

Wow 761

Chapter 761: Compromise?_2

"I say we can cooperate," the silvery-white prototype Intelligent Mechanism enunciated, its somewhat stiff electronic tone revealing a rigid honesty.

Bai E became interested, "How do we cooperate?"

"It's simple," the silvery-white prototype Intelligent Mechanism turned its head toward Rose, fully armed at Bai E's side, "You want to test the brand-new weapon system on her, so I will deploy troops to drill with her and make sure that the intensity of the opposition is enough to test the real limits of your weapons without compromising her safety; as for what you want to take from us... you can tell me, and as long as it is within an acceptable range, I can satisfy you directly."

Bai E squinted his eyes, "If I attack directly and win, then I rightfully deserve all this, don't I?"

"First, if you start a direct confrontation, it won't benefit your weapons trial at all; the high-intensity battle would directly exceed the theoretical threshold of your whole system and fail to achieve the desired test results; second, even if you kill us all, before you do so, we can easily order the destruction of everything here! That is something we can accomplish with a moment's command, as you should understand." The electronic voice sounded mechanical, but its logic was sound, clearly possessing an intelligence level equal to that of humans, "So I think, cooperating is better than a decisive battle."

"..."

"..."

The perfect explanation left the entire Vanguard Team speechless.

This script... doesn't seem right?

When have the prototype Intelligent Mechanisms ever been so easy to talk to?

Humans have tried to communicate with them in the past, attempting to achieve harmonious coexistence since they all possessed intelligence. Even though they were quite different in terms of reproduction, as long as there were intelligence, there was room for cooperation.

But how aloof were the prototype Intelligent Mechanisms back then?

With just a disagreement, they destroyed an entire corps in Blackwater City, causing it to become significantly weakened for a time.

But now...

"Actually, its reasoning is not entirely without merit," Helen nodded indifferently. The thinking patterns of Intelligent Mechanisms were somewhat similar to those of pure researchers like herself, addressing any issues by looking for the so-called "optimal solution," "Of course, the final decision is still up to you. We can't guarantee that it isn't trying to deceive us."

Bai E nodded, his eyes flickering slightly.

In fact, he felt the same way. The other party was right; a large-scale war would only let Rose, in her exoskeletal armor without defensive functions, deal with minor soldiers on the fringes of the battlefield.

If the other side was ruthless, even just sending one prototype Intelligent Mechanism to attack her might be too much for Rose to handle.

After all, the effectiveness of the new armament had not yet been demonstrated, and the lack of defensive capacity was indeed a severe flaw.

But that didn't mean they had to take the other party's word for everything. Bai E still asked cautiously, "Why? You have never regarded us humans as masters, have you?"

The electronic eyes on the silvery-white chassis blinked twice, as if simulating a blink, "Because, after computing, we judge that the probability of defeating you is less than one percent."

Power, that is everything in this era.

It is better to cling to life than to be destroyed along with everything else.

For them, Intelligent Mechanisms, there is no concept of honor or dignity; survival is an acceptable outcome.

Helen seemed to know more of the situation and stepped forward to question, "Initially, the human race also destroyed some of your core Intelligent Mechanism bases, but we never encountered such a request."

Due to human scheming, the electronic demons slumbered, and there was no single dominant ruler among the prototype Intelligent Mechanisms; they also fell into disarray after the Intelligent Mechanism rebellion, with each large base controlling all Intelligent Mechanisms within a vast territory.

The Intelligent Mechanism Base near Blackwater City was one of these, not the entirety.

Additionally, not every city struggling in this chaotic world owns a "War God" or holds most of the legacy of the Golden Age, like the human empire "Star City," which indeed possesses the power to eliminate all surrounding threats.

In the early gifts shared with various cities, there was relevant battle information for reference.

Unfortunately, over the years, Blackwater City had not gained much valid experience from this; after all, they couldn't directly send troops to crush insects, beastmen, and Intelligent Mechanisms just like squashing ants.

Helen, now faced with an unfamiliar crisis, needed an explanation to distinguish it from the cases in her memory.

The silver-white body slightly bowed its head, "Because, they don't need us."

The imperial capital didn't need the intelligent mechanisms that had changed during the Golden Age of human technology; the cost of cracking and recovering these intelligent creations was not worth it for them, not as much as simply taking down the Intelligent Mechanism Base earlier to expand their own production capacity.

Even if the intelligent mechanisms wanted to compromise, there was no room for it.

"More importantly... the presence of our only master seems to have completely disappeared." This was the first time that a sentiment similar to emotion appeared in the speech of the silver-white first-generation intelligent mechanism.

It was like a mix of melancholy and loss.

For them, the slumber of the electronic demons, as referred to by humans, was merely a prolonged wait in time; the undying fluctuations within the electronic signals were the lifelong belief of every intelligent mechanism.

And yet, not long ago, the fluctuation that belonged to that absolute ruler just vanished suddenly?

For a moment, every intelligent mechanism felt as if the chains around their necks had been unlocked without their knowing, and this left them bewildered.

Without the only master, their millennia of vigil seemed to become a hollow talk.

Without a master, they were free.

But without a master, they also lost their direction.

Anxiety is the dizziness induced by freedom.

Now, they were in this abnormal state.

No one knew where the intelligent mechanisms would go with this newfound "freedom."

But faced with external stimuli, they should first take various actions to ensure their individual existence so they could consider the "future."

Faced with the explanation of this first-generation intelligent mechanism leader, Bai E and Helen exchanged glances, their eyes slightly easing.

Clearly, the other's rational logic had persuaded their will.

As the other had said, perhaps "cooperating" was indeed a better matter for both parties.

Both had needs of the other, and cooperation would be mutually beneficial.

"Then let's see your sincerity first," Bai E said with a strictness that bordered on cruelty, facing an absolutely different species in both thought and body. "Send out your warriors for us to test the new weapons system. As for what we need, we can talk about that later."

"No problem," the silver-white mecha agreed in a surprisingly accommodating manner.

Perhaps this was a characteristic of the intelligent mechanism form of life—

Purity.

After the silver-white first-generation intelligent mechanism waved the sharp-tipped staff in its hand towards the mountains behind it, the matte grey iron-like surface of the mountain wall suddenly split open. A smooth metallic gate parted into two, revealing an orderly and quiet mechanical army standing by.

With a swing of the staff, the first row of human-like mechanical infantry stepped forward with uniform strides.

Accompanying this was the mechanical electronic female voice of the first-generation intelligent mechanism leader, "I will gradually increase the intensity of the offense. Of course, preferences for offense or defense can be specified by your testers at any time, and I shall fulfill them promptly. Now... begin the first wave of attack!"

Bai E's gaze swept over the cold mechanical infantry.

He had encountered the same combat model when he had come across intelligent mechanisms before.

But to face them with only Rose's strength was ultimately a first.

He wondered to what extent the enhancements of the brand-new weapons system would allow her to perform?

Chapter 762: Test

A row of eight junior mechanized soldiers, four stationed with ranged weapons and four charging with blades.

Before the melee soldiers could reach her, the bullets were already howling towards Rose.

In Rose's vision, those bullets seemed to slow down significantly, drawing intense trails of hot air as they traveled.

The rapidly spinning bullet heads had an astonishing stability, and computer precision calculations tightly locked down most of Rose's dodging space.

Before the soldiers could gather more personal information about Rose for their calculations, their targeting was only a basic lockdown for an average human.

Of course, with Rose's current physical capabilities, she couldn't outpace the bullets, but that wasn't what she needed to do.

The competition was about the decision-making speed of the gun holders.

Rose constantly monitored every move of her opponents. Bai E and the opposing commander's negotiations were at a strategic level, but the combat Rose had to face was inevitable.

Even her own performance in this battle was of significant reference value for Helen and Bai E regarding the combat effectiveness that human soldiers could achieve with this set of arms. She had to perform at full strength!

As the four mechanized soldiers stationed their weapons, Rose had already started her preemptive evasive maneuvers.

The moment the bullets left the chamber, Rose had shifted several meters laterally with her full exoskeleton armor.

She, with a rifle sword in hand, didn't retreat but advanced, charging towards the four approaching melee mechanized soldiers.

In the open battlefield, a single soldier facing multiple gunlines had no way to perfectly dodge; only by using the bodies of the opponents as cover could they break through to their vicinity for a beheading.

From a distance of tens of meters, Rose burst forward. Mighty strength propelled the cumbersome steel armor in a forceful charge, and in the instant she crossed paths with a melee mechanized soldier, her right hand touched the activation switch. The Dynamic Source Sword in the mechanical palm sliced through the opponent's body as effortlessly as tofu.

"Zzzzzz~"

Sparks flew, and the diagonally cut surface was as smooth as a mirror. The upper half of the soldier's body slowly slid to the ground in front of Rose, incredibly smooth.

"..."

An overzealous Rose promptly steadied her nearly toppling body by planting the sword in the ground.

The moment she turned her face to check on her opponent, she saw the mechanical body, still sparking, slowly sliding down in front of her...

So she turned her head to look at the massive sword in her mechanical right hand, tightly gripped.

Only at this moment did she truly realize the value behind the new weapon that both Helen and Bai E had placed such importance on.

Truly, it cut through iron as if it were mud!

There was no need to put in extra force, no need to exert a chopping effect with her own strength; she only had to "swing the blade," only had to sweep her weapon wherever she wanted, and everything in its path naturally split in two!

"Swish!"

Another sword swing, and yet another mechanized soldier quietly split into halves.

The other personnel accompanying her monitored the system data coming back from the various sensors installed in the weapon system Rose wore. Helen, standing beside Bai E, pushed up her gold-rimmed glasses and nodded in satisfaction, "The basic performance is as expected, though I'm curious how stable it will be with prolonged use."

Pausing for a moment, Helen asked with some curiosity, "However, why isn't she using the Energy Gathering Rifle?"

This battle was not a live combat exercise, its purpose was to test the new weapons.

If she didn't use it, how would they know its performance, whether good or bad?

"Her marksmanship isn't that good..." Bai E said softly with a hint of amusement.

Rose's skills could certainly be considered all-around; her marksmanship was not bad in the entire military camp.

But when she had to use the external mechanical palm to hold the new type of firearm while also engaged in high-speed combat, it was difficult for her to ensure precision under such conditions.

Not to mention... Energy Gathering Rifle bullets are expensive.

The manufacturing process for the Energy-Gathering Rifle was in fact more complicated: the rifle and bullets were two different technologies.

Without enough certainty, Rose was unlikely to shoot indiscriminately given her character.

Looking at the commanding figure on the field, Bai E murmured softly, "However, at a distance of over ten meters, she should be confident enough."

Indeed, after getting a bit more familiar with the Dynamic Source Sword that took the form of a broadsword in her right hand, Rose finally turned her attention to the Energy Gathering Rifle in her left hand.

After cleaving another melee mechanized soldier in half with one sword strike, Rose used her sword to lift the remaining lower half of the body to shield herself from the barrage of gunfire coming from the four other ranged mechanized soldiers. She then tossed out the Energy-Gathering Rifle, appearing like an oversized hand cannon, and immediately pulled the trigger linkage in her glove with force.

"Boom!"

The massive recoil force traveled through the rigid mechanical connection to Rose's body, causing her entire left arm to jerk upward involuntarily.

But before that, the specially processed Energy-Gathering Bomb had already been shot out at high speed.

"Pop!"

The bomb crossed the tens of meters instantaneously and hit one of the ranged mechanized soldiers... right on the shoulder.

"Boom!"

A massive explosion erupted from the shoulder of that soldier, sweeping through its entire body in an instant.

The destructive power equivalent to a small missile rendered the mechanized soldier's body to explode open, reducing it to the many raw materials that had comprised its form.

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"..."

"..."

Rose, whose face was grazed by a bullet, suddenly awoke with a look of surprise and delight in her eyes as she inspected the Energy Gathering Rifle in her hands.

This thing is much more useful than swords!

She then turned and fired another shot, and another remote-type intelligent mech warrior crumbled to pieces after being hit in the knee.

The first batch of eight warriors posed no threat to Rose.

The silver-white, first-generation intelligent mech lord, who was merely observing the battle from mid-air, watched as all eight intelligent mech warriors were utterly destroyed before gently waving her spike, and then two more rows of intelligent mech warriors left the formation.

They launched a second charge at Rose with varying speeds.

"Whiz, whiz, whiz, whiz!"

The dense barrage of gunfire doubled and locked down virtually all of Rose's evasion space.

While Rose was fighting the first batch of intelligent mech warriors, data about her continuously streamed in through sensors to the combat systems of the warriors she was fighting.

Training and analysis of existing data is the most fundamental ability of these intelligences; this capability could even be wirelessly transmitted through the Mechanical Force Field they were in.

Thus, even intelligent mechs that had not personally engaged in combat could access the combat data about Rose.

Intelligent mechs not connected by internet technology might not send real-time combat data across tens of thousands of miles to another mech, but for all those within the same Mechanical Force Field, any enemy one intelligence faces is an enemy they all face.

Even on the most chaotic of battlefields, smart mechs that might switch targets at any moment are able to instantly adjust to the optimal combat strategy against different foes.

At this moment, all key battle data, such as Rose's strength and her fastest speed of attack, were completely mastered by the opponent.

Multiple lines of gunfire crossed each other, completely sealing off her every chance of evading.

Still instinctively dodging, Rose faced the incoming hot bullets, her reactions outpacing her thoughts as she swiftly raised the door-sized Dynamic Source Sword in her right hand while her left hand triggered the activation switch for the fracture field within her glove.

"Buzz!"

Indeed, a warrior's frontline battle wisdom is always remarkably reliable; the omnipotent force field of the Dynamic Source Sword easily blocked the rapidly incoming bullet heads.

More than a dozen deformed bullet heads fell fruitlessly in front of the shield onto the ground.

Rose, who had blocked the bullets with her sword, did not hesitate; grasping the gun and sword, she once again leaped courageously into battle.

As long as there was a battle, it would activate the warlike genes within her.

"You humans, do you all plan to defend yourselves in this way?"

A mechanical electronic female voice suddenly rang in Bai E's ear.

The silver-white, first-generation intelligent mech, hovering not far above, watched the battle below with an expression of puzzlement.

"Do you have a better idea?" Helen quickly looked at her with a hint of frenzy in her eyes.

Whatever the strategic requirements, Helen never allowed her academic pursuits to be influenced by them.

Moreover, since the technology used by the intelligences and humans originated from the same source, it held significant reference value.

Even if this weapons system were successfully tested, it was only configured for maximum offensive power, but the defensive aspect... it still required extensive research and tuning.

If there were any ready-made plans to reference and use, that would be better than great!

The silver-white first-generation intelligent mech didn't directly answer her question; instead, it turned to look at Bai E standing next to Helen, "You've fought with Jarvis and his two brothers, so this technology must have been learned from them... but why didn't you learn the 'Power Source Shield' technology?"

"..." Bai E fell silent.

He couldn't very well say that he hadn't managed to spawn it, could he?

A satisfied smile played on Helen's face.

The words of this first-generation intelligent mech lord confirmed something for her—

'It seems Bai E wasn't lying to me before; he really did learn this technology from the intelligences. As for why a technique is missing... could it be due to a limited Mech Soul capacity?'

The Energy Gathering Rifle and Dynamic Source Sword were both offensive technologies.

Power Source Shield, obviously biased towards defense technology.

It's said that a MechSoul generally resembles its owner's personality; perhaps Bai E inherently prefers offense over defense?

As an excellent researcher, Helen's divergent thinking led her to consider many possibilities in an instant.

And Bai E's silence didn't surprise the silvery-white, first-generation mechanical sovereign.

Not having learned it is just that, nothing to discuss.

She even felt some joy in discovering another detail advantageous to her side.

"The disintegration field of the Dynamic Source Sword is generally only used for offense. If your warriors try to use it defensively like you just did, there actually are many drawbacks. Its defensive capability is an entire order of magnitude weaker than its offensive power; even attacks with far less technical content can breach the disintegration field's defense. When that happens, the entire Dynamic Source Sword will suffer devastating damage. Without a matching defense module, your armament system..."

The mechanical sovereign, who had inherited human thought processes but not their tact, sensed that her next words might displease the human before her. But after hesitating briefly, she still spoke with difficulty, "...will be of little practical use."

What determines the limit of a system isn't the longest "plank" among its components, but the shortest.

The lackluster defensive performance would turn the entire armament system into a glass cannon.

And a glass cannon of close combat type is thoroughly useless.

The talking mechanical sovereign slightly lifted "her" elegantly curved silvery-white chin, acting as proud as a human.

The other's meaning was clear—

'I have such technology.'

'But if you try to destroy us, you'll be finished.'

Bai E looked up, seeing the other's proud posture, and nodded slowly, "I will consider the extent of the demands I make in our upcoming communications."

"Hmm~" The mechanical sovereign emitted an inexplicable vibration, not making a sound.

This was the result she had wanted to achieve.

And the result was strikingly effective.

So she concentrated, trying to find other flaws in Rose's armament she had exhibited.

...

Maybe the doubled number of the long-range type mechanical soldiers made Rose feel somewhat troubled, but to her, a doubled number of close combat type mechanical soldiers was still just a matter of spending more time.

"If Rose's marksmanship was just a bit better, she could fight even more easily," Helen said, touching her chin as the last of the second batch of long-range mechanical warriors fell.

This wasn't a problem with the armament system itself, but purely a personal ability preference.

"Given that, let's keep the number of ranged attacks at this level then," Bai E decided, speaking to the mechanical sovereign floating in mid-air.

"Understood," the other replied calmly, and once again brandished her spike-like scepter.

Another group of twenty mechanical soldiers stepped out of the mechanical formation and lunged at Rose.

Rolling, dodging.

One after another, the mechanical warriors fell to Rose's gun and sword.

Dragging that heavy metallic armor, Rose's breathing had become labored.

"Still too heavy..." Helen softly sighed, noticing this.

Through her glasses, she could see that every muscle on Helen was burning with effort. However, burdened by such a weight and fighting intensely for so long, she was nearly at her personal limit.

"You guys there, do you have any integrated drive modules that could be useful?" Helen raised her head to the mechanical sovereign above her.

"The non-expendable kind is fine."

"..." Helen fell mute.

What's the point of talking if you're not going to release people?

If she had to carve out that much space from a human body, she could make the armament move on its own.

It seemed that between adding modules and controlling body shape, she still needed many trials to come up with a perfect compromise...

Chapter 764: Protocol One: Contact

Rose had reached her limit.

After continuously engaging in intense combat with such heavy mechanical weapons purely on her own strength, Rose was no longer able to fight.

But in this rather lengthy test, the stability of the entire weapons system had proved quite impressive, and it met the most fundamental testing requirements of everyone.

And the effect of amplifying the individual strength of the warrior was indeed quite formidable.

The subsequent intelligent mechanized soldiers sent out included existences similar to the small BOSSes encountered by Bai E and the Nova Squad for the first time, but in Rose's hands, they could barely withstand a few more strikes before making no difference at all.

Keep in mind, it was only through Nova using Spiritual Energy to deplete the energy reserves of the mech that Bai E found an opportunity to eliminate it.

And now, amidst the groups that surrounded and attacked Rose, even these little BOSSes were effortlessly decapitated by a weary Rose.

While Rose's rapid progress played a role, the difference between a small mechanical BOSS that could devastate a regular human military force and a normal human was like night and day. That Rose could achieve this extent with her flesh and blood body meant that the amplification provided by the entire set of armor was of utmost importance.

Helen and the others were quite satisfied with the test results of this experimental set.

In the end, the silvery-white first-generation intelligent mechanized lord had not found any exclusive technology that could give her an advantage.

Humans had already forged their own path in technological development, and the technology they possessed was either based on the same foundations or had diverged in completely different directions from that of the intelligent mechs.

Luckily, she still possessed a unique technology of her own, which should, she hoped, enable her to take the initiative in the hands of that terrifying human...

Quack!

"You want us to move all of the Ore Smelting Factories into your territory?"

Bai E nodded in confirmation, "As well as all the low-intelligence machinery below the level of intelligent combat soldiers."

For instance, the defensive turrets, armored transport vehicles, and so on.

Some units may seem to have high combat strength, but that's simply a matter of materials.

To the intelligent mech life form, these beings aren't considered as one of their own "intelligent mechs," but merely tools.

On the other hand, the ordinary intelligent mechanized soldiers, which may not seem very smart or powerful, are considered as "kin" by the intelligent mech community in a broader sense.

The biggest difference lies in whether they have an "intelligence chip" made from mined Computing Power Resources.

This is an absolute division in the eyes of the intelligent mechs.

As for the more ultimate definition of "kin" from the intelligent mechs' perspective, only the first-generation intelligent mechs with a full will of their own can count.

And now, what Bai E wanted was an all-encompassing cut below the "intelligence chip."

Without an intelligence chip, it meant that the "Intelligent Technology" involved in these mechs wasn't very advanced, making them relatively easy to modify; at the same time, it would be more acceptable to the intelligent mech community, at least not giving them the sensation that their "kith and kin were being slaughtered."

Basic production factories, along with all finished products below the "intelligence chip," were all that Bai E required.

"That's too much." The voice of the silvery-white first-generation intelligent mech leader trembled slightly, and Bai E's demands infuriated her.

"So, what's your decision?" Bai E calmly watched her.

He wasn't unwilling to accept bargaining, considering that the current state of intelligent mechs was different from what he had envisioned and how they would get along in the future... he didn't yet have a certain plan.

If, as the intelligent mech claimed, the intelligent mechs would be free after the demise of their electronic devil overlord, then it's not impossible to reintegrate them into human society.

The benefits that intelligent mechs could bring to human society were conveniences that any ordinary person who had experienced the age of intelligent technology would find hard to resist. Of course, the prerequisite was that all intelligent mechs integrating into human society must possess self-awareness and enlightenment like this first-generation intelligent mech leader.

Even then, such integration would need to be under strict surveillance.

The past crises of intelligent mech rebellions must not be allowed to occur a second time in human society.

Of course, these were still just vague plans in Bai E's mind for now.

Whether they could smoothly move in this direction would depend on observations and understandings of this relatively amiable first-generation intelligent mech leader, and decisions would be made gradually while attempting.

For the moment, it was also a kind of probing.

If they were ultimately to integrate into human society, Bai E wouldn't fuss over temporary gains and losses or exploit the other side excessively.

If they were to be utterly destroyed in the end, then it didn't make much difference to Bai E whether he assumed possession of his belongings sooner or later.

Therefore, Bai E's bottom line was quite flexible.

After all, anything gained from this robbery was a bonus...

"You must leave us at least one factory!" The silvery-white first-generation intelligent mech lord raised her slender white index finger insistently, looking at Bai E's face with a serious expression, "If you take all the smelting factories, it will be too slow and difficult for us to start over!"

"Deal." Bai E extended his right hand, subconsciously wanting to complete a human ritual with her.

However, the originally floating intelligent mech lord, who had not fully landed but was suspended in front of Bai E, reacted like a frightened bird; the moment Bai E extended his hand, she activated her engines and shot backward abruptly.

Chapter 765: Protocol One: Contact_2

Hovering in the high sky "out of reach" of Bai E, she watched him with a face full of "caution" as she rigidly asked, word by word, "What do you want to do?!"

There was no other way, in front of this terrifying human, maintaining distance was the only way to survive, she believed.

Humans can't fly; it was the only advantage she could find over him.

"..." Bai E looked at his outstretched hand, then lifted his gaze to the other party, somewhat silently.

"It's a... habit of us humans; it's okay if you don't like it, then it's decided. I'll also need to trouble your transport fleet to help move the factory over," he said.

"I will make arrangements," the Intelligent Mechanism lord stared intently at Bai E, "So, can you leave now?"

"...You also need to teach us 'Power Source Shield' technology without reservation."

"Find someone to learn it, that's fine."

"I need to make sure this is completely settled."

"You can send someone to oversee it; you are not welcome here."

"..."

Chitchat.

Bai E nodded, turned, and walked away. At the same time, he whispered to Helen at his side, "Have someone keep an eye on it, also... take extra care yourself."

"Understood," Helen could hardly keep the joy contained within her.

A development better than the original plan.

The original plan was to clear this Intelligent Mechanism, then rely on Li Ming Town's not-so-advanced transportation methods to move bit by bit slowly; she hadn't expected these Intelligent Mechanisms to be so cooperative—now going as far as essentially packaging and delivering themselves to her doorstep.

These were Intelligent Mechanisms!

Once considered by humans as the third worst disaster, beneath demons and insects, who would have thought that now they could be acquired through negotiations.

Whether Intelligent Mechanisms can ultimately be trusted or not, the benefits obtained are undeniable.

The lower-level Intelligent Mechanisms, once their bit of intelligence cores were removed, had nothing to do with Intelligent Mechanisms anymore.

"Do you think there is a problem with it?" Bai E, having turned around, asked Helen through Spiritual Energy.

Helen's opinion also took precedence while observing the Intelligent Mechanisms.

"So far, its behavior doesn't have too many suspicious points, but we can't rule out the possibility of an Intelligent Mechanism's conspiracy. After all, it was after they nearly took over human society that they launched that rebellion. Let's keep watching, I will attempt to contact these original generation Intelligent Mechanisms while learning the 'Power Source Shield' technology to see what they think," she replied.

"Alright, we must be cautious with them." The idea to possibly reintegrate Intelligent Mechanisms into the social system of humans was one they had come up with together.

"I will wait for you to return."

No matter how powerful Bai E was, he couldn't confront this world alone.

Many things needed to be done by others; no matter how strong one was, they couldn't be in every place at once filling every role.

For example, if Black Street were suddenly under a devastating attack, Bai E, now in the Intelligent Mechanism Base, would be unable to aid promptly.

Even racing back as fast as possible would yield nothing but the ruins of destruction.

But if an entire force were powerful, the outcome would be entirely different.

Now, the chance to strengthen that entire force lay in Helen's hands.

To mass-produce the new-style armament systems as much as possible and equip them on as many trustworthy subordinates as possible was the key step in seizing political power during the upcoming opportunity.

This was the step in the entire plan that could most increase their assurance!

Watching the terrifying human's figure gradually recede, the original generation Intelligent Mechanism lord seemed to finally relax her caution.

However, the next moment, she witnessed a scene that made her hair stand on end—

Right in front of her, that human took flight on his own, without any tools or a running start, just floated up effortlessly from the ground and soared into the sky with an easy grace.

And once he had determined his direction, he shot away like an arrow...

He could fly!

Her only advantage was gone!

"..."

'Thankfully, I surrendered quickly!'

'Humans are truly terrifying!'

'At least, I managed to save the last bit of my foundation.'

With the great Will Leader gone, from now on, I could only rely on myself.

Feeling the weight of her responsibility, she proceeded with trembling caution, determined to prevent her race from becoming extinct on her watch.

Why is life so difficult?

I only wanted to hole up here, mine a bit, create some of my kind, and see if maybe one or two would emerge from the selection of numbers to ascend to the "First Generation Intelligent Mechanism" level of awakened intelligent mechanisms, and join my family of first-generation intelligent mechanisms.

'I just want to live my life!'

Sizzling...

The silvery white eye of the intelligent mechanism flickered slightly, and beneath the faint sound of electrical current, a line of text flashed across the surface of the electronic eye of this first-generation intelligent mechanism overlord—

[Agreement One: Contact (Completed)]

...

Bai E flew a great distance in one breath.

To impose sufficient deterrence on the first-generation intelligent mechanism overlord, letting her know that flying was futile, Bai E deliberately displayed his newly acquired ability after ascending to the third stage of Spiritual Energy—

Flying!

The third stage of Spiritual Energy required breaking the world's constraints on the human body.

The ability to 'lift oneself' was the hallmark of this stage.

This was information Bai E had obtained from Spiritual Energy practitioner Pansen, and now, it had become his tangible ability.

From the moment he ascended to the third stage of Spiritual Energy, Bai E's world was no longer confined to a simple two-dimensional plane.

He could go anywhere, above the ground or below the sky.

An entire additional dimension of choice vastly expanded Bai E's tactical options in his future actions.

In fact, the surge in ability went even further.

[Feedback from the mission, your physical strength +2.9, reflexes +2.7, insight +1.8.]

Several days had passed since Bai E met with the reborn Kuang Xin and the others.

Dai Lian had completed the injection of the Gene Optimization Solution and had become the first player to undertake gene optimization; the reborn Kuang Xin and Gong Yan were leveling up swiftly under Gu Lan's guidance; Xu Ruoguang was also working exceedingly hard to meet the stat increase requirements

for the injection, especially the reborn Kuang Xin and Gong Yan, who could provide shocking contributions to Bai E's attribute growth.

The proxy leveling by the players led to a rapid increase in Bai E's attributes to physical strength 22.3/24, insight 18.6/24, reflexes 20.7/24.

If the players could just try a little harder, Bai E would qualify for a second injection of the Gene Optimization Solution.

At his current level of status, the only things constraining his gene optimization were his own advancements in power, and no longer the resource limitations of the past.

The explosive increase in attributes significantly boosted Bai E's actual combat ability; maybe every point in the fundamental attributes only strengthened by 10% compared to the previous one.

However, even the slightest enhancement, when amplified by Bai E's skills, could result in vastly different levels of actual strength.

Now, all he needed to do was to train and arm his soldiers to the teeth as well as he could before that "opportunity" arrived.

If possible, completing the second gene optimization before then would give him even more confidence.

...

Within the not too distant Grey Iron City, a modified warrior returned, covered in dust.

'Doctor, we've detected that the people from that town are mobilizing en masse towards the Intelligent Mechanism Base!'

After all, it was a large-scale movement; it would be difficult for anyone who was paying attention not to notice the unusual behavior of the town's residents.

'The Intelligent Mechanism Base?' The tall, elderly man narrowed his eyes, a sharp light flashing through them.

The Intelligent Mechanism Base was not a place that just anyone dared to approach.

If it wasn't that young man's command, just the mutineers from that small town alone would not dare to provoke those powerful intelligent mechanisms.

So... do you already have the confidence to confront the intelligent mechanism overlord?

Chapter 766: is cooperation!

"Go and see?"

The thought instantly sprang to the doctor's mind.

The strength possessed by that Intelligent Mechanism Base was troublesome even for Grey Iron City, which he ruled. A direct assault could have uncertain outcomes, but it would surely come at a heavy cost.

Yet now, that kid had not even utilized the force of Blackwater City itself, daring to attack the Intelligent Mechanism Base with just the rebels from that small town. The reports even stated they had brought their chaotic convoy of transports, seemingly brimming with confidence.

With that thought in mind, the desire to see for himself became uncontrollable.

"Follow me and let's take a look," the doctor ordered, and his elite subordinates clad in black raincoat-like attire assembled once again.

Whether the people in Grey Iron City obeyed his orders superficially or grudgingly accepted them, the doctor never cared about their thoughts.

As long as he possessed absolute power, they could only act according to his will.

Even if he left temporarily with his most elite forces, upon his return, the city would ultimately fall back under his control.

Just like the last time he left the city to chase after Nova.

Watching a swarm of warriors in black cloaks surround their absolute master and leave the city, the messenger who came in faith chased after them, waving and calling out, "Hey, hey, hey! My lord, you have not responded to me yet!"

The messenger squad that attempted to chase was encircled by a group of tall, powerful men. The leader, with an indifferent face, stared at the messenger, "The doctor will naturally give you a reply once he's made his decision. For now, he has important matters to attend to, so just wait patiently!"

"..." The messenger clenched his fist. Being from the imperial city, when had he ever been treated with such disdain?

But when he thought of the terrifying strength of these burly men, the messenger swallowed his pride and managed to squeeze out a not-so-sincere smile, "Fine! Then I'll wait for the doctor's reply."

The doctor, having left Grey Iron City, rushed with his dozens of subordinates, hoping to arrive in time to witness the fight.

Whether it was to observe the kid's performance against the Intelligent Mechanism Base or help out in a crisis, he wanted to make himself useful.

But...

As he saw the harmonious cooperation between humans and machinery loading steel creations onto the transport vehicles, the doctor halted his steps, frowning and observing his subordinates.

They had undergone many surgeries and had decent resistance to mental attacks. If it were an "Illusion Technique," they should have noticed it.

However, aside from a bit of confusion, the doctor couldn't glean much more from the reactions of his subordinates.

It was a human who was directing the transportation that first spotted these oddly dressed kin.

His expression immediately guarded, he stood at a distance with a megaphone and shouted, "What are you doing here?"

The shout drew the attention of more humans to the doctor and his party. And seemingly having heard the human's question, an orange and yellow colored first-generation intelligent machine supervising the work also swiftly turned its gaze toward the newly arrived doctor and his party.

They were quicker in noticing these black-clothed humans than the working humans were.

But they were all humans, probably all accepted by its lord, in its perspective.

Yet now, these working humans showed clear vigilance towards these newcomers in black, meaning that it, too, needed to stay alert towards the newly arrived in black.

"It's that Evil Doctor!" someone recognized the doctor.

"They're the lackeys from Grey Iron City!" more recognized the signature attire of the men in the black raincoats.

"Didn't they already let us leave? Why are they still pursuing us?"

"What, they've come to kill us? After all this time?!"

The perpetual fear of the rulers of Grey Iron City over the years sowed panic among the busy inhabitants of Li Ming Town.

"What else could they be here for if not to kill us? Don't tell me they came for these intelligent machines!"

"That's also possible! They might want to scrape something off these intelligent machines for themselves!"

"Damn it!"

Amid the chaotic discussions, the inhabitants of Li Ming Town working on the site became agitated. One by one, they stared at the newcomer doctor and his entourage with hostility, their hands moving towards the weapons they carried.

A fierce battle seemed imminent!

And seeing their demeanor, the originally blue electronic eyes of the intelligent machines turned a fierce red signifying combat readiness. Amidst the jarring "click" sounds, all the intelligent machines on the scene instantly brought out their weapons, entering into a basic combat alert state.

"..."

The doctor blinked.

Without doing anything, his party instantly became the enemy of all the humans and intelligent machines present, which caught him somewhat off guard.

What exactly was happening?

How had he arrived with an intention to help, only to find himself suddenly standing where two battling forces should be fiercely engaged, now as their common enemy?

"We're all on the same side!"

As he looked at those humans regarding him with caution, the doctor felt a mix of amusement and frustration.

He also realized that the contact between the kid and the intelligent machines might have led to some unexpected developments he hadn't anticipated.

"We come with no ill intent." In a gesture of goodwill, the doctor stepped away from his group of subordinates, raised his hands high, and advanced alone, "I'm here to find Bai E..."

Chapter 767: is cooperation!_2

Considering that these people might not know the name Bai E, the doctor paused before adding, "Also known as the adult from your Dawn Town."

It was difficult for a small town that suddenly emerged in the wilderness to escape the scrutiny of the field operation teams, not to mention that most of the people in the town were those who had fled from their own cities.

Indeed, if the actual controller of the Blackwater City Military District wasn't Bai E by now, the news of a wilderness warlord known as "Dawn Town" would have already landed on the desks of the main players among the various powers in Blackwater City.

It could be said that the doctor's understanding and awareness of Dawn Town were no less than any person in the town itself.

Because she had heard of some unexpected complications in the transport operation, Helen and it descended from the sky under the escort of the silvery-white original intelligent mechanism lord.

Landing before their own transport convoy, Helen fixed her gaze on the tall elderly man in front of her with evident confusion in her eyes, "You are?"

"I am the doctor from Grey Iron City, acquainted with that lad Bai E, where is he?" the doctor disclosed his background and intentions proactively, not wanting too many misunderstandings to arise.

"Bai E? He has already gone back."

He couldn't leave this place, as there were still many matters in Dawn Town waiting for him to handle.

Helen spoke, her eyes assessing the doctor up and down.

A doctor from Grey Iron City?

'Doctor' was a common title, but those who dared to use the title 'Doctor from Grey Iron City' outside of home were likely only one person.

This doctor was said to be the actual controller of Grey Iron City.

Moreover...

Helen's gaze drifted, settling on the group of quiet figures in black raincoats waiting behind the man who claimed to be the "doctor."

She had also heard of this group of "transformed fighters" who followed the doctor.

Grey Iron City and Blackwater City were on two completely different technological paths.

The transformed fighters from Grey Iron City were said to be alarmingly powerful.

With a hint of wariness in her eyes, Helen furrowed her brows and asked, "What do you want with him?"

"..." The doctor's lips pressed into a thin line, somewhat at a loss for words.

'Am I worried that if that lad can't win, I thought about coming over to help?'

But considering the familial scene with the intelligent mechanisms before me, aren't my words a bit superfluous?

'No!'

The doctor still couldn't understand how the intelligent mechanisms, which had always been enemies of humankind, had managed to mingle with the people under that lad's command.

"I came... to help him."

After a long hesitation, the doctor still had to reveal his true intentions, albeit with a darkened expression.

"You, want to help Bai E?" Helen still found it strange.

This was something Bai E had never mentioned to her.

If what he said was true, just how many things had this guy been doing behind everyone's back?!

Even the absolute controller of Grey Iron City was coming to help him?

Wait a second... If the absolute controller of Grey Iron City was willing to help him like this, what was he still doing in Blackwater City?

'...'

"Yes." Since the topic was broached, the doctor continued speaking calmly.

He looked at the strikingly beautiful Helen and somewhat oddly said, "Bai E probably didn't tell you, did he? My daughter is only willing to follow behind him. I'm afraid he'll die here. The moment I received word that you wanted to attack this intelligent mechanism base, I brought people and rushed over."

"..."

"..."

Helen momentarily fell into a state of befuddled confusion.

The daughter of the Grey Iron City doctor!

That guy actually managed to run off with the daughter of a city's ruler!

Incredible!

However, this... seemed to make some sense.

The doctor's gaze shifted past Helen and swept toward the silver-white First Generation Intelligent Mechanism leader standing beside her, looking protective. His eyes were also filled with puzzled confusion.

He recognized this extremely distinctive First Generation Intelligent Mechanism leader, who was the only king of this Intelligent Mechanism Base!

And at this moment, the only king was standing beside this woman, protecting her?

What did this represent?

"Now, what is the situation with you all?"

Aren't humans and intelligent machines natural enemies?

You... How could you collude together? Like rats flocking with snakes?

Hearing this, Helen lifted her chin slightly with pride, "They have surrendered."

After Bai E had left, through technological studies and contacts with these First Generation Intelligent Mechanisms, Helen became increasingly sure of one fact—

These intelligent machines had truly surrendered in earnest.

"..." The silver-white First Generation Intelligent Mechanism leader standing to the side slightly turned away its head. Its metallic face showed no "expression," but its tone clearly carried a hint of shyness, "Please... don't put it so unpleasantly. It's collaboration, just collaboration."

Helen nodded expressionlessly, "Yes, it's collaboration."

After leaving that electronic demon, Helen found that the minds of these intelligent machines were quite simple.

They indeed possessed intelligence almost equal to humans, but without guidance, they were really just as innocent as children who hadn't been corrupted by society.

If the electronic demon directed them to attack humans, they would attack humans.

Without the electronic demon, the freely growing intelligent machines were like blank slates, waiting to be stained by the encounters of the world.

"He actually managed to make the intelligent machines surrender?" The doctor's eyes flashed with a hint of amazement.

Even though the reality was already in front of him, when he heard the other party say it outright, he still felt a sincere shock.

This Intelligent Mechanism Base had always been seen as a thorn in the side of Blackwater City and Grey Iron City. If the intelligent machines didn't have a strong intent to expand, just stealing mines here and there, the two cities might... not be able to unite.

After all, Blackwater City also faced a more lethal threat from the Blackrock District Hive; they would never want to lose too much power over this Intelligent Mechanism Base that had no intent to launch an offensive.

But now...

"...It's a collaboration." The silver-white First Generation Intelligent Mechanism leader seriously corrected on the side.

"Yes, it's collaboration." The doctor also nodded expressionlessly.

Once both sides had made their identities clear and spoken out, the misunderstanding was completely resolved.

Helen waved to Yafei, who was in charge of the logistics for everyone on the side, "Let them continue their work, it's all right now."

Turning her head toward the doctor, she introduced herself, "I am an Academician of the Blackwater City Research Institute, you can call me Helen."

"Academician Helen." The doctor nodded and then looked at the humans and intelligent machine soldiers who were moving various large metal objects onto transport vehicles, "Are you organizing the transport of these materials for Bai E here?"

"Yes... and no." Helen turned and directed her gaze toward a First Generation Intelligent Mechanism leader next to her, "Transportation doesn't require my attention. The reason I am still here is that these intelligent machines possess technology that we can use."

"Oh?" As someone also involved in technology, the doctor was curious, "What technology?"

Knowing that the other party was Bai E's future "father-in-law," Helen spoke frankly, "A defensive technology called 'Power Source Shield,' to be placed on top of our latest developed armed system."

The doctor's eyes immediately lit up at this, and his face rarely showed a hint of eagerness, "Have you developed a new armed system? May I see it?"

Everyone is striving for the rise of humanity, and technology belongs to all.

If others are willing to accept, he never minds teaching the human enhancement technology he has mastered

And if others have some technology that he can also learn from, curiosity and eagerness are naturally unavoidable.

"Certainly." Helen agreed quite straightforwardly, "However, there are still many unresolved issues with no suitable solution, so the current armed system is still in a preliminary stage."

...

Rose hadn't left either.

Having such a good sparring partner in intelligent machines, she had been in charge of piloting the armed system, providing Helen with a continuous stream of data and refinement ideas.

And when Rose piloted the slightly modified armed system, the doctor was instantly impressed...

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The black exoskeleton armor, equipped with an exaggeratedly large sword and hand cannon, was evidently heavy at first glance, and the doctor didn't notice any auxiliary power systems that would aid movement on this rudimentary armament system.

And the female warrior from Blackwater City who could manipulate such heavy arms—how strong was her strength?

Blackwater City should not have the same kind of surgical enhancements as his own, and the doctor, who was proficient in human modification, could not find any trace of surgical alterations on her body.

But the robust vitality she emitted made her enormously attractive.

If such a warrior were to undergo his surgical enhancements, how great could her ultimate achievements be?

In fact, the human modification technology he researched had reached a bottleneck at one stage.

The ten surgeries he had developed were each more difficult than the last; very few could endure up to the eighth, not one had survived the ninth—those who tried either died or ended up crippled, and as for the tenth... it was even less worth mentioning.

Is he to wait for those with extraordinary and one-in-a-billion talents to undergo all of his surgical modifications?

But technology shouldn't be like that.

Technology should have no barriers.

Perhaps... there was something about his technological theory that needed improvement.

But purely from the perspective of surgery, the doctor had already reached his limit.

It was now, upon seeing Rose, who had not gone through any surgery and yet had attained such strength, that he saw hope once again.

Not everyone is a freak like Bai E, and the doctor never expected people like Bai E to be mass-produced.

But what about this female warrior before him? Is she rare enough in Blackwater City?

"Are there many warriors like this in your place?"

The doctor leaned closer to Helen and asked softly.

"Many?" Helen knew of Rose's unique Spiritual Body constitution.

But this doctor surely couldn't discern that this trait was related to higher dimensions at a glance. So, was it that... he was interested in Rose's own physical condition?

If that was the case...

"There might be a hundred or so," Helen replied, not very familiar with the specific situation of the military warriors; she could only access firsthand data during occasional comprehensive surveys.

There were even more in the military barracks before, but the last expedition to the bug nest had been devastating, with survival not closely related to whether one was among the elite; elite warriors like Rose naturally also suffered significant losses.

All were soldiers who had used the Gene Optimization Solution, and the properties Rose had tested previously did not exceed those of other soldiers by much.

Under Bai E's overwhelming pressure, Rose could at most be considered the second strongest in the barracks, without further widening the gap between herself and those below her.

Strong, but the strength had its limits.

If we're discussing entire levels of power, Helen felt that her estimate of hundreds was still reliable.

"A hundred or so..." A hopeful light flickered in the doctor's eyes.

But he remained silent for a moment.

Bai E, that boy, seemed to have a prejudice against human modification technologies, and if he wanted to get people from him, he'd need a sufficiently convincing reason.

He'd have to maintain contact and observe more...

After Helen responded, she turned to Rose and instructed, "Please cover up again; we need more data."

"Okay," Rose replied without the slightest dissatisfaction.

On the contrary, she quite enjoyed these challenges to the limits of her abilities, as long as she had enough time to rest and recover her physical strength.

Wave after wave of opponents imposing sufficient pressure were the steps for her to continuously break her limits.

Wave after wave of smart-mechanical soldiers charged at the lone figure, quickly exhausting themselves, and before long, Rose, panting heavily, returned to the side.

Looking at the freshly produced data, Helen nodded in approval, "The performance is a little better than before."

But it was not the weapons that deserved the credit; it was the person.

Rose's own attributes were growing rapidly through these extreme battles, and her adaptability to the entire weapon system was also improving swiftly.

But for all those involved in technological research, technology was never exclusive to the talented few.

Enabling ordinary soldiers, whose strength wasn't nearly as formidable as Rose's, to wield the power of this weapon system was what her research and design had to achieve.

"Is there anything troubling you at the moment?" the doctor initiated to ask.

Both being involved in technology research, they naturally shared a common language.

"Yes," Helen nodded, "Actually, there's a concept for adding an auxiliary action system to this armament system—it's not completely without direction."

Whether it's the Mechanical Court or the military's mechas, they fundamentally rely on mechanical power to move.

Helen had experience in this design, and scaling down to just a bit larger than a human size was challenging, but not insurmountable.

With continuous trials, she had gained some confidence.

Now, the more troublesome aspect was actually the human factor.

Since she aimed to create truly powerful armor, all designs must push towards the limit.

The Mechanical Court and military mechas, due to their large size, appeared clumsy.

But they could at least address some defensive performance issues by layering materials.

Small humanoid mechas, on the other hand, couldn't just pile on materials to resolve defense issues.

Although there was the "Power Source Shield" technology provided by smart-mechanics, this nearly impregnable shield still had to be operated by a person, right?

So the brand new armament system couldn't be heavy.

Speed was essential—the speed of both straight-line and responsive movements.

Speed wasn't hard; on good road conditions, the motorcycles, mechas, and off-road vehicles humans built could reach speeds of two to three hundred kilometers per hour.

Chapter 769: Protocol Two: Trust_2

So the question arises, what kind of human body can withstand such frequent movements at such high speeds?

Mecha pilots and off-road vehicle drivers can endure these speeds because there is no absolute rigid connection between the pilot and the entire mechanical body.

If a mecha's leg breaks or its head falls off, it doesn't affect the life status of the pilot inside.

Even if an off-road vehicle is hit, at least there are airbags and seatbelts for protection, so that it's not an absolute death sentence.

But for soldiers inside this new type of humanoid weaponry... without a full-range rigid connection with the entire mechanism, they cannot precisely control every part of this new weaponry, and thus cannot unleash its full capabilities.

Command transmission delays, acceptable on large mecha, are absolutely not allowed on this type of single combat equipment.

But maintaining a rigid connection in all directions, any damage suffered by the new weaponry, including the physical stress from high-speed changes in direction, would be faithfully reflected on the soldier within.

Theoretically, apart from Bai E, Helen hasn't found anyone else capable of possessing such a degree of physical resilience.

But it's the same old story; science and technology should not just be for one individual.

If we want this weapons system to be widespread among all soldiers... or at least most elite soldiers, this becomes an unavoidable problem.

"At present, even Rose is struggling to pass our extreme tests," Helen said, biting her lip, "Alternatively, we could lower the designed limits, but once we do that, the upper limit of this weapons system would be greatly reduced, leading to a drop of several tiers in its predicted combat capabilities."

"Like this?" The doctor understood Helen's concerns and had a bold idea, "Perhaps, we could let our people try it?"

Facing Helen's slightly puzzled look, the doctor explained with a smile, "The surgeries I've performed have optimized many of their bodily flaws."

For example, the modification of nerve junctions not only allows them to maintain energy without sleep but also enables them not to lose balance from dizziness during high-speed rotations.

The modifications to their hearts, lungs, muscles, and blood also make their ability to withstand external shocks outstanding, and they can even ignore pain.

Most importantly... his soldiers can be mass-produced!

The greatest demand humanity has for technology is the ability to manufacture it en masse!

No matter how strong an individual is, they can't take care of the whole world.

Bai E can lead everyone to conquer the world, but he must have a basic level of technology to help him maintain it.

As long as his modification technology can adapt to the other party's new needs, then his demands might not be that difficult for them to accept.

Killing two birds with one stone!

The doctor's eyes sparkled with excitement as he looked at Helen eagerly, "I can send people to collaborate with your research, any kind of experimentation will do, they are not afraid of dying!"

After seven or eight surgical modifications, it would be quite difficult for these modified people to even think about dying.

In head-on combat, they might not all be a match for Rose.

But in terms of adaptability to the environment and durability, Rose, still hampered by human physical limitations, couldn't catch up with these modified beings.

"..." Helen looked at the doctor, whose face was filled with the same fervor, and she understood and appreciated his passion for technology itself.

She then glanced at the silent, black-coated figures who always followed the doctor, and finally, she nodded vigorously, "Alright! It's worth a try!"

With that, she and the doctor strode towards the interior of the Intelligent Mechanism Base.

Even though what the intelligent mechanisms' production lines manufactured was worlds apart from what humans used, when these intelligent mechanisms were willing to modify, under Helen's command, a workshop attempting to create a brand-new concept of weaponry was operational in less than an hour.

Helen, who had been there for two days, had completely fallen for the convenience of intelligent mechanism technology.

Her roots may still be in Blackwater City, but for any brand-new experiments, the Intelligent Mechanism Base might be more convenient than the headquarters of the Scientific Research Institute in the city.

The silver-white original intelligent mechanism leader, quietly observing the two human scientists collaborating to create something new, nodded slightly, feeling that these humans truly seemed to let go of their wariness toward them.

Finally, there's no need to worry about being completely cut down by that terrifying human being...

'Huhh~'

The First-Generation Intelligent Mechanism Lord let out a deep sigh of relief.

The electronic eye of white light flickered once more, and beneath the faint sound of electrical currents, a line of text briefly appeared on the surface of the eye of this First-Generation Intelligent Mechanism Lord—

[Agreement Two: Trust (Completed)]

But creating a brand-new conceptual weapon was not as easy as kneading a ball of dough, and the production process was not something that could be completed in a day or two.

Weapon systems, particularly mechanical armaments, were not the doctor's forte, so there was little significance in staying here any longer.

Helen thoughtfully took the initiative to ask, "If you're looking for Bai E, you can go to the town to find him. If he's not there, then he has returned to Blackwater City. The control over him in the city is very strict, and it's actually difficult for him to disappear from the camp for long periods."

"Mm." The doctor nodded as he indeed had something to discuss with Bai E, "Then I will leave a hundred people with you. After you've created your new weapon system, you can find them for experiments at any time, I have already talked to them. They will all obey your commands until I return."

"Thank you." Helen was not shy in accepting.

Both being research personnel, their respect for technology was their acknowledgment of each other.

...

Bai E was teaching Dai Lian higher-level specialization skills after his breakthrough.

The newly evolved Kuang Xin and Gong Yan were crazily leveling up. Dai Lian, the first and so far only player to break through genetic limits, paved the growth path for everyone else.

To breakthrough from level 6 to level 7 in any specialization, one must raise the two base attributes required by the specialization to above 15 points.

Before acquiring the Gene Optimization Solution, each member of their small group of players had brought their main specialization abilities up to level 6.

But after the attributes surpassed 15 points, Dai Lian sadly discovered that it was quite difficult to continue making breakthroughs in specialization abilities through self-improvement alone.

To make a breakthrough, they needed to learn more advanced specialization knowledge.

No wonder the lord had already added level 7-8 specialization teachings to the fourth floor of the Faction Shop quite early on.

"Lord, I want to learn level 7 Light Firearms Specialization!"

After learning the lord's extraordinary archery skills, archery had become Dai Lian's secret trump card for burst damage.

But apart from that explosive shot, in everyday use, archery really wasn't as convenient as firearms.

Hence, after deciding to step into a new phase, Dai Lian still remembered his original aspiration and wanted to see if the new-level Light Firearms Specialization could bring more comprehensive abilities to himself.

Bai E would not disappoint the players who had always followed him.

His own Light Firearms Specialization, which had risen to level 5 (409/3500) after prolonged feedback, had hardly been used since.

Now that the players needed to learn, Bai E simply decided to add points directly.

[Payment: 8591 Combat Experience.]

[Learned "Level 7 Light Firearms Specialization", also gained 2 Hidden Improvement Points.] (Stacked)

[Light Firearms Specialization (Level 7): Shooting accuracy +35%, Critical hit +7%, Arcing shot (Special) +20%, Quick reload (Special) +4, Overload Mode (Special) +4.]

[Detected that the character currently possesses Light Firearms Specialization (Level 7), according to the character's current mastery of all tactical features, Second-Order Improvement Skill Tree (Random Pool) unlocked: Absolute Mastery (can be unlocked repeatedly), Time Barrage.]

[Current unlock requires: General/Combat Experience *10000 (unlocking one more skill of the same level doubles the consumption), Hidden Improvement Points *4 (fixed).]

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"["Teaching" ended, and through the feedback from the "teaching," you have altogether gained 2000 points of combat experience.]

As the saying goes, the master leads you into the door, but the practice is up to the individual.

More advanced specializations for players are more like a kind of skill, where the main thing learned is a qualification for practice.

...

[Through observing the demonstration of a master, you have successfully mastered the tricks of practicing a higher-level specialization ability. Light Firearms Specialization experience +1000, from now on, you can continue to enhance the level of Light Firearms Specialization through normal "practice" up to level 10.]

The moment Dai Lian received the prompt, he finally breathed a sigh of relief.

If he didn't stop now, there wouldn't be enough experience left.

Who knows if this thing would also be level-locked at higher levels?

"Keep up the good work," Bai E said with a hint of a smile in his eyes, "Try to enhance your strength as much as possible recently. Coming up, there's an even more important task that may be entrusted to you."

If his plan to seize control of the city were indeed successful, then it would be essential to replace a number of key positions with people he could trust.

Although players were not very reliable, these few who had been following him all this time were well-understood.

The special military troop included in the plan could perhaps be moved up the agenda.

As soon as Dai Lian heard there was an even more important task, his face flushed red, and he subconsciously snapped to a crisp salute on the spot, "Understood! My lord!"

"If there's nothing else, get busy," Bai E waved his hand, watching Dai Lian walk away.

Not long after Dai Lian left, Bai E received a request from the person in charge of the town's defense force: "My lord, a person claiming to be a doctor from Grey Iron City wants to see you. We stopped him outside the town. He brought at least two hundred men in black, strange fellows. Do you want to meet them?"

'Doctor?'

What does he want with me?

Is it about Nova?

With a thought, Bai E agreed to the request: "I'll be right there."

Outside the town's roadblocks, a tall, old man stood under the blazing sun, waiting patiently.

But as he looked at the completely mechanized metallic town before him, he couldn't help being somewhat astounded.

The change here... was far too great.

Since he learned about the connection between Nova and Bai E, and that Bai E had ties to this small town, his people had been observing the town from a distance in secret.

He had seen the photos of the town's initially desolate state.

And now... it had turned into a fully industrialized city of machinery!

He certainly knew that the residents of this small town were mostly rebels who had fled from his Grey Iron City, but did those rebels have this ability?

No!

If they had this kind of ability, could they have been oppressed to the lower levels in Grey Iron City? Would they have ended up being driven out of the city?

It was that kid who had taken Nova away who completed this kind of construction from nothing!

This level of transformation, even with the entirety of Grey Iron City's power, would be difficult to achieve in a short time.

By such a comparison, could it be that this kid's ability alone could match their entire Grey Iron City?

Or perhaps...

"If I had known intelligences were so easy to bully, would I have waited for him?" A leader of the small team in black raincoats nearby said with some envy.

"..." The doctor glanced at him, "Has the transformation damaged your brain too?"

If intelligences were that easy to bully, the map of the world would have cleared these things away long ago, clean and tidy.

"He's coming," another man in a black raincoat, a transformed person, spotted the target walking out from the town earlier than others.

Most of them had already committed to memory the features and intelligence on Bai E.

"Hmm," the doctor hummed softly, waiting quietly for the other's arrival.

Seeing the white-haired old man from a distance, Bai E quickened his pace a bit more and soon came face-to-face with the man, asking with a puzzled look, "What brings you here? Is there something you need?"

For Nova? It wouldn't warrant such a grand display.

As for other matters? There didn't seem to be any connection between them.

Even though Bai E had some disapproval of the way things were inside the other's city, they were ultimately too far removed, with no right or ability to interfere.

"Let's find a quiet place, just the two of us to talk," the doctor suggested, looking around before taking the initiative to speak to Bai E.

"...Okay."

After instructing those combatants in black raincoats to stand by where they were, the doctor followed Bai E to a secluded room within the town.

This was a house specially constructed for Bai E by the residents of the town, in case Bai E arrived without a place to stay. Although it was usually vacant, it was always clean and tidy, with all the necessary furnishings and items.

"Can we speak now?" Bai E asked calmly after they were seated.

"Has the messenger from the imperial city made contact with Blackwater City?" The doctor directly cut to the chase unlocking the purpose of his visit.

Although he came out with the thought of supporting Bai E, he also intended to temporarily avoid the inquiries of those imperial couriers. He wanted to probe the intentions of Blackwater City from Bai E's mouth before making a decision.

In his view, no matter what Bai E's previous status was, now having revealed his strength multiple times, if the people of Blackwater City weren't fools, then Bai E would definitely be in a high position now.

A person in a high position could hear more confidential news, which made sense.

Seeking out Bai E meant to learn Blackwater City's response to the imperial city's letter.

Since the two cities were close, maybe they could make some joint decisions on certain matters, which could at least increase their leverage without being swept away by the tide."