

## Wow 841

### Chapter 841: Patching Vulnerability Solution\_2

The official responsible for maintaining order waved his hand coldly, "Do as the lord says! No nonsense!"

"Yes..."

Ten people looked at each other, then returned to the queue. One by one, they lined up and individually walked forward, passing in front of Bai E.

The sudden change attracted the attention of everyone at the scene.

Since this lord began demanding tests, this was the first group he had treated differently.

The reliability of his testing results—this moment might serve as the most direct proof.

One...

Two...

Three...

"Shua!"

A flash of the blade cut through the air, and even the spectators forgot to scream.

Only when a head, resembling an octopus, rolled several times on the ground did the warriors responsible for maintaining order suddenly leap into action, pulling the bolts of their guns. "Nobody move! Wait where you are for us to handle this!"

The official who had been waiting nearby for the first-hand result immediately took command of the scene. He instructed various personnel to clean up, dispose of bodies, and maintain order.

Ensuring that everything continued smoothly and methodically.

In the hearts of the senior officials in the back row, there was not a shred of doubt left about the lord who had arrived from Blackwater City.

"He can really identify those insects hidden among us humans!"

"Quickly mobilize the entire city and cooperate with the lord!"

Where there's a will, there's a way.

To speed up the testing process, those waiting in line were now divided into groups and loaded onto vehicles.

After one group finished testing, the driver of the next loaded vehicle would slam on the gas, accelerating the testing as much as possible.

Faster!

Even faster!

One octopus-like head after another failed to evade Bai E's discerning eyes and was swiftly cut down by his blade.

As night began to fall, Bai E hadn't encountered any abnormal groups among the tested individuals for half an hour.

"Is it happening again?"

Bai E gazed into the distance and beckoned to a senior official from Thorn City who had been waiting nearby. "In your city, are there places that are easy to defend, hard to attack, or suitable for hiding people?"

"In the city?" The official paused for a moment, then shook his head. "There might be small corners, but as for large bases capable of housing many people, I don't think so. Lord, what do you mean by this...?"

"It's been quite a while since a new infiltrator appeared."

The official was initially relieved but immediately grasped Bai E's meaning. His expression darkened instantly. "Lord, are you suspecting that the infiltrators, having learned of what's happening here, have all gone into hiding?"

"Very likely. That's precisely what they did back in Eternal Night City."

"This..."

Bai E shook his head and signaled the official not to worry. "This might actually work in our favor, providing us the opportunity to eliminate them in one concentrated operation."

But as he was speaking, one of his companions received unexpected news and hurried over with a grave expression. "My lord, there's been a development!"

"What happened?"

"We just received a report from the guards. A group of people, holding command tokens, claimed they had a critical mission and left through the West Gate!"

Other officials erupted in fury. "What kind of critical mission could there be at a time like this? That's absurd!"

To choose to flee at such a moment, these "humans" were almost blatantly revealing their true identities.

If those insect-like creatures, indistinguishable from humans, returned to the wilderness and eventually crept back into the city or wandered to other cities, it would spell disaster for cities without Lord Bai E's protection!

"What were those guards doing? How could they let anyone leave?"

"You can't entirely blame them..."

Time was tight, and the city couldn't communicate the details of what was happening to every corner.

Thus, gaps emerged.

"The top priority now is to pursue those people and eliminate them all. Even if just one escapes, the consequences could be catastrophic in the future."

Bai E furrowed his brow, noticing a detail he hadn't considered before.

Indeed, if he left, and more infiltrators disguised as humans entered the city, then what?

While cities like Blackwater City, which had the ability to produce tools to distinguish humans from infiltrators, were secured, infiltrating these cities from outside had become nearly impossible.

Yet, for smaller cities suffering from resource shortages and lacking the capacity to confront the crisis independently, manufacturing detection instruments was an unattainable dream.

They lacked resources and a sufficient pool of talent.

Thinking of this, Bai E suddenly remembered a special group—

Players!

No other group in this world possessed a faster ability to learn than these beings.

During his return to Blackwater City, he had already sensed an abundance of players in the barracks and research facilities.

As long as the critical institutions of the city opened their doors to them, these extraordinarily gifted players would inevitably immerse themselves in every facet of the world's operations in no time.

And players weren't unique to Blackwater City. Back when Gong Yan and the others visited Grey Iron City, they even managed to recruit quite a few players from there.

So naturally, Thorn City wouldn't be devoid of these individuals.

If they could be assembled, a specialized team of technicians for Thorn City could be trained in no time!

With determination gleaming in his eyes, Bai E soared into the sky, heading toward the city's West Gate.

As his figure disappeared into the distance, his voice echoed back, "Everyone stay where you are. Wait for me to return and resume the tests!"

Through his unique ability to sense the insects, Bai E could easily detect the general direction in which the infiltrators were fleeing and rapidly chase after them, ensuring none escaped.

Watching Bai E fly off into the sky, the officials of Thorn City couldn't help but admire him. "This lord of Blackwater City is truly formidable."

"Is this what it feels like to have such a city lord? A sense of utter security... I envy the people of Blackwater City."

["Lucky Strike" charge +50.]

Without taking much time, Bai E returned with a string of octopus-like heads in hand, tossing them casually onto the open ground in front of everyone.

With these infiltrators having thinned Thorn City's population, the testing speed paradoxically increased.

Flying over the lengthy city queue, Bai E could only comment on how cleanly the infiltrators had reeled in their network.

"No more." Bai E returned to the eagerly awaiting officials with a cold expression, calmly stating the answer to the question they most wanted to hear.

"Wonderful!"

"Thank you, Mr. Bai!"

"Mr. Bai, why don't you stay and become our city lord?"

"Yes, Mr. Bai, we think you'd make a better city lord."

"..." Bai E shook his head helplessly. "But in the future, you must remain cautious about one problem—if infiltrators come from outside the city, how will you handle them?"

The same overweight official stepped forward and said, "I heard there's technology from the capital that can differentiate these insects from normal humans."

Bai E nodded. "Correct. How many have you made?"

"One..." The official looked embarrassed.

"One?"

"Not even one..."

"..."

Afraid of disappointing Bai E, the official hurriedly explained, "The issue is that Thorn City has limited technical capacity, and the capital's promised resources and technical support haven't arrived yet, so... so..."

Bai E shook his head, unwilling to listen further. "I'll handle this problem. But I need you to help me find some people..."

"Find people?" The official immediately patted his chest, making a guarantee. "Rest assured, my lord. No matter what kind of talent you need, we'll find them for you!"

Chapter 842: Strange Rumors Among Players

"I just don't know, my lord, what kind of people you're looking for?"

The explanation was on the tip of Bai E's tongue, but she suddenly froze.

The term "players" certainly couldn't be mentioned in front of these natives.

However, the term "Children of the Demon" seemed to also be a nickname coined by Blackwater City's Arbitration Place based on player characteristics.

"Just a group of... wandering rogues who have no fixed abode and behave rather strangely and unpredictably."

A member from the officials' team stepped forward from the crowd, "My lord must be referring to those maniacs, correct?"

This matter, in fact, traces back to the old city lord.

In Thorn City, for all these years, no one has dared to challenge the authority of the city lord.

Yet there was indeed a group of people who, in a certain phase, forcibly broke into the city lord's mansion.

They even shouted nonsense about love and justice, completely disregarding the threat of death.

Though that group of maniacs ultimately failed to pose any significant danger to the city lord, it was undeniable that their onslaught left every high-ranking official in Thorn City aware of the existence of these lawless renegades lurking in the shadows of the city.

No one knows where they came from, nor their background.

Initially, their appearance often left clues behind, but they would quickly reveal shocking talents, growing to a level where a single Thorn City warrior would struggle to match them one-on-one.

Yet this was only part of what had been uncovered; in truth, every official aware of this mysterious group found themselves unable to accurately determine how many "maniacs" were truly hidden within the city.

The conflict between Thorn City and the maniacs had been ongoing for quite some time...

"May I ask what my lord plans to do with these people?" The official sheepishly cupped his hands, "To be honest, we've also been investigating their whereabouts, though the results have been minimal. If these are the people my lord is seeking..."

Bai E confirmed his speculation, "Yes, it's those people."

"..."

"However, I'm not seeking them to stir up trouble, but rather to teach them certain... skills."

"Skills?" An official's eyes lit up, and he promptly offered himself. "My lord, we have many skilled craftsmen and technicians within Thorn City. If you need any assistance or are looking for specific talents, we can help too!"

Bai E gave a faint, indifferent smile, "If you manage to gather those maniacs, your confident craftsmen and technicians are welcome to join in and learn alongside them. But my time here is limited; I will not offer any special treatment to your craftsmen."

"Of course! Absolutely!" The official immediately broke out in joy.

"Any bit of technical knowledge from someone of your caliber is precisely the resource we are most desperately lacking in Thorn City."

"We certainly will not disappoint my lord! But could my lord share a bit more detail on what kind of skills you plan to teach?"

"Knowledge related to instruments for detecting infiltrators."

To ensure her all-around capabilities during solo operations, Bai E had specifically dismantled a finished infiltrator detection device prior to departure.

Not only did she carry dozens of required raw materials for the instrument, but she also possessed the complete technical know-how for producing it. She hadn't expected to need them so soon upon arriving at the very first city she lent her support to.

"Understood, my lord! Absolutely, my lord! We'll handle it right away."

"Make it quick." Bai E's tone remained impassive as she turned and walked away without hesitation, "I have limited time—half a day to gather the people, and half a day to learn. Miss the deadline, and I won't wait."

"Huh?" A group of officials was instantly dumbfounded.

What kind of outrageous efficiency is this?

Yet, faced with Bai E's retreating figure, none dared to voice their objections.

The moment Bai E disappeared from view, the officials burst into action, initiating an unprecedentedly efficient search.

While gathering those maniacs, they also did their best to seek out promising and talented individuals within the city.

"But aren't these maniacs unlikely to show up? We've been hunting them down for ages..."

In terms of credibility, Thorn City's official stance was essentially nil to the maniacs.

"This is my lord's rigid demand. What choice do we have? If we fail to fulfill her very first request after she saved our city, do the rest of us even want our jobs anymore? Just be upfront and tell the truth—make them understand that it's not us looking for them, but rather this globally renowned figure from Blackwater City. Her influence will surely hold more weight than ours."

"Besides, those maniacs are bold to the point of recklessness; even if they suspect a trap, some of them are likely to step in regardless. Once we have one as an example, given their strange internal communication methods, it should be manageable."

"True... let's just tell them the truth."

The official responsible for spreading the word never thought there'd come a day when part of his job involved painting his city's authorities as outright villains.

How peculiar, indeed?

...

Having traveled a long way from Blackwater City to aid Thorn City, Blackwater City's city lord Bai E had single-handedly annihilated the insect nest outside the city and decided to impart skills within the city.

And the recipients of this training were precisely the maniac players who had long opposed Thorn City's officials, with a recruitment deadline set to half a day.

The news spread through Thorn City almost instantly, reaching the ears of every player in the city.

"Blackwater City?!"

"City lord Bai E?!"

These two familiar names immediately ignited the passion of every Thorn City player.

In the early stages of the game, players rarely exchanged intel, or limited communication failed to gain unanimous approval among the community.

After all, each player's birthplace was different, and their starting environments varied.

The development of each city followed vastly different trajectories. Naturally, the events and characters each player encountered differed drastically as well.

Chapter 843 Strange Rumors Among Players\_2

In this situation, other people's experiences and insights are completely useless to me, just empty talk on paper.

But as players gradually grow and deepen their understanding and involvement in this world's background, they're also starting to recognize the global environment we're all a part of.

Especially with the recent Human Alliance incident, frankly, it's an even hotter topic among the player community.

Within this major event tied to the shared world background of all players, the name that stood out didn't just circulate among the natives.

When it comes to various "number ones" in the game, players tend to pay close and fervent attention.

Some dive deep into uncovering the backstory of characters, while others dream about rallying a group someday to take them down.

Or perhaps they learn the backstory first and then think of a way to gather people and take them down.

Bai E, the Lord of Blackwater City, is currently the universally acknowledged number one in this world!

The strength to solo annihilate an insect nest is undeniably the ceiling of this game right now.

Since entering this game for so long, some daring players have challenged those hideous-looking insects in the wilderness.

And even those who consider themselves in the top tier among players struggle against a single mantis-type insect, let alone wiping out an entire nest.

In such circumstances, players have no other option when facing this legendary number one.

They can only choose to learn—and if possible, establish some sort of connection.

Even picking up a few random abilities from this game's ceiling may make them walk tall among the player community.

Not to mention... a rumor has begun circulating among the player group—

The enhancements acquired in the game seem to have a certain degree of influence on real-life bodies.

One player claimed that after playing the game for a while, their previously disabled legs somehow recovered!

Even more incredible, another player, weighing over 200 pounds at a height of only 5'2", said they could now run like the wind.

With this in mind, the idea of having a chance to interact with the man who currently represents the ceiling of the game world's background is the greatest allure for every player in Thorn City.

"I'm signing up!"

"Me too!"

"Don't do it! What if it's another trap from those bastards!"

"A trap? So what? At worst, I'll just die! Anyway, I heard all those people whose real-life bodies got enhanced had at least died once in the game. I haven't died even once yet, so what's the harm?"

"This... I'm coming too! Let's go together!"

...

"Open up! Free trade!" Kuang Xin, who was just leading his convoy on a trading run to another city, suddenly found himself at the daily log-off time.

This log-off, and the subsequent log-in, brought no change to the game world for him.

Only his mind would gain the memory of a day's worth of encounters and events.

As he woke up from the gaming pod, he immediately received a familiar incoming call—

Gong Yan.

As the call connected, Gong Yan's voice, sweet yet tinged with a faint maturity, came through the phone: "About the recent rumors on the forums, do you feel anything?"

What other players had said wasn't entirely trustworthy, and among their little team, only Gong Yan and Kuang Xin had died once.

So this bizarre rumor could only be discussed between them.

"Me?" Kuang Xin's face showed confusion. "Maybe? Or maybe not. I haven't tried, but I do feel some inexplicable confidence."

The kind of confidence that made him feel as if his body could effortlessly execute a backflip or vault over a railing half his height.

But for safety, Kuang Xin hadn't tested any action that might result in physical injury.

On the other end, Gong Yan lowered her voice slightly, speaking in a somewhat enticing tone: "If you haven't tried, you should go ahead and try."

Intrigued, Kuang Xin asked, "Yanzi, do you feel it too?"

"I..." Gong Yan bit her lip, uncertain whether her next words might sound too horrifying. "I think... the me in real life might have Spiritual Energy."

While speaking, Gong Yan squinted her eyes at the pen floating in front of her desk, which she was "lifting" through sheer thought. Her face grew solemn. "I don't know if it's just my imagination."

"..." Upon hearing this, Kuang Xin immediately grew interested. "Are you serious? Alright, wait there—I'm going out to test my body right now."

To satisfy Yanzi's doubts, why not endure a little pain?

Kuang Xin dashed out of his apartment building, eyeing the steps leading down from the entryway. Without hesitation, he took a running start and flung himself forward.

The wind howling past his ears did nothing to slow Kuang Xin, as his hefty body soared mid-air, executing a flawless 360-degree spin while leaping over the stairs.

"Smack!"

His body landed securely and instinctively, neither dizzy nor disoriented.

A passing auntie's eyes nearly popped out of her sockets as she stared at Kuang Xin in shock, scanning up and down his physique. "What does this young man eat to grow up like that? Such an amazing body!"

Turning back to look at the distance he had just flown over, Kuang Xin replayed the sequence in his mind.

He couldn't help but feel as if the world before him had taken on a surreal quality.

Giving himself a sharp pinch on the thigh, Kuang Xin finally shook his head to snap back to reality. "It's real... I'm not dreaming. This is the real world—I'm not in the game right now."

If I'm not in the game, yet I can still achieve feats like this?

With this thought, Kuang Xin resolved to test more, verifying whether his current physical abilities had indeed undergone the exaggerated enhancements described in the rumors.

Jumping, climbing, front flips, backflips.

Single-arm push-ups, one-handed handstand walking...

One task after another, all completed with ease.

Kuang Xin's eyes widened in astonishment, entirely dumbfounded.

"Holy sh\*t!"

Calling Gong Yan back, the first words out of Kuang Xin's mouth were an uncontrollable burst of excitement: "Yanzi, I've freaking transformed too!"

"So it's real." Gong Yan's tone turned grave, her voice drifting. "It's not just my imagination."

"When I log back into the game today, I have to discuss this with Dai and the others!"

"No! Don't tell them yet!" Gong Yan immediately interrupted.

"Huh?" Kuang Xin's face revealed confusion. "Why? This is such great news—shouldn't we be telling them to restart their characters and train right away?"

Based on the rumors, players whose real-life bodies had enhanced were all those who had died at least once in the game.

Dai Lian and the others hadn't died even once—if they didn't die soon, they'd miss the chance!

But Gong Yan's response carried an eerie undertone, something unsettling.

"Great news? Why do you think this is good news?"

"Isn't it?"

Getting superhuman physical abilities effortlessly.

With a body like this, even working as a mover would earn you enough for a house within a day, right?

"I have Spiritual Energy." Gong Yan repeated as she gazed at the floating, spinning pen in front of her.  
"Do you understand what this means?"

"What?" Kuang Xin was still clueless.

"It means... our world might also have high-dimensional space..."

If it were merely physical enhancements, it wouldn't feel as eerie, but Spiritual Energy was an absolutely supernatural power.

According to the game's lore, the existence of Spiritual Energy was rooted in the presence of high-dimensional space.

Now that Spiritual Energy was appearing in their real world, did it imply that high-dimensional space was somehow linked to their reality?

If that were the case... could the demons intrinsically tied to high-dimensional space in the game lore also—just possibly—be forming some kind of connection to their real world?

"High-dimensional demon invasion of the real world... does that still sound like good news?"

Chapter 844 Blackwater City, building a starship?

"What should we do? Should we not tell them anything?" Kuang Xin felt a bit flustered.

Acquiring supernatural powers was naturally thrilling, but if the real world could face disasters of the same extent as the game world, the mere thought made Kuang Xin's entire body shiver in fear.

Playing the game is one thing, but if such catastrophes were to descend upon the world...

Gong Yan frowned, feeling uncharacteristically lost, "Whether we tell them or not, it's trouble either way."

According to the rules of the game world, the nature of high-dimensional demons is such that the more people who know about them, the easier it is for them to make contact with the real world.

The fewer people who possess Spiritual Energy or know about them, the slower their invasion of the real world might progress.

However, if we completely pretend not to know anything, the pace at which they erode the world might only slow down marginally.

When the time comes, if humanity in the real world lacks the kind of Spiritual Energy battle abilities seen in the game, how will they face the invasion of high-dimensional demons?

Intentionally training in power accelerates demonic erosion.

Completely lacking training in power means waiting for a slow death dictated by fate.

Faced with beings like high-dimensional demons, it seems that no matter what course of action is taken, it's the wrong one.

Unless beings as overpoweringly strong as Mr. Bai can also appear in the real world, it's the only possible hope to shelter it temporarily.

"So should we tell Dai and the others after all?"

"If we tell them and warn them not to spread the word, it's not entirely impossible. But whether we say anything or not, it doesn't seem to matter much." Gong Yan furrowed her brows tightly, "Right now, I even feel uncertain about our assumption that dying once allows us to obtain power from the game. Death may not be the key to gaining strength. The 'Real Game' option we chose might be the core reason behind our ability. As for whether this option is part of the demons' conspiracy, that's still unknown. If it truly is part of their scheme..."

Gong Yan bit her upper lip, her tone bitter, "Then those of us who've already gained power might have already become the true pawns of the demons. The game's official term for us, 'Children of the Demon', might actually become reality. I don't want Dai and the others to walk the same path we're on..."

"Huh?" Kuang Xin was completely bewildered, "What should we do?"

"Sigh... I don't know either. But now that we've gained power, we must strive to strengthen ourselves as much as possible! If the world falls into crisis again in the future, Kuang Xin..." Gong Yan's voice became low as she called softly.

"What?"

"Maybe you will become my hero again!"

"Hero... huh?"

Kuang Xin's heart echoed with Gong Yan's words, and he felt as though the blood flowing within him had transformed into molten lava surging forth from ancient times, burning and enduring.

As he lay back into the gaming pod to enter the game once more, in the pitch-black darkness before connecting to the game, a pair of eerie crimson eyes silently emerged from the void, staring malevolently...

...

The atmosphere at the scene was far more explosive than what any Thorn City official had anticipated.

No one could have expected that those wild and unruly individuals who had been opposing them for so long would enthusiastically sign up because of a single announcement. They kept shouting absurd phrases like "I am Bai E's loyal dog."

"If we'd known earlier that these people were so easy to fool, we would've used this excuse to reel them in long ago..."

"Reel them in? If we had gathered them all earlier, what would we have to present to Mr. Bai now? Mr. Bai specifically wanted people, and he can probably tell who are genuine rebels with just one look."

After all, identifying those insects disguised as humans at a glance is far more ridiculous than this.

"True... hahaha! I never imagined humans could still have such incredible talents. I was really ignorant before."

Recruitment went on for half a day, and when the time was up, the recruitment site shut down instantly.

No matter how much players who rushed back or received the news late begged, not a single official dared defy Bai E's will.

Altogether, a total of more than fifty players gathered into a neat formation before Bai E, whispering among themselves, "This is Bai E?"

"So handsome?"

"Not outrageously handsome, just that he emits a kind of reassuring aura... So this is humanity's strongest leader right now? Truly worthy of the reputation!"

"I wonder what he'll teach us? I'm so excited!"

Beside the players' formation, there was also a group of craftspersons and technicians carefully chosen by Thorn City. The two groups were distinctly separated.

Thorn City's officials were determined to let this Whitewater City leader, Bai E, see the comprehension skills of their Thorn City craftsmen!

Otherwise, as allies, if Thorn City performed too poorly, it would be an embarrassment before Mr. Bai.

Bai E began teaching...

Watching as Bai E mostly focused on disassembling and assembling machines on the spot with minimal explanation, followed by instructions about various points to note during machine usage, the previously enthusiastic Thorn City craftsmen were visibly stunned.

'What's this supposed to be?'

'This is teaching? No theoretical principles, no apprentice trials—does this qualify as teaching?'

'Damn it, how are we supposed to learn from this?'

What was even more jaw-dropping was the reaction of the neighboring group of so-called "lunatics."

"We've mastered it, sir!"

"Is that it, sir? Can we get something more exciting?"

"Sir, could you teach us something else?"

["Teaching" completed. Based on feedback from the "Teaching" session, you have gained 29,800 points of universal experience.]

Looking at the lively players before him, Bai E smiled indulgently, "Alright then."

Chapter 845 Blackwater City, building a starship?\_2

Anyway, my core objective has already been achieved. Teaching these players some extra skills could serve as a way to build rapport in advance.

"I imagine everyone is finding it quite challenging to enhance their attributes, so let me teach you all a method to quickly train your physical fitness."

Advanced Physical Training 3.0 should be the most universal skill I have—it doesn't matter what development path these players lean toward; everyone should benefit greatly from it.

Watching the legendary Bai E lead the group with some bizarre movements on the training field, the artisans from Thorn City felt utterly bewildered.

What the hell?

We were promised knowledge-based learning, so why are we practicing physical poses now?

Did the city officials not explain this properly beforehand?

What exactly are we here for?

As the minutes ticked by, Bai E wrapped up the training program for the players.

["Training" completed. Based on "training" feedback: you've gained a total of 73,000 universal experience points.]

'Using this global aid initiative to collect another batch of experience points from the players seems like a good idea, doesn't it?'

With that thought in mind, Bai E waved his hand in farewell to the players, whose eyes gleamed with excitement, and to the Thorn City artisans, who remained visibly perplexed.

"Train hard and grow stronger quickly. Our Blackwater City caravans will soon travel to every city in this region, bringing you the items you desire the most."

Before leaving, Bai E didn't forget to dangle the biggest carrot of them all in front of these players.

The so-called "most desired items"... were obviously the Gene Optimization Solution.

With plans spoken, Bai E floated into the air.

A shadowy blue-and-white mecha emerged out of thin air at high altitude. After descending ever so slightly, the entire machine exploded into a gust of wind and darted toward the far-off horizon with a whooshing sound.

Bai E's time was tight—he couldn't afford to linger anywhere for too long.

"Holy crap! That was so slick!"

"Mr. Bai, take me with you! I'll be your loyal dog!"

"I'm the one who should go!"

"Woof woof woof!"

Contrasting the players' exhilaration, Thorn City's officials rushed in as soon as they realized Bai E had left.

"Has Bai E left?"

"Why did Bai E leave just like that?! Couldn't he at least say goodbye to us first?"

One of the officials immediately sought out the artisans tasked with learning "advanced technology."

"Well? How much did you learn?"

"..." The artisans stood silent, not daring to make a sound.

Disappointment spread across the questioning official's face. "Don't tell me..."

"Injustice, sir!" One flustered artisan finally snapped under the pressure and cried out, "He barely taught us anything... it's impossible for anyone to learn from him!"

"Nonsense!" One player, who'd been itching to challenge Thorn City officials, immediately sneered and countered, "We managed to learn it, didn't we?"

"Learn my ass!" The artisan didn't hold back.

The player grinned viciously, a new idea flashing through his mind. "How about a bet?"

...

What happened behind him never fell within Bai E's concern.

Countless cities suffering under hardship worldwide were waiting to be saved, one by one.

The lessons gleaned from rescuing the previous city would always be addressed in the next.

Whether or not these cities trusted Bai E, his ability to single-handedly annihilate Bug Race nests was his true calling card.

Months of battles later, in every city he passed, even if they didn't entirely believe in Bai E, they at least knew and revered the existence of such a singular human force.

Some of the cities in the direst circumstances, after being saved—much like Eternal Night City—had even erected shrines uniquely dedicated to Bai E.

For people teetering on the brink of annihilation, anyone who could rescue them from their misery was nothing short of a god in their hearts!

["Lucky Strike" charging +50.]

[You have received a touch of faith erosion; higher-dimensional traits intensifying...]

[You have received a touch of faith erosion; higher-dimensional traits intensifying...]

...

Similar messages had been appearing repeatedly during those months.

Yet, despite this constant influx, Bai E still hadn't felt any noticeable changes to either his physical body or his Spiritual Body.

Maybe this level of faith was still far from sufficient.

When the final Bug Race nest near human civilization was uprooted from the earth, humanity's society for the first time saw a revival marked by joyous, bustling energy.

Though many other Bug Race nests might lie deep in the wilderness, along with rogue beastmen and dormant Intelligent Mechanism Bases, these threats hadn't completely disappeared.

Yet, with every city now freed from the bug threats, it was already seen as humanity's greatest progress.

"Even though we've achieved a significant victory in the fight against other species, we must never let our guard down!"

After eliminating the immediate threats to all cities, over a thousand cities gathered once more in the capital for the grand Thousand Alliance conference.

Of course, most of the thousand cities were merely spectators. Genuine proposal rights were limited to around fifty cities with Supreme Council membership.

Among those, only the five cities of the Upper Council had the authority to determine the direction of every key proposal.

It's worth mentioning that Eternal Night City, once holding one of these five Upper Council seats due to Bug Race infiltrators competing under its name, eventually lost its qualification after being deemed unfit for the council's standards. The seat ultimately fell to its former rival—Beast Fury Isle.

Now, at this conference of a thousand cities, the capital raised its vision for the alliance's future development.

"We, from the capital, believe that the alliance's next priorities should continue focusing on eradicating global disasters and restoring the livelihood levels of every city."

The goal was clear: humanity deserved a brighter future to ensure everyone could live in comfort.

The days of hiding away in underground steel caverns filled with the stench of mold were something no one wanted to revisit.

After the capital representative finished their remarks, their gaze swept across the room. "So, does anyone here have any opposing ideas? If not, we can proceed with the vote on the alliance's development priorities."

The capital's proposal reflected the answer in the minds of many.

The alliance had come this far—gradually reclaiming global sovereignty was more than enough.

The planet was here; who could challenge them for it?

Yet, no one hurried to respond. Instead, all eyes turned to one particular seat among the five Upper Council chairs.

The figure under the Blackwater Flag, representing Blackwater City, was the silent focus of nearly a thousand city representatives attending the conference.

Everyone was waiting for this city to speak.

As the terrifying influence centered around this city, eclipsing even the capital, the officials from the capital looked rather displeased.

But regardless of their frustrations, everyone knew one truth: the foundation of the alliance's existence... had almost entirely been fought for by that man!

Under this intense spotlight, Kiro Lan, Blackwater City's delegate, rose with a light smile.

She glanced around and smiled softly.

"I believe the alliance's next focus... should be cosmic exploration!"

As Kiro Lan spoke, the room fell silent enough to hear a pin drop.

Everyone listened intently to Blackwater City's voice.

"I think we should build starships!"

When her words landed, the room erupted into stunned silence.

After some time, someone finally swallowed nervously and asked, "Is this... Mr. Bai's directive?"

Kiro Lan nodded proudly. "Of course."

Chapter 846 Trust

Such an avant-garde proposal actually came from that man's mouth. Even if it defies current reality, it must now be taken seriously.

"What are your plans for action?"

"First, naturally, we must unify global production capacity. Under the overarching premise of building the Starship, all other demands must be relegated to secondary goals. Secondly..." Having already undergone internal discussions, Kiro Lan spoke with eloquence and precision, methodically laying out the various provisions Blackwater City had prepared.

After quietly listening to Kiro Lan's statement on behalf of Blackwater City, the host from the Empire solemnly asked, "Does anyone here still have any unresolved questions?"

"No."

"Understood."

No one raised any doubts.

The proposal from Blackwater City was highly detailed, leaving everyone with only two choices: to act or not.

The Empire's questioner lowered his gaze in quiet despondence, weakly scanning the room. "Is there anyone who has another proposal?"

The room was enveloped in silence.

The Empire's suggestion already represented the sentiments of most cities, but now Blackwater City had presented an alternate possibility.

The situation was clear: everyone simply needed to choose between these two options.

After a long silence, the Empire's host calmly declared, "If there's nothing more, then let these two proposals be the options for the voting process."

As his voice fell, brief silence was followed by frantic activity on the vote counter.

When the faint buzzing from the timer finally subsided, the ultimate results appeared on the circular public screens before all attendees—

38:7

The stance of the 45 cities in the Lower Council was shockingly united, with an overwhelming majority supporting Blackwater City's decision.

Even if the Empire wanted to leverage the Supreme Council's high-weight votes, where one vote equaled ten, to impact the result, the outcome was even more despairing—

4:1

Whether in the Supreme Council or the Lower Council, the voting results were astoundingly unified.

Staring at the final results displayed on the public screen, the Empire's host looked despondent but had no choice but to announce the result aloud, "The voting results are in. It seems everyone's choice is remarkably aligned—the Alliance will implement Blackwater City's proposed 'Starship Project.' But before that..."

This man, also serving as a representative of the Empire, weakly removed the golden-threaded glasses from his face and slowly scanned the room with his still-bright eyes, looking at every member present from the Supreme and Lower Councils.

"I just want to ask everyone one thing: Do you truly believe that humanity has become strong enough to the point where interstellar exploration is our only path forward?"

In the past, the footsteps of the Golden Age reached every planet in the star system, but before humanity had time to truly explore the depths of space, the disasters of the Bug Race and electronic demons arrived in succession.

Humanity fell in an instant, leaving us in this current state of decline.

And now, before even reclaiming the heights of the Golden Age, are we truly ready to set our sights on such a distant goal?

"..." After a prolonged silence, a city from the Lower Council stood up and took the initiative to speak, "In truth, even with the Alliance established, our city's assessment of humanity's overall strength remains somewhat limited. I don't know whether humanity has grown strong enough to focus solely on interstellar exploration, but I know that from the lofty vantage point of that man, any opinion he offers is undoubtedly grounded in foresight and wisdom. I don't know about humanity, but I trust that man... he won't be wrong."

Another city leader stood up to speak, "A lack of foresight leads to immediate troubles. Since that man has proposed building the Starship, there must be even more catastrophic threats looming in the universe. Everyone should know by now—whether it's those beasts, elves, or Bug Race—they are not native species to our planet. Beyond our world, there surely exists another magnificent society of intelligent life. If we don't explore outward, humanity will forever remain at a disadvantage in terms of knowledge.

No one knows how the beasts and elves beyond our planet view us humans, nor does anyone know if the Bug Race that invaded our home represents a massive contingent species. No one knows whether the invaders we fought were the core forces of the Bug Race or merely their vanguard troops. If a similar event were to happen again, would we, with our current strength, still be able to repel them like our forebears did four hundred years ago during the Golden Age, reducing them to their current weakened state?

We can't always shrink back and hope that these disasters will simply vanish. Mr. Bai made this decision because he foresees the crises we will inevitably face in the future! It's common knowledge that when it comes to the Bug Race, Mr. Bai is the foremost expert on our planet."

The representative from Beast Fury Isle, as the first Supreme Council member to speak, attracted the greatest attention. "Under Mr. Bai's intervention, even the beasts who treated the plains around our cities as their mushroom fields for years relinquished those fertile lands and migrated en masse. He's the benefactor of our entire city. I trust that any decision he makes is grounded in absolute correctness."

The people of Thousand Facet City, almost all of whom possess Spiritual Energy talents, have the deepest sensitivity to high-dimensional space. Their city's representative now offered a completely different perspective on the matter. "In truth, high-dimensional space has been undergoing unprecedented changes. In our perception, it feels vaster and emptier than ever before. This could very well signify the existence of many intelligent lifeforms beyond our planet who have carved out high-dimensional spaces of their own. Exploring outward and establishing connections with these intelligent beings holds profound significance. What's more, Mr. Bai, who once led expeditions into high-dimensional space, certainly possesses a deeper understanding of this matter. His opinions deserve our full attention."

Trust... trust...

It was all trust.

Regardless of which city voiced its support, the considerations during the vote were overwhelmingly based on trust in that man.

Because the decision came from him, even the most nebulous ambitions seemed grounded in tangible foundations.

'So this... this is the network of influence and reputation Mr. Bai has built over these past six months through his widespread assistance?'

The representative of the Empire felt a bitter sting in his heart, but he could only resign himself to this established fact.

"Since that's the case, the 'Starship Project' is officially launched as of now!"

Chapter 847 Personnel Selection

All around the globe, construction was fervently underway.

Even though Bai E possessed the starship blueprints, essentially resolving the technical challenges required for building a starship,

constructing a massive starship capable of traveling deep into space required every single part to reach absolute precision.

This was the first step in their planet's exploration of the cosmos. For the first starship to be constructed, no technical specification could possibly be too stringent.

No single city had the capability to create all the necessary components at the highest precision. Only by pooling the collective effort of thousands of cities could they ensure the successful launch of their starship.

These manufacturing requirements left no room for shortcuts or embellishments—perfection was the only standard.

For Bai E, however, what mattered even more was determining who would participate in the first interstellar voyage.

The starship had limited capacity. According to the theoretical specifications of the blueprint, it could accommodate no more than three thousand people.

Moreover, facing the completely uncharted cosmic depths, Bai E didn't intend to bring too many people on this maiden voyage.

But as the vanguard for exploring the universe, these crew members had to meet specific standards of capability and competence.

High standards meant they all had to be elites.

And no matter the area of expertise, elites were pillars of human society.

To take away too many of these societal pillars at once could leave the planet's society in an inevitable period of weakness.

Bai E wanted to venture into the deep cosmos, but he didn't want to weaken the strength of the planet as a result.

Who could be both capable and bear minimal societal responsibility?

The answer was obvious: players!

Moreover, compared to the native inhabitants who only had one life to live, if something unfortunate were to occur during the interstellar journey, the death of players would be relatively less distressing.

After nearly a year of gameplay, the players had generally reached a point of development and growth.

However, to participate in the first interstellar voyage, Bai E wanted to enhance the players' capabilities even further—

through human augmentation.

After months of traversing calamities across various regions and during the prolonged process of constructing the starship, Helen and the doctor had collaboratively refined the technology of human augmentation.

The innovations had even incorporated biotechnology inherited from the Golden Age's bio-soldiers, resulting in augmented warriors who possessed immense power and extended lifespans—entirely transcending the level of ordinary humans to become a whole new class of formidable fighters.

Yet, the number of individuals capable of enduring these extensive surgeries was extraordinarily limited relative to the human population.

Leaving aside the matter of consent, Blackwater City's technical staff—after conducting widespread physical evaluations across all cities—had arrived at a rough estimate: one in ten thousand.

Only one out of every ten thousand people could fully undergo the complete set of procedures.

The earlier difficulties and immense risks experienced during surgeries carried out in Blackwater City and Grey Iron City stemmed from this scarcity.

Those few naturally suitable for all the surgeries were inherently rare, while the "test subjects" from the experimental phase, when the procedures were still rudimentary, were never destined to endure the full scope of augmentations.

The primary reason Bai E could feel assured about leaving this planet was that the one-in-ten-thousand warriors selected globally had all undergone the augmentations.

Paired with the enhancements of storm armor, a team of just a few dozen to a hundred such individuals could accomplish feats on par with Bai E himself, even combating a bug hive.

With the protection of these storm battalions, humanity on the planet would face no significant threats from any disasters they'd previously encountered, even in Bai E's absence.

Now, Bai E planned to extend the privilege of these augmentations to the players.

Players willing to follow him into the vastness of the cosmos would have the chance to receive these augmentations.

The extent to which a player's body could adapt to the surgeries would depend on their individual potential.

However, when the recruitment announcement was released, the number of players signing up from around the globe far exceeded Bai E's expectations.

The original plan was to recruit around one thousand crew members for the first starship expedition, but now tens of thousands of players had expressed interest.

The planet's game world still had plenty of content for players to explore, offering them numerous events to grow and enjoy.

But this was a chance to explore the cosmos!

Even the real world hadn't entered interstellar space yet. Who knew what kinds of creativity and imagination awaited in the game's universe?

Not to mention, those who signed up to explore the stars would also receive free physical augmentations.

Many players had already witnessed the combat prowess of the augmented native warriors firsthand. The promise of such drastic, immediate boosts to their combat abilities made players eager to join, as though they'd push and shove their way in.

To players, altering their in-game bodies through modifications was no big deal.

Even transforming into orcs or bugs was acceptable to some curiosity-driven players.

In fact, ever since orcs and humans had established normal communication, certain fun-seeking players had immersed themselves among orcs, leading to practical advances in the possibility of "rebirth" transformation.

Given these developments, the decision now fell to Bai E.

After assessing the situation, Bai E waved his hand. "Then run a screening test on them."

Since there was an abundance of candidates, he would select only the best of the best.

The results of the testing came in quickly—they all qualified!

This was the value of players!

The testing personnel could hardly believe their eyes, but even with Helen and the doctor verifying the results, the findings remained unequivocally accurate.

Every single one of these so-called "Children of Chaos" players was fully suited for the surgical augmentations developed in Blackwater City.

"In that case, select two thousand of them based on the needed fields and appropriate proportions..." Bai E reluctantly decided, discreetly increasing the planned roster size for the first interstellar expedition.

As for future policies regarding the players...

Even if the players weren't inherently suited for surgical augmentation, it would be impossible to grant this extraordinary power to all of them instantly—these fundamentally chaotic beings.

The process of attaining such power had to involve some challenges, ensuring that players pursued it proactively to reduce the likelihood of chaos following their empowerment.

Players as tools were highly useful, but the Fourth Calamity could be even more terrifying than the bugs.

All systems were in place; only the final spark was needed...

Chapter 848 Set Sail!

As the spindle-shaped starship gradually revealed its proper outline over the vast plains, the dense black metallic shell exuded a sense of steadfast solidity.

Every day, countless convoys came and went across this entirely sealed-off region of plains. The alliance cities, which had struggled to emerge from the chaos of war into today's unified state, had almost universally abandoned humanity's inherent penchant for internal conflict.

Throughout the entire construction process, there hadn't been any significant disruptions or attacks.

Everyone was waiting for the day it would truly take flight!

Nearly a year after the starship project began, the doctor responsible for human genetic modification technology once again approached Bai E.

The progress of the starship's construction was visible to everyone. As the projected departure date drew near, the doctor conducted a final physical examination on all personnel participating in this inaugural interstellar voyage, as was his duty.

Only those individuals who fell within the normal thresholds of both physical and psychological stability would be granted final boarding qualifications.

In truth, this was not the first examination of its kind. Over the past year, the doctor had repeatedly monitored the physical condition of each batch of modified humans.

Today, the doctor presented his findings, detailing the subsequent observations of the bodies of warriors who had undergone surgical modifications.

After all, once Bai E led the team into space, whether future encounters would occur—or when they might happen—was anyone's guess.

Before Bai E truly departed, the doctor felt it was necessary to convey the entirety of his understanding to Bai E.

The technology was constantly advancing, and the flaws exhibited by the early surgically-modified warriors were gradually being uncovered and addressed.

For instance, nearly all individuals who had undergone surgical modifications had completely lost the ability to reproduce.

Reproducing to continue one's lineage is an innate aspiration for many humans who come into this world.

If you don't reproduce and I don't reproduce, humanity will inevitably face extinction as its lone outcome.

This is why humanity could never make genetic modification surgery universal. Beyond the exorbitant cost of creating a Storm Warrior, the prospect of sacrificing humanity's capacity for reproduction in pursuit of combat prowess is a development no one wishes to see.

Under these circumstances, the existence of a select few individuals who retained the necessary conditions for reproduction after undergoing modifications became something of utmost importance.

These individuals, regardless of whether they were natives or players, totaled merely about a dozen exceptions.

Interestingly, among players, the exceptions included Kuang Xin, Gong Yan, Dai Lian, Gu Lan, and Xu Ruoguang—precisely five individuals.

Among the natives, Bai E was familiar with quite a few: Stone, Rose, Zero, Morphie, and Ares.

Aside from two other native individuals whom Bai E had never encountered, the twelve exceptions included ten whom Bai E personally knew.

One couldn't help but wonder why the small Blackwater City seemed to produce so many extraordinary individuals.

These twelve exceptions were regarded as treasures by the doctor.

After all, the current modification technologies were largely derived from the foundational techniques developed by the doctor himself. Many of the challenges he had faced in the past remained unsolved.

For instance, the bodies of modified warriors were inherently unstable, requiring regular doses of Stabilizing Repair Fluid to maintain physical stability.

Additionally, each modified warrior's body carried a certain probability of producing a rare seed known as the "golden seed." This seed was a product of coordination between the modified organs and the individual's original genetic makeup. When implanted into a recipient, the seed enabled its host to undergo the same surgical modifications as the donor without experiencing rejection or reliance on Stabilizing Repair Fluid.

The production rate of golden seeds was astonishingly low, rivaling the statistical rarity of finding humans suitable for complete genetic modifications.

Out of ten thousand ordinary individuals, perhaps only one would possess the right biological traits for all the surgeries. Similarly, out of ten thousand modified warriors, only one might produce a golden seed.

By coincidence, these twelve exceptions not only retained their reproductive capabilities but also each generated their own golden seed.

However, given limited time, the doctor had only managed to collect the first golden seed produced by each of these individuals. He had also observed signs of a second golden seed beginning to form but wasn't certain whether they could continuously generate these seeds or whether there was a limit to the number they could produce.

To date, the doctor had only successfully implanted the twelve initial golden seeds into the bodies of the next batch of modified warriors. It was still unknown whether this new generation would inherit the unique traits of the donors—the ability to reproduce and produce more golden seeds.

If this proved feasible... then using these initial twelve exceptions, it might be possible to create a fully mature, stable, and sustainably developing Storm Warrior Brigade.

The reason the doctor visited Bai E before his departure was to urge Bai E to pay closer attention to these exceptional individuals.

Apart from Ares the War God, all of the other special exceptions showed great enthusiasm for Bai E's journey.

They all eagerly wished to join this monumental expedition. Even Ares himself, had it not been for his desire to safeguard humanity's original homeland, would undoubtedly have followed Bai E's footsteps.

Chapter 849 Set Sail!\_2

"Understood, Doctor." After listening to the Doctor's account, Bai E nodded in agreement. "I will focus on monitoring them... After we leave, the development of the Storm Battle Corps on this planet will be entirely in your hands."

The Doctor beamed with a hearty smile. "Of course!"

Creating a group of mortal angels capable of conquering all corners of the universe was his life's greatest ambition!

Shortly after the Doctor departed, Helen, the chief designer of the entire Starship Project, also came to find Bai E.

The passage of time and the weight of responsibility had added a certain hardened weariness to the radiant and alluring woman.

Years of tireless dedication left her eyes full of fatigue, but upon seeing Bai E, she couldn't help but show a bright smile. "Bai E, it's time for launch."

To fulfill her promise to Bai E, she had thrown herself completely into the Starship project for nearly a year.

Endless reviews, tests, with every detail demanded to be nothing short of perfect.

All for the sake of this single, unassuming announcement today.

Upon hearing that the day had finally arrived, Bai E froze momentarily, then smiled warmly at her.  
"These past two years... you've worked so hard."

"Hard?..." Helen's eyes flashed with a rare intensity. "You're about to leave. Can I ask you for a first and final request?"

"What is it?"

"Your... seed."

Helen had never forgotten her vision of the genetic prototype project.

Especially as the Doctor's modification surgeries became increasingly sophisticated.

She had also heard rumors about those twelve special cases.

However... could these exceptional individuals, chosen from ordinary humans, rival Bai E's unparalleled potential?

Bai E himself had never undergone any form of surgical modification, nor had anyone conducted a thorough examination of his body to determine its compatibility with such procedures.

As humanity's reigning champion, who had reached the pinnacle without any enhancements, no one had demanded that he resort to those methods for self-improvement.

Yet if an army of warriors could be created based on his genetic blueprint, could they not become an unparalleled and transcendent force of invincible soldiers?

Faced with Helen's request, Bai E, who had never considered this possibility, froze momentarily. "Seed? You can have anything you want from me. I just don't know what seed you're asking for?"

Helen's cheeks flushed red, her eyelids lowering slightly. "The means... are rather primitive..."

Bai E never would have imagined that this graceful yet coldly stunning female scientist had such intentions ever since their first meeting!

...

The launch of humanity's first interstellar exploration team was finally set.

On the day of departure, nearly all core personnel from cities worldwide gathered on-site to witness humanity's inaugural attempt at interstellar exploration.

It was a moment destined to be etched into the annals of human history; no one living in this age could bear to miss such an event.

Those who lacked the qualifications but came with admiration—whether players or indigenous inhabitants—formed layer upon layer of crowds, encircling the plains in every direction.

During these two years, Bai E and countless human military forces had cleared nearly every threat on land multiple times over.

Except for the unfathomable deep seas and underground realms, the surface world was now devoid of any danger that could threaten humanity.

Humanity had once again ascended to the position of planet's overlord.

The gradual recovery of transportation networks encouraged countless ordinary people to flock to the scene to witness this monumental milestone for humanity.

Before the Starship's launch, the plains buzzed with lively excitement.

"I'm so envious of them..."

"I wonder when the next interstellar voyage will be? I'll definitely sign up next time!"

"Signing up won't help you! I heard they mainly recruit those 'Children of Demons' and 'Warlords.' Without their extraordinary learning abilities, you think you could join the interstellar exploration team? Some things just aren't in your cards."

"But I heard an ordinary person made it in! One of the students taught by the neighbor of my cousin's great-aunt's teacher was selected for the first astronaut team."

"Those are critical crew members with even stricter selection criteria than the so-called 'Warlords.' Out of billions of people globally, this first crew only has a few dozen members! Don't get your hopes up."

"If one doesn't dream, how are they any different from a salted fish?"

"Ha?"

"What are you laughing at?"

"I'm laughing at how there might never even be a next Starship, let alone another recruitment."

"What do you mean, brother?"

"From what I know, just building this Starship exhausted nearly all of Earth's resources. Without Bai E, the legendary figure spearheading this initiative, it would've been an impossible feat. A second attempt? Highly unlikely..."

"Unless they discover something in space that humanity cannot possibly refuse—or something dangerous..."

Amid the world's gaze, the pitch-black Starship finally sprung to life.

With the help of its anti-gravity modules, the massive Starship steadily lifted off from the ground and into the sky.

Its colossal shadow blanketed vast swaths of land below.

From the control tower, Helen, Ares, and others watched as the Starship ascended, offering one last blessing before it moved out of communication range—

"May you return victorious."

The Starship rose, until everything on the planet's surface became distant black specks.

With a gentle tremor, the Starship breached the atmosphere and smoothly entered the dark expanse of space.

The fierce solar winds ruthlessly swept past from afar, but the Starship's surface coating shielded it from all harmful effects.

Among the spacecraft's crew, Wen Jie—one of the rare individuals who was also a player—frowned deeply, scrutinizing all Starship diagnostic readings and observing the health conditions of its onboard personnel.

His inherently cautious nature compelled him to fixate on even the slightest anomalies in the data.

This was the most significant human endeavor he had ever been engaged with!

Interstellar travel—a monumental achievement yet to be realized even in the real world!

Not to mention, the game featured much professional knowledge that he believed was worth learning from.

At that moment, Wen Jie felt no sense of being in a game. Instead, he considered himself a responsible crew member tasked with safeguarding the lives of everyone aboard.

The deep void of space was silent.

The sleek, black Starship sailed like an ethereal ghost toward the unknown.

The journey's destination was a star system identified through extensive observation as likely bearing signs of artificial modifications.

Although it was at least 200 light-years away from their original planet, thanks to the Starship's warp capabilities, they would reach it within a timeframe that would not exhaust their lifespans.

The entire crew consisted of surgically enhanced individuals, each boasting a lifespan far exceeding the biochemical warriors who had guarded the Root Server ruins for over 400 years.

The crew brimming with confidence for this interstellar expedition!

That is, until the Starship had traveled a certain distance from their home planet, and several individuals reported hearing some eerie sounds within the cabin.

"Creak~"

"Creak~"

The noise resembled countless tearing sounds happening simultaneously—making people uneasy.

The crew reacted immediately, but the Starship's diagnostics found no fatal threats.

"It might be high-energy radiation penetrating the surface's coating and causing minor damage to some structures, but our Starship is built with a highly active, self-repairing alloy series. This level of damage is insignificant."

The crew commander, having meticulously reviewed all Starship indicators, had absolute confidence in this collective masterpiece of human ingenuity. "Everyone, stay calm. It's all within controllable limits."

Among the crew, only Wen Jie, not of this world, felt a lingering sense of unease.

Chapter 850 Dismantling!

As the Starship continued to forge ahead, the sound of "crack crack" echoed from every part of the hull, relentlessly disturbing each interstellar traveler within the ship.

Until the moment when Wen Jie noticed a distinct, visible crack on the metal workbench beside him, which was then restored by the adaptive self-repair feature of the alloy itself — his eyes suddenly

sharpened. In that instant, he thought of a fundamental cosmic rule of this world that had astounded him upon first arrival but had since been forgotten for a long time:

The sum of the squares of the two perpendicular sides of a right triangle equals the hypotenuse raised to the power of 2.023...

How could there be such a strange number?

It doesn't conform to the elegance of mathematics at all.

It should be an integer!

It should be 2!

The universe itself should be 2!

Wen Jie immediately approached the chief officer of the crew, demanding access to a piece of data that wasn't displayed on the Starship's monitoring system —

Spacetime curvature!

Indeed, as the Starship gradually departed further from the direction of the primal planet, the curvature of space underwent subtle changes.

Both of them realized almost simultaneously a fatal issue. They turned back to look in the direction they came from, only to find a void — a starry expanse silent and desolate.

"Black hole!" Wen Jie spoke the truth in a tense, gritted tone.

Everyone had assumed that their home planet represented the normality of the universe.

Never had they considered that their planet might exist within a special Stellar District.

In the direction of the primal planet lay a massive black hole, its presence distorting the surrounding spacetime, causing immense curvature in the region near the black hole.

As they gradually moved a certain distance away from the black hole, the spacetime curvature affected by its gravitational pull slowly returned to the equilibrium of normal, flat spacetime.

However... the foundational construction of their Starship was based on the distorted physical laws created by this unique environment.

When these physical laws began to normalize, their Starship — built upon erroneous rules — naturally started to disintegrate step by step, from its very foundation.

While the curvature changes were still minor, the Starship could rely on its materials' self-repairing properties to fend off the mild tears.

But as the Starship advanced further, the changes in curvature grew increasingly dramatic.

At this pace, before reaching their intended destination, the materials' self-repairing properties might fail to counteract the ever-worsening rupture, leading to the ship's total dissociation in the boundless vacuum of space!

"Quick!" shouted the crew chief, his eyes bloodshot, issuing an order over the internal voice channel, "Everyone, immediately execute the return directive! Repeating: Everyone, immediately execute the return directive!"

But... it was already a fraction too late.

A narrow fissure instantly appeared on the hull.

The Starship was simply too massive...

The central cavity that housed the crewmembers had been the most structurally vulnerable and sparingly reinforced part of the ship. Naturally, it was the first to succumb to the deconstructive forces.

The imbalance of internal and external air pressure instantly swept away unsuspecting crewmembers near the fissure, ejecting them into the vacuum of space. Their augmented bodies were durable enough to prevent immediate decompression or freezing to death. Some of the ejected players even spared a moment to curiously observe the startling transformations around them.

Countless shattered fragments, along with them, spilled out from the Starship's cabin like a fountain, erupting outward alongside fellow players.

This unprecedented spectacle displayed an astonishing, broken beauty — the lonely expanse of space swallowed everything, with the majestic yet desolate Starship as the core of this mesmerizing destruction.

Witnessing this novelty, one of the players even exclaimed "卧槽!" excitedly, though in the vacuum of space, sound waves couldn't propagate; only bone conduction let them hear their own voice.

From just their lip movements, it was clear other ejected players felt similarly exhilarated.

This plot twist? Thrilling!

However, the next moment, their exuberance was interrupted as they began to wonder — had the Starship been attacked by some external force, causing such catastrophic damage? Yet as they scanned the surroundings, they found no signs of anything external besides themselves.

Then... what happened?

As their bodies floated helplessly across space, the players' excited nerves gradually cooled down.

They realized one critical issue —

How were they supposed to get back?

Although their bodies were surgically enhanced and fine-tuned through long-term personal effort, allowing them to temporarily withstand the harshness of the vacuum of space, this didn't mean they could endure indefinitely!

A rate of health depletion, even just one point per minute, would eventually lead to zero.

And even if they managed to return... would it make a difference?

Before their very eyes, the vast fissure that had ejected them from the Starship was growing visibly larger. The tearing intensified, and it seemed as if the ship would soon split entirely into two.

A Starship divided into two — could it still function, protect everyone, and continue its voyage through space? Probably not, right?

However, an utterly unexpected moment caused everyone's eyes to widen in disbelief —

The splitting trend of the Starship came to a sudden halt!

A thin, invisible membrane had, at some unknown point, enveloped the fissure, sealing it off. The escaping airflow, along with all debris and passengers, was no longer being pulled into the terrifying vacuum of space by the air pressure differential.