distorted!"

"Ah!"

"It hurts! The damage from these spectral souls is too high!"

Many Arbitration Place enforcers were lost, including Morphie and Kiro Lan, who were unable to discern direction, leaving most ordinary enforcers to flounder helplessly.

Various forms of Spiritual Energy techniques emerged one after another, each enforcer was born with innate spiritual talent, and each talented individual had their unique Spiritual Energy attribute.

Attack, defense, support... every type of Spiritual Energy unfolded before Bai E.

Had there been time, Bai E would have liked to find a target and see if he could mimic another Spiritual Energy attribute again.

However, the immediate danger was of greater concern.

From the enforcers' communications, it was clear that even they, with all their experience, did not know the origins of the unknown high-dimensional demon driving the shadows; its presence might be even more problematic than the so-called "Thousand Faces" demon they had just encountered.

Surrounding cries of agony pierced Bai E's ears as he drew his Longsword, but as he marched straight ahead, not a single "spectral shadow" dared to attack his position.

Walking alone through the black fog, Bai E felt as though he was venturing solo into a silent, ancient forest, seemingly fraught with danger at every moment, yet never actually arriving.

The blade of law in his hand emitted rings of soft spiritual light, yet it couldn't protect any Arbitration Place enforcer present.

The target of protection had to first submit to Bai E's command, and given Bai E's display of overwhelming combat power among the previous survivors, the others naturally followed his lead.

The current enforcers were subordinates of the Arbitration Place, acting under a unified command and completely unaware of Bai E's arrival, unable to trigger the protection effect.

Fortunately, even if he couldn't protect others, the black fog still dispersed to some extent under the glow of the blade of law, and even the half-illusory, half-real factors affecting the senses receded in the glow's presence.

What laid before Bai E was nothing but a path with extremely low visibility.

Following his memory of the terrain observed at the auction earlier, Bai E found his way to the auction stage.

The three "slaves" that first displayed anomalies during the incident and Kuang Xin, who had not yet been rescued or escaped on his own, were here; Bai E was sure to check this place first.

However, as Bai E steadily approached the target point he had in mind, suddenly there came a series of thudding and roaring noises from the direction of the target.

"Bang bang bang bang bang!" The sound of fist against flesh was incessant, and getting closer one could even hear the clear roar, "Damn it, come on! Come at me again! Watch me smash you bastards to pieces!"

The voice was deep and powerful,

It was Kuang Xin!

The instant Bai E heard this voice, he was certain he was heading in the right direction.

However, just as he took a bold step forward with his sword raised, an endless black miasma seemed to swallow up everything like a whale gulping water, instantly retracting from the entire area to a central point.

The fierce suction acting upon each person's soul rendered everyone incapable of looking after themselves, only able to focus on stabilizing their souls without the capacity to be distracted by investigating further.

Bai E's longsword pierced into the ground as he coldly gazed at the center where the dark qi was swirling into.

The three figures stained with ink under Kuang Xin's fists had long since been disfigured, their vital energies wilted.

The black miasma was indeed funneling into the three figures through their mouths and noses before finally disappearing without a trace.

Kuang Xin, his body drenched in blood, slowly straightened up after laying down the last limp body, his fervent eyes swiftly scanning the surroundings as if a hungry beast in search of its next prey.

However, beset by an overwhelming sense of dizziness due to overexertion and a barrage of system notifications, Kuang Xin still felt a darkness before his eyes as the game world plunged into complete blackness.

"Damn it!"

This was Kuang Xin's last thought.

As he fell unconscious in the game, he lost all ability to act, including the capacity to perceive his surroundings.

At the same time, his real-world body also entered a deep sleep.

Unable to move, unable to speak, not even a hint of sensation.

Both worlds simultaneously slumped into a profound slumber.

Only a few pairs of malevolent eyes of different appearances gently opened in the darkness of an unknown place...

Bai E caught Kuang Xin's body as it fell towards the ground.

The surrounding officers, armed with bizarrely shaped weapons, quickly gathered around after the soul-scouring gale had passed. Yet, seeing Bai's figure, everyone's expression shifted as they respectfully stood in place and saluted, "We have seen General Bai!"

In the darkness of the black fog, it was impossible to see anything.

As the black fog receded, the fleeting clairvoyance was only able to discern that Bai E was standing right at the center of the tumultuous change.

So, it goes without saying who resolved all the unfolding calamities.

The leading instructor of all the officers approached, sword with a broad blade in hand, "General Bai, may we take the person in your hands?"

"He's also a victim," Bai E advised as he handed over Kuang Xin to them.

He had already used Spiritual Energy to examine him, and there was hardly a trace of demonic energy on Kuang Xin.

As for which direction the chaos among the players would turn their hearts, that remained an unknowable proposition.

"I understand," the instructor nodded in agreement. "We won't harm him, we just need to ensure that none of the individuals involved pose any danger to human society."

"Mm."

Bai E cast one final glance around, and finding nothing else of interest to attend to, he made his way towards the exit, intending to leave.

With matters here concluded, there was no reason for him to stay any longer.

However, the voice of Aglaya echoed directly in his mind, stopping him, "General Bai, please hold on. We would like to take a moment of your time for you to attend a meeting with us."

Chapter 627 City Council

"Sure," Bai E responded instantly.

He got into Aglaya's private car, and the two sped along, crossing the city's endless corridors, finally arriving within the city's true inner circle.

Above the ground, at the city's core... this was the real inner city.

The supreme seat of power—the City Lord's Mansion—was located here.

Golden pillars of brilliance soared into the sky, and atop the towering summits floated several copper metal spheres of varying sizes, unattached to anything substantive.

An endless stream of energy radiated from them, bringing waves of terrifying pressure to the senses attuned to Spiritual Energy.

Sitting in the car, Aglaya spoke softly, explaining to Bai E at her side, "After this incident, the city will definitely have to reconsider its stance on the castle. However, the castle involves the interests of many people, and those nobles who haven't personally experienced the difficulty of this incident might still be blinded by their own desires despite the clear explanation of the stakes. It's unknown how many are like that, and it may still come down to a vote. Now, with Weslin unconscious, as the highest-ranking officer in the military, your stance represents the entire military's attitude."

This was news she had just learned.

Normally, the military's say in such matters wasn't significant, being a simple force responsible for external enemies and not meddling in the city's affairs, big or small.

Moreover, if Weslin were in charge and the incident happened while he was outside the city, they probably wouldn't even be called.

But now, Bai E had a voice, and from his recent attitude, she knew he was a firm opponent; furthermore, Bai E had been at the scene, fully participating.

To not call him would be somewhat unreasonable.

The only thing that aroused curiosity was how Bai E's ascension to the rank of general, akin to being parachuted in, hadn't caused the slightest controversy within the military.

The news that Bai E could represent the military with full authority was something she had just learned after making contact.

"Hmm," Bai E nodded nonchalantly, remaining silent.

Aglaya, who was driving, occasionally swept her gaze over the soldier's profile beside her, her eyes filled with a strange light.

From an artificial soldier initially dismissed for his lack of Spiritual Energy talent, he had now become the absolute controller of the military's strategic forces, an All-around soldier fully endowed with Spiritual Energy. This artificial being had performed an incredible reversal that many could scarcely imagine.

The reason for summoning Bai E was not only to gain his support on the matter of the castle but also to showcase his current strength at the upcoming meeting attended by many important figures of the city and to propose the strengthening of Bai E's Spiritual Energy.

She couldn't stand idly by and let Bai E, with such powerful Spiritual Energy, waste his talents—even if his insight was unparalleled, even if he could learn the Exorcism Magic Circle by briefly observing Kiro Lan's demonstrations, he couldn't be expected to break through every situation by learning on the spot.

The decision to open all the city's precious archives to an artificial soldier was extraordinary, and even if this individual had demonstrated absolute combat dominance, utmost caution was still needed.

Moreover, if the proposal opposing the continued existence of the castle passed and Bai E made his stance clear, as a retaliation, the nobles and the forces they could influence would likely not sit idly by and allow the proposal to succeed.

Aglaya knew that the upcoming meeting might witness bloodshed of another kind.

The city's true council hall was resplendent with gold, and by the time Bai E and Aglaya arrived, the irregularly arranged seating was already filled with people.

The buzzing noise of the pre-meeting chatter filled the hall, yet when Aglaya, with Bai E in tow, made her entrance, all those sounds instantly hushed.

Since the internet had been reactivated, the world might not yet be reconnected to each other, but news within the city had become incredibly swift.

Almost immediately as the incident occurred, all the city's significant figures learned of the anomaly at the castle, and the roles of those who stood out during the chaos.

"Bai E," this name had appeared before everyone's eyes a bit too often of late.

Even those figures unconcerned with mere fighting had to take an interest in this artificial soldier who had risen like a comet.

Bai E could clearly feel the inquisitive gazes upon him, some curious, some intense, some like a breath of spring, others as fervent as flames.

Those seated here were the true powers controlling the city.

Bai E's gaze swept lightly across the audience, suddenly feeling a certain revulsion towards the task at hand.

To gain the support of at least 51% of the people here?

Did that mean he would have to stoop to consorting with them?

The end result of such collusion was to allow places like the castle to exist within the city.

Today the castle might be gone, but tomorrow another den of iniquity could arise in its stead.

The castle wasn't the essence, it was merely a phenomenon that revealed human nature.

Bai E spotted two small figures; they too had been brought here, sitting on a long bench.

"They're not here to make a stand, but to face judgment," Aglaya whispered by way of explanation.

Of course, to call it judgment wasn't that serious.

But since the two hadn't acted according to plan, they had to face some questioning.

The more prodigious their talent, the more attention must be paid to their loyalty to the city.

As Bai E calmly made his way past many seats alongside Aglaya, he looked around curiously and asked, "Where is the City Lord?"

When mentioning the city's absolute ruler, Aglaya's tone became a bit strange, "The City Lord... hasn't come. Usually, he only shows up when there are matters that threaten the city's very survival. At ordinary meetings... he comes if he wishes or absents himself if he doesn't. Even if he does come, he usually remains silent or even unseen."

"Hmm," Bai E nodded, finally taking a seat next to Aglaya in the inner circle of the front row.

"The military's seats should be over there, but since it's your first time, just sit beside me," she said.

"Yes," he replied.

An elderly man, distinguished and with silvery hair, who seemed to have been given a signal, stood up to preside over the meeting, "Alright, since everyone is here, let's discuss the changes at the castle that happened tonight—at 8:58 p.m., a disturbance occurred in the underground castle, causing it to briefly lose contact with the rest of the city."

"First, we would like to ask... Morphie, Kiro Lan, what exactly were the initial instructions you received? And thereafter, under whose directive did you undertake such risky actions?"

Chapter 628 Accountability

Morphie spoke calmly and initiated the conversation, "Our initial instruction was to escort the military marshal out of the zone, Marshal Weslin."

"Then why didn't you transfer Weslin out immediately after receiving him? Who instructed you to act beyond your orders?"

"No one instructed us." Morphie responded emotionlessly, "It's just that we felt there was still hope for saving that castle, so perhaps it was worth a try."

After spending a long time in the city center, even a child would have to possess some political savvy.

Morphie understood his and Kiro Lan's positions. Even if they took all the blame, it wouldn't have much impact on them.

Not to mention that the eventual outcome of the incident was positive.

Outcomes can justify intentions, but intentions cannot justify outcomes.

However, the inquisitive elder was relentless, determined to find an absolute scapegoat for possible future accountability, "So ultimately it was you who saved everyone in the castle?"

Morphie looked intently at the other party, his gaze sharp as a sword, "The castle was ultimately saved, but not by our own hands."

In the midst of speaking, Morphie felt a twinge of pain in his heart.

"So your actions were meaningless, right? Because of your delay, Marshal Weslin is still in a comatose state. Do you admit your guilt?"

"We do not admit guilt." Aglaya, who was sitting next to Bai E, suddenly stood up, "Their assistance played a critical role. Without their aid, General Bai E would have had a hard time liberating the entire castle."

"But who authorized them to save the castle? Lady Aglaya, you were involved throughout the process, so you must know what were the initial orders given to the two Saint Heirs? As for General Bai E..." The old man's sharp gaze then turned to Bai E, who was sitting composedly next to Aglaya, "General Bai E, please explain why you were not in the military area on guard duty, but instead entered the city secretly without orders?"

Bai E replied without emotion, "To protect the Marshal."

"Humph!" the elder snorted coldly, turning to fire at the other group, "Then what about the Arbitration Place? What role did you play in this event? Just watching from outside? Stationing so many people permanently on guard, yet completely unaware that the demons had hollowed out the interior?! Following the incident, you even appointed two utterly untrustworthy individuals for important tasks. What exactly have you been doing!?"

Aglaya, who had sat back down, stared at the elder who was speaking, and explained to Bai E in a low voice, "These people are firing all around to distribute the blame and to frame the core cause of this catastrophe as a human operational error, rather than an inherent hazard of the castle... Such malice!"

Bai E responded expressionlessly, "Thank you for the advice, Lady Aglaya."

As the person fully responsible for the Arbitration Place's action, Arnold, a man of rigid temperament, stood up furiously in response, spraying saliva, "To preserve the existence of the castle, even our own people have become the nourishment for the demons' essence. Demons are pervasive, and I had long proposed the elimination of the castle!"

"Nonsense! If you really had no means to deal with the castle, then why were two Saint Heirs sent out to take action?"

"That's because they were still in their study period, not exposed to more... to more details of the city."

"If it can be done once, it can be done twice! If the Saint Heirs you trained could enter, why couldn't others? Ultimately, it's because your talent reserves are insufficient and your contingency plans are lacking, leading to the numerous sacrifices following the castle incident!"

"To have us stationed in a place that will surely breed demons is a desecration of every officer's mission! If not for shift monitoring, we wouldn't have enough hands!"

"That's your Arbitration Place's internal resolution and has nothing to do with this matter! Guarding the castle is your entire institution's responsibility, and such a great oversight now is a result of the Arbitration Place's inefficiency!"

Arnold had bloodshot eyes and looked furious, "You have no idea what kind of opponent we faced this time!"

The grand demons have a thousand faces!

An ultra-dangerous high-dimensional demon whose mere images could erode everyone!

At the time, those present had no way to handle it, and besides the survivors in the castle, those outside were the enforcers from the Arbitration Place, who deal with demons daily and did not care about the potential risks.

However, now in the council chamber, there were plenty of high-ranking individuals without Spiritual Energy talent.

Not to mention complete corruption; even if merely one of them had been infiltrated by a demon, it could cause unimaginable disaster to the city.

The Arbitration Place has always been like this, undertaking the most dangerous and troublesome tasks in the city and always unable to make their own difficulties public due to the nature of demons.

"Let it go." An old voice arose from a corner, "I've set up a mental filter Array around the meeting place. You'll forget everything once you leave. Let it go."

Following the voice, everyone looked and saw only a young girl pushing an elderly man in a wheelchair slowly entering through the passageway.

Someone exclaimed in shock, "Judgment Chief Nolanitz!"

"How come even he was invited?"

Franca, pushing Nolanitz's wheelchair, caught sight of Bai E in the crowd and cheekily winked at him.

Chapter 629 Accountability\_2

"Yes!" Arnold seemed to have found his mainstay in an instant, excitedly agreeing.

The image was not from within the castle, but rather atop the dim ruins of a city.

The thorny flower flag flying high above the ruins reminded many of the famous city that had long vanished into history—Freedom City.

That was during the days when the empire had not yet completely fallen apart, existing in name only.

However, the moment the demon, which had devoured countless souls of the entire city, slowly emerged from the void, was also the first act of the empire's decline.

The spire-like demons were almost scattered across the entire city's ruins, endless enforcers from the Arbitration Place fearlessly launched a desperate assault against the higher-dimensional demon.

Then they fell amidst the ruins...

One after another, endlessly.

Unlike with the Bug Race or orcs, humans occasionally managed to launch a counterattack and even harbored ambitions to completely clear the opponent from the planet.

But against higher-dimensional demons, humans could only adopt the most conservative defense.

Preventing the enemy's arrival in the real world was the most common task of the enforcers.

When a demon of sufficient significance truly descended, the price humanity had to pay was bound to be extremely severe.

And when the scene switched, to the images of the inside of the castle taken from outside the twisted barrier, it was apparent.

The one that appeared inside the castle this time was the same desire-based great demon that brought painful lessons to the empire—Thousand Faces!

The nearly identical skill display, the sky full of clones including the networks of blood and flesh vines, were all signature skills of Thousand Faces.

"It's that one!"

"It has reincarnated again!"

Anyone with a slight understanding of history would not forget the scars this great demon had brought to humanity.

The ruins of Freedom City are still laid out on the land for subsequent visitors to mourn and commemorate.

But there are always those unwilling to accept their opponent's strength and by extension, acknowledge their own team's weakness, "Does looking the same mean it has the same strength? Back then, so many executors gave their lives just to narrowly defeat the physical body of the great demon in the real world. Now it can be... it can be stopped by General Bai E alone? Could it be that General Bai E's strength surpasses that of so many executors combined? Being stoppable indicates that this reincarnated great demon no longer possesses the formidable power of the past. Could the demon that almost devoured an entire city's worth of souls back then be on the same level as the one summoned by this decaying castle?"

"I truly wish you were at the scene when the barrier broke!" Arnold stared at the speaker, his eyes icy cold.

The soul-piercing scream of Thousand Faces, unwilling to be repelled by the laws of the real world at the last moment, caused even him to feel his soul tremble and nearly disengage. If these ignorant fools were

to take his place, their souls would likely be torn away on the spot, becoming the most basic and senseless chaos eggs in the high-dimensional space.

It was only through the desperate struggle of countless warriors that these so-called nobles standing here casting their verbose judgments had the opportunity.

However, watching the continuous playback of the video, even those of the same rule spoke up—

"Perhaps... General Bai E is indeed strong enough."

"He... he knows the Exorcism Magic Circle, too?"

"Wasn't it said that General Bai E had never studied any ability related to Spiritual Energy?"

"Perhaps it's... learned from Kiro Lan."

Even though Kiro Lan and Morphie didn't disclose it outright, their interactions were too obvious to be concealed from anyone.

The origins of the two Saint Heirs had a close connection to General Bai E, with most of the information laid out on the desks of the attendees after the incident.

Thus, it's understandable that the two Saint Heirs would follow General Bai E's arrangements upon meeting again.

This point was insignificant, as they only needed someone to take the blame, regardless of who it was.

But now... merely from observing Kiro Lan complete half of the Array and then being able to perform it himself, General Bai E truly exceeded the expectations of most people.

Being able to become nobility invariably means having elite family members who are connected with various main organizations of the city.

Although a family's spokesperson might not understand the intricacies of the Spiritual Energy field, there's always someone elite in the family who does.

Unable to bear seeing their family's spokesperson continue to make a fool of themselves, they notified their representative in their own ways, in secret, to prevent them from truly embarrassing themselves.

While General Bai E was engaged in sword combat against thousands, the Arbitration Place's Saint Heir Kiro Lan was struggling to inscribe a certain Array, and anyone with a bit of visual acuity and wisdom could tell at a glance that it was the Arbitration Place's treasured secret skill—the Exorcism Magic Circle.

The Arbitration Place has never been stingy with such skills; anyone with Spiritual Energy who wanted to learn could do so, yet those who managed to master it... were one in ten thousand.

Kiro Lan's ability to master the Exorcism Magic Circle had created a sensation among their Spiritual Energy wielders at the time, let alone... a military soldier who had never been exposed to the Exorcism Magic Circle yet managed to learn it after merely watching someone use it halfway?

What was even more preposterous was...

Watching the figure in the screen fighting against the great demon, while dancing with the sword so fluidly and completing the Array in one fell swoop, everyone felt their worldview shattering.

Is this something a human can achieve?

Kiro Lan's performance was by the book, conforming to everyone's serious perception of exorcism.

But General Bai E fought like he was on a rampage in the home of demons.

It was probably only the concern that other survivors couldn't hold on for too long that stopped him, otherwise, he might have simply taken a sword and slaughtered all the demons in the fortress.

"Absurd."

"Indeed..."

Even those who had been reluctant to speak out before no longer insisted on their stubbornness.

Even if the Bug Race had just resurrected and lost its prestige, it was still on the demon's turf after all.

While enduring the frenzied attacks of the demon, the person was multitasking, inscribing the Array at an accelerated pace.

Then considering the disrepair shown by Arbitration Place's enforcer during his last struggling roar against the Bug Race, perhaps the just-resurrected Bug Race hadn't lost its stature to that extent.

Praise be as it may, everyone knew that the Arbitration Place was an organization fighting on the frontlines against the demons within the city.

Even if their power wasn't heaven-defying, they were far from weak.

In comparison...

For a moment, everyone's gaze towards Bai E was filled with fervent meaning.

"If General Bai E could be stationed at the fortress, would we be completely secure in the future?" someone excitedly suggested.

This immediately drew a snort from Arnold, "Anyone who allows the fortress to exist will become a part of its nourishment. This is General Bai E's first visit here, and if he were stationed here, there would not be a second General Bai E to break this siege in the future."

Aglaya, who had been seated beside Bai E and had hardly said anything, seemed all of a sudden to have received some message. She hummed softly twice and with a wave of her hand, a small electronic USB drive appeared in her hand.

Controlling the USB drive with Spiritual Energy to fly towards the technicians, Aglaya stood up and said, "Additionally, our people made some predictions after capturing sufficient real-time spatial data on site. This is the result of those predictions. Everyone can have a look."

The 3D structural diagram symbolizing the entire city's structure cast aside the obstructions from the building bodies, using only a form of dots, lines, and planes to depict the city's core structure.

The very bottom of the city's virtual diagram, which displayed in a gyroscopic shape, had a small area marked in red—that was the location of the fortress.

When the fortress was instantaneously hollowed out, the overlying space poured into it like water.

The flow of space spread throughout the city, causing certain disruptions to the entire city's building structures.

And when the projection zoomed in on the detail, the architectural structures borne by the space immediately showed a distorted form at the area closest to the source.

Aglaya's voice echoed throughout the hall, "If the fortress truly falls, at least the structures within three levels in proximity will suffer devastating damage. The number of deaths won't just be those inside the fortress!"

Chapter 630: votes decided

Aglaya's words officially brought forth the core issue at hand in this meeting—should the castle's existence be completely abolished?

Such an alteration is not, as some might think, just about ensuring the rescue of a few key individuals.

The localized impact caused by carving out a piece of space from the real world can be far more troublesome than the wide-ranging, long-term effects.

Especially since the castle is set so deeply within the city, its collapse would spell trouble on a grand scale.

A spokesperson clad in the robes of the Arbitration Place was the first to stand, speaking out loud, "I propose that we completely abolish the castle. The city can no longer tolerate such a den of filth!"

Immediately, a chorus of agreement erupted, "Seconded!"

"Seconded!"

Those truly concerned about safety were completely different from that batch of profit-seekers.

An area bound to attract demonic attention could only be abolished without any room for compromise.

Facing this sudden backlash, the first speaker, an elderly man, had a dark expression on his face, "The castle cannot be abolished! We must provide space for the rational venting of desires. If we do not establish toilets, the entire place will become a toilet; if we do not establish order, the market will find its own order. It is much better for us to control such trading within the castle than to allow such transactions to develop freely and unchecked!"

"Then go search! Go investigate! What is the city security squad for? We should not indulge these uncontrollable desires! In the face of demons, we must be vigilant as a whole!"

"Desire is an inherent attribute of humanity; we can't go against everyone's nature! You are shaking the very foundation of the city!"

"Are these so-called desires truly those of the entire city, or are they just your own private desires?" the Arbitration Place speaker retorted with a scoff, his words vehement.

Seeing the topic veering towards chaos, another lavishly dressed elder stood up to end the dispute, "Enough! Since there's disagreement, let's settle this with a vote!"

For regular members, it was one person, one vote, with roughly over a hundred votes in the venue.

The remainder belonged to key institutions like the Arbitration Place, the barracks, the Scientific Research Institute, and their opinions carried more decisive weight, with a spokesperson's vote counting as ten.

Bai E held a voting device in his hand; once authenticated by the representative of the barracks, his vote counted as the decision of ten votes.

Without a doubt, Bai E cast his support in favor of abolishing the castle.

Before long, the voting results were in, showing the pro-abolition side winning by a slim margin of 5 votes.

Ordinary council members, burdened with family missions, mostly voted against abolition.

Yet the Arbitration Place, the Spiritual Power Managers Center, the barracks, the Mechanical Court, and even the city security squad, extraordinarily united in consensus on this matter.

This turn of events sounded the alarm for all institutions genuinely concerned about the city's safety; no one could stand by and allow the same to happen again.

"Very well, very well!" The elder who first raised the issue, visibly indignant upon seeing the vote's outcome, said, "Since everyone is so confident in the order of the city, let's wait and see the performance of your security squad and the Arbitration Place then!"

The resolution was settled, and Aglaya, who hadn't attracted too much attention since the beginning, now stood up calmly to speak.

"I have another proposal to put forward."

"Considering General Bai E's exceptional performance in the recent castle incident and his demonstrated potential in Spiritual Energy, I suggest granting him access to all of the city's secret magical techniques. If General Bai E had earlier access to the Exorcism Magic Circle, Kiro Lan wouldn't have even needed to risk demonstrating them."

In fact, the anomalies that occurred at the beginning might have been dealt with by General Bai E right from the start.

"General Bai E? A general promoted from an artificial being also to master so many secrets of the city? I am not at ease with this."

"Exactly! Teaching him combat skills is fine, but granting access to all Spiritual Energy techniques... I'm sorry, but I cannot agree!"

"Aglaya, have you forgotten the fact that General Bai E just recently lost control! Do you realize the significance of granting access to all secrets?"

The city's foundation relies on various energy Arrays, and the maintenance of these related Array nodes are all recorded within the secret techniques.

If one day the controller intends to make a move, others won't stand a chance.

Aglaya's eyebrows furrowed slightly.

Even knowing full well that this inevitable counterargument was coming, she still couldn't help but feel it was a thorny issue.

If General Bai E couldn't seize this opportunity to gain access to all Spiritual Energy techniques now when his performance was so outstanding, finding a similar chance in the future would become difficult.

How many life-changing events can one encounter in a normal lifetime?

Some opportunities, if missed, may never come again.

With such thoughts, Aglaya's gaze shifted towards certain corners of the room.

The Spiritual Power Managers Center also had its networks; it was time those connections were called upon for support.

If there weren't enough explicit signs of support, there wouldn't even be a chance to try voting on it.

She wondered if her web of relations was strong enough to push this through...

However, the next moment, Aglaya saw an unexpected figure, not well-acquainted with her, standing up. "I support Lady Aglaya's proposal. General Bai E has made remarkable contributions and is loyally devoted to the city. The strength of General Bai E is the strength of our city."

An unfamiliar representative suddenly rose, "I also agree with Lady Aglaya! The presence of General Bai E could deter criminals lurking in the shadows. The stronger he is, the safer our city will be."

"I agree too..."

Representatives from the Scientific Research Institute, the security squad, the Arbitration Place, and even from the Mechanical Court—an institution that usually stood on the opposite extreme from the Spiritual Power Managers Center—were all standing up to express their positions at this moment.

After speaking, they all turned towards their respective sides, nodding and smiling with a sense of goodwill as if to curry favor, seemingly with ulterior motives.

Though the existence of the Spiritual Power Managers Center was vital to the city, when did it gain such prestige over these parallel institutions?

No! Perhaps it wasn't her prestige at all.

But rather... Bai E.

Their gaze had deviated slightly.

It was Bai E, seated beside her, who was the true target of these powers' overtures.

When did this warrior, originating from the lowest ranks of the barracks, come to possess such influence within the city?

Overwhelmed with shock, Aglaya watched as the proposal she had only tentatively suggested was miraculously passed with an overwhelming majority.

Even more straightforwardly than the earlier controversy over the castle.