# 2649 Meeting at the Lake

Han Sen looked at the thick stack of yellow papers he had amassed. He wanted to cry. Those pornographic pictures he had fished up over the past few days were enough to compose an entire book. Aside from the yellow papers, he hadn't been able to catch anything.  
  
"Don't say that," he reminded himself. "These pictures look kind of like a comic."  
  
If it wasn't for Bao'er being there, Han Sen would have liked to examine them in greater depth.  
  
Han Sen looked at the Bao'er. Her experience fishing had been very different. She had managed to earn all sorts of things. Although they weren't all deified treasures, the things she had collected were all better than the yellow papers Han Sen had received.  
  
"It looks like my luck hasn't been too good in recent times. Perhaps I should ask Mister White to calculate my fortunes and find a way to heighten my luck," Han Sen thought, considering various ways he might improve his situation.  
  
Just as it was Bao'er's turn to fish, the small jade figure reacted. Han Sen quickly pulled Bao'er away and sat down on the lakeshore himself, pretending to be in the middle of fishing.  
  
Not long later, Exquisite teleported there.  
  
Exquisite walked over to Han Sen and looked at him. She didn't see anything next to Han Sen, and she said, "Don't worry. Underworld Lake is often like this. Sometimes it can take a couple of days to get something, other times it can take weeks. I asked you to come here to test your luck and give you some time to practice geno arts.  
  
Han Sen was shocked. Hearing Exquisite, it sounded as if it was supposed to take a number of days to fish something out. But he had always received something in half a day, at the most. The shortest time it had taken those two to fish something out was half an hour. The average, if he had to guess, was two to three hours.  
  
Han Sen had been trying to think of a way to show Exquisite those yellow papers, but he didn't have to do that anymore.  
  
"It looks like there are no resources I can use for practice here," Han Sen said, looking at Exquisite.  
  
Underworld Lake was magical, but he couldn't stay here if he was only pulling out old pieces of paper. He would rather kill xenogeneics.  
  
"Don't rush anything just yet. Recently, my little sister has needed my help. I don't have the time to take you hunting. So, continue practicing here. If you have enough luck, maybe Underworld Lake will give you a pleasant surprise," Exquisite said with a smile.  
  
Han Sen might have just been imagining things, but he noticed that when she spoke to him—even though she was still reserved—she tended to smile more and more. She was different from how she used to be.  
  
"There was a surprise, but the surprise was so big, I wasn't sure how to take it," Han Sen thought to himself.  
  
After a brief conversation with Han Sen, Exquisite quickly walked away. She left a few items behind for Han Sen to live off, and she also provided him with vials of geno fluid.  
  
Han Sen had actually brought his own, but he had forgotten to tell her.  
  
Han Sen pulled a parasol out of Destiny's Tower, and he also brought out a couple of sunbathing chairs. Han Sen and Bao'er settled themselves down comfortably on the shores of the lake to fish. As they did so, Han Sen also set aside some time to research the geno arts he had been given.  
  
The geno fluids Exquisite had brought him weren't bad. They were good for his body, but Han Sen had yet to find a way to make a breakthrough that would enable him to become half-deified.  
  
After another couple of days, Han Sen gave up fishing. He let Bao'er do things herself. He focused on practicing his geno arts.  
  
Part of the reason he had given up was because he had continued to receive pieces of paper. It was pointless for him to continue. Whenever Bao'er fished, she would retrieve something encrusted in jewels. Each item was ornately wrought and beautifully finished.  
  
But aside from the enormous gold sword and the hair clip, Bao'er hadn't gotten any more deified treasures. Clearly, deified treasures weren't easily found.  
  
Since Bao'er had already been able to get two, though, that was still a fantastic result.  
  
Not everything she fished up was a high-level treasure. There were a few ordinary items in there. But whether they were high-class or low-class items, they all looked sovereignly luxurious.  
  
Suddenly, Han Sen's eyes flashed. He picked up Bao'er and pulled the Underworld Silk away from her.  
  
A minute later, he saw someone approach. It was Second Brother Liyu Zhen, the man that Han Sen had met when he first entered Outer Sky.  
  
Liyu Zhen saw Han Sen and Bao'er behaving as if they were having a vacation, lying down on their sunbathing chairs with a parasol. There were many snacks and drinks on a table beside them. There was even a nuclear reactor mini-fridge. The sight made him frown.  
  
"Exquisite brought you here to practice, not to have a vacation," Liyu Zhen said coldly.  
  
"What has it got to do with you?" Han Sen continued to lounge on the sunbathing chair. He didn't get up, and he didn't even spare the other man a glance.  
  
Liyu Zhen's face looked cold. He stared at Han Sen for a while. Without saying another word, he went to the other side of the lake. He pulled out an Underworld Silk from his head of hair. It looked as if he had come there to fish, as well.  
  
If most people of another race spoke to Liyu Zhen like that, he would have reacted poorly. But Han Sen was already Exquisite's silkworm. There was nothing he could do to Han Sen; that was one of the Very High's established rules. Even if a silkworm committed a crime, it was the master of the silkworm that had to deal with it.  
  
If Liyu Zhen fought Han Sen there, he wouldn't simply be fighting Han Sen. He would be humiliating Exquisite. That was why Liyu Zhen didn't do anything.  
  
With Liyu Zhen being there, though, Han Sen couldn't allow Bao'er to fish for him. So, he fished on his own the whole time.  
  
Han Sen's situation was still mostly the same, though. He still reclined in his sunbathing chair. He tied the Underworld Silk to his finger, so he could sense movement the moment it happened.  
  
Han Sen then turned his attention back to reading through the geno arts. He didn't have to look at his line, though. He knew it was only a matter of time before he received another yellow piece of paper.  
  
Of course, an hour later, something pulled at his line. He pulled it out of the mist, revealing another sheet of paper.  
  
Liyu Zhen glanced over when he saw that Han Sen had received something. It was just an old piece of paper, though, so he ignored Han Sen and carried on fishing.  
  
With Liyu Zhen being there, Han Sen felt uncomfortable. When there was no one, Exquisite could not feel him, and he was able to do anything he wanted to.  
  
If he disobeyed Exquisite's wishes while someone was there to tattle on him, however, he could risk getting into trouble.  
  
Plus, Liyu Zhen had seen what Han Sen had pulled out of the lake. Now, he could no longer hide what he had retrieved. If Exquisite wanted to read the pages, he would have to let her see them.  
  
"What is this guy doing here?" Han Sen couldn't think of a way to get the man to leave, and he couldn't leave himself. He had to continue fishing.  
  
After half the day, Liyu Zhen felt as if something was amiss. In that short period of time, Han Sen had pulled three things out of the lake. They all looked like old sheets of paper. Han Sen was operating at a remarkably efficient catch rate.  
  
When Han Sen pulled out his third piece of paper, Liyu Zhen put away his Underworld Silk and walked in front of Han Sen to look at the other man's catch.  
  
"Let me see those papers."  
  
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# 2650 Different Kind of Luck

"Why should I let you see them?" Han Sen asked, his voice relaxed and unhurried. He casually rolled up the paper, then turned a cold glance on Liyu Zhen as he spoke.  
  
Liyu Zhen looked at Han Sen with disdain, then chuckled darkly. "You are with the Very High now."  
  
"Yes. And?" Han Sen's face remained expressionless.  
  
Liyu Zhen wasn't annoyed. Instead, he smiled and said, "I just want you to know that if a Very High asks something of you, you cannot say no."  
  
"Oh, yeah? I just said it. What are you going to do about it?" Han Sen said.  
  
Han Sen thought Liyu Zhen was going to fight him, but it didn't seem like Liyu Zhen was going to go that far. He just continued to stare coolly at Han Sen, and then, the third eye in his forehead opened. His black and white pupils looked like a tai chi yin yang symbol. That black and white symbol began to spin. It looked like some invisible light was brewing within it.  
  
His gaze now looked as if it could see through everything, and it made Han Sen frown.  
  
Liyu Zhen looked into Han Sen's yellow piece of paper. With a disdainful look, he said, "I thought you had pulled up something nice, but it's just a pornographic picture. I overestimated you, clearly."  
  
After that, Liyu Zhen went back to ignoring Han Sen. He returned to his fishing spot and continued with the task.  
  
It was a coincidence. Liyu Zhen sat there and fished for a while. But later on, his Underworld Silk began to move. It shook a lot, and it appeared as if something big was on the other end.  
  
Liyu Zhen quickly pulled the line. He tried his hardest to tug it out, but the thing seemed heavy.  
  
Pang!  
  
After ten minutes of wrestling with the submerged foe, Liyu Zhen managed to pull out an item from beneath the mist of the lake. The object bounced right out of it and landed on the shore.  
  
Han Sen couldn't help but look at it. He saw a big gold sword that was similar to the one Bao'er had retrieved. It looked a lot rougher around the edges, though. It also seemed to lack the jewels. It was just a big gold sword that was missing its luxurious touches.  
  
Liyu Zhen looked at the big sword with excitement. He spoke to himself, saying, "Gold Slash... Is this the deified Gold Slash? The Seventh Uncle was right. My luck has finally turned around."  
  
He picked up the big gold sword with a look of unbridled joy. He was extremely fond of his new catch. And after goofing around with it for a while, he decided to end his day of fishing. He put his Underworld Silk away and started to leave with the golden sword in his hand.  
  
When he passed by Han Sen, Liyu Zhen looked at him. He acted as if he was talking to himself, but the words of poison were obviously meant for Han Sen to hear. "This is the luck that separates you from I. You can only fish up that useless and dirty pornography, while I get deified treasures."  
  
"Really? Your piece of crap sword is a deified treasure?" Han Sen said with a laugh.  
  
"Such an ignorant kid you are! Gold Slash is an obscenely rare treasure to fish up from the Underworld Lake. It is deified at the very least. Although it is a primitive treasure, it is much better than your dirty pictures," Liyu Zhen said with a cold laugh.  
  
"That means there are higher-level Gold Slashes to be found, right?" Han Sen asked.  
  
"Of course there are. One of our leaders managed to obtain a butterfly-class Gold Slash, but that doesn't matter to you. Carry on fishing up your useless, dirty porn... Haha!" Liyu Zhen held his sword proudly and laughed as he wandered off. He laughed in mockery.  
  
Han Sen couldn't be bothered with the man. He thought to himself, "It looks like the sword Bao'er got was also a Gold Slash. But it is obvious that Bao'er's is of a higher class. Which class it is has yet to be determined, though."  
  
After Liyu Zhen left, Han Sen felt a lot more comfortable where he was. It felt good to have no one watching him again. He planned to fish one more item out of the lake, then let Bao'er carry on while he went back to practicing with his geno arts.  
  
Not long later, Han Sen felt the Underworld Silk move. Something had latched onto the line.  
  
Han Sen thought it would just be another yellow paper, but the item he pulled up was black. It wasn't the same yellow paper as before.  
  
"Has my luck taken a change for the better?" Han Sen's heart jumped. He quickly grabbed the black thing to take a look at it.  
  
When Han Sen picked it up, a chill ran through him. This new item was also a sheet of paper, but it was black this time, and it was much thicker than the yellow sheets he had previously retrieved.  
  
"Am I going to collect seven different colors of paper before I move on? Can I summon a dragon along with it?" Han Sen complained, turning the paper over so he could check it out.  
  
Han Sen had a look, and the sight made him freeze. This new piece of paper was indeed quite different. The thick black parchment appeared to be the cover of a book. Furthermore, there were three words written on the front.  
  
"Xuan Yellow Sutra. This cover cannot be a cover for all of those yellow papers, can it?" Han Sen was shocked. He flipped it over and had a look at all the small words inside the cover.  
  
"If the man is in chaos, the sky and the earth will be in chaos. And the sky and the earth will turn yellow." Han Sen was shocked. This line of words was the prologue of the Xuan Yellow Sutra. This was definitely some sort of geno art, but it didn't seem to have anything to do with the yellow papers he had collected.  
  
"Maybe this isn't a cover for the yellow papers. Maybe it's meant for another book?" Han Sen thought the entire situation was strange.  
  
Han Sen hesitated. While Bao'er began fishing, he brought out all of the yellow papers and started to piece them together. He noticed all of the yellow pages had numbers. So, Han Sen arranged them in order of their numbers. There were many missing pages, however. The highest number was 254, but Han Sen only had 20 pages in total.  
  
Han Sen put them down next to the Xuan Yellow Sutra and noticed that their size was a perfect fit. Still, he couldn't be sure if the cover was really meant for his yellow papers.  
  
Han Sen thought this was a bit weird. He looked at the contents of the yellow paper, and when he looked over them, he felt a strange sensation.  
  
He thought the pictures had merely been the doodles of some horny guy in ancient times, so he had never inspected them closely. But now that he was, he noticed something.  
  
The people in the picture were covered in thin veins of blue and red. The small lines were very light. If Han Sen hadn't decided to examine the papers closely, he wouldn't have noticed them at all. Few drawings were so realistic that they mapped people's veins and arteries.  
  
But after a thorough inspection, he realized they weren't blood vessels. The small, blue lines should have been meridians, and the red were likely the presence.  
  
Han Sen was so shocked, and he thought to himself, "This isn't a porn picture. It is a geno art! But why would a geno art look like this? It is easy to misunderstand it."  
  
Due to the fact that there were no descriptions or text, and Han Sen was missing many more pages, he couldn't be entirely sure it was a geno art. But regardless, his interest in it had been sparked.  
  
Han Sen took the Underworld Silk away from Bao'er. He continued fishing, and a little while later, he fished up another yellow paper.  
  
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# 2651 Star Tree

On a ship that was headed to the Andromeda system, a crystallizer woman turned to a man next to her. She looked afraid.  
  
"Are you a crystallizer?" she asked.  
  
"Yes," the man said with a nod. He sounded rather cold.  
  
The woman looked very surprised, and she said, "I can't believe I have met someone of the same race here. My name is Lydia. You took the hall's quest to venture to the Andromeda system to hunt xenogeneics, didn't you?"  
  
"Yes," the man answered. His emotions didn't seem perturbed at all.  
  
"That is great. Can we combine forces and do it together?" the woman said.  
  
"No, we cannot," the man answered.  
  
The woman seemed disappointed, and she said, "That's fine, I guess. What is your name, anyway? Can we exchange phone numbers? There are too few crystallizers here. We can contact each other."  
  
"No, we cannot," the man said. His face remained impassive.  
  
The woman had spoken nicely to the man, but the man hadn't reciprocated by the smallest amount. He never gave her a reply that was greater than three words.  
  
After they arrived in the Andromeda system, the ship's passengers spread out as they headed to the various planets. The man got off the ship while the woman followed after him.  
  
"Why are you following me?" the man asked, turning around and looking at Lydia strangely.  
  
"It is because, in this universe, a crystallizer woman meeting a crystallizer man is a one-in-a-billion chance. I don't want to miss out on such a rare opportunity. So, please, tell me your name," Lydia responded, lowering her head and mumbling quickly. She spoke in a volume that only dogs could have discerned.  
  
"Yi Dong Mu," the man finally spoke his name.  
  
Lydia looked very happy to hear that. She raised her head, wanting to tell Yi Dong Mu something. But as she opened her lips, before she could speak, Yi Dong Mu's dagger slammed through her heart.  
  
"Why... why..." Lydia couldn't believe what had just happened. She stared at Yi Dong Mu with shock. She couldn't believe the man would do something like this to her.  
  
"It is because I sense something dangerous within you." Yi Dong Mu pulled his dagger back out of Lydia, sending the woman stumbling to the ground.  
  
He looked at Lydia's body, then turned around. He left and disappeared someplace into the mountains.  
  
Shortly after Yi Dong Mu left, the lifeless Lydia opened her eyes. Weird flashes passed through her eyes, and she stood up like a wooden doll.  
  
At that moment, Lydia looked like a lifeless robot. Her eyes were wide open, but they had no focus. It was like lots of data was scrolling through her eyes.  
  
"It failed again. Such a heartless killer. He killed a beautiful woman of the same race simply because he sensed danger. It is so hard to deal with this guy." After a while, Lydia spoke to herself. "So annoying! I have now failed eight times trying to get close to this target. Another team failed to gain any information from him, as well. It is so hard to get information from others who have been in contact with Han Sen before. Since when did the crystallizers become so strong? It looks like this investigation will become quite difficult."  
  
After that, Lydia's body suddenly collapsed on the ground. Her light faded, and she looked like a dead body again.  
  
"Brother King, has anything special happened to you recently?" Wang Yuhang looked at his phone while chatting with Xie Qing King.  
  
"I made some new friends," Xie Qing King said, with a cigar hanging from his lips. He was reclined in a CEO chair. He looked really relaxed as he spoke.  
  
"Me, too. But it looks like something happened with Han Sen. Is he in big trouble or something?" Wang Yuhang said.  
  
"Maybe not. Maybe they are just keen on investigating the boy. Otherwise, the people coming to ask us questions wouldn't be so gentle." Xie Qing King squinted while he spoke.  
  
"Then, what are we going to do?" Wang Yuhang asked.  
  
"If someone is giving you free money and beautiful women, are you ever going to say no? It would be very rude, and you would be missing out. That would sadden the person making the offer. Of course, we aren't going to do that." Xie Qing King laughed.  
  
"Teehee! That is what I thought, too. Lin Feng, Tang Zhenliu, and the others, as well. Can you please get in touch with them? Me being here is not a coincidence." Wang Yuhang laughed.  
  
...  
  
Every day, Han Sen remained near the lake and continued fishing out pages of the Xuan Yellow Sutra. For some reason, whenever it was Bao'er's turn, she always ended up with actual treasures, and every time Han Sen fished, he ended up with a sheet of paper belonging to the Xuan Yellow Sutra.  
  
"This is so fucking weird. Why can I only retrieve this geno art, page by page?" Han Sen wondered. He couldn't think of an answer.  
  
After all, anti-material worlds were difficult to explain. Common sense and logic didn't really apply to such places, and Han Sen didn't want to waste time mulling it over. He just wanted to gather all the pages of the Xuan Yellow Sutra as fast as he could. He was keen to find out what sort of geno art it was.  
  
"A geno art that comes from the anti-material world. No matter how bad it is, it must be special, right?" Han Sen thought to himself.  
  
Suddenly, the triangle symbol on the small jade figure glowed. Han Sen knew Exquisite was on her way over. He carefully synced his thoughts with the small jade figure.  
  
"Find anything?"  
  
Moments later, Exquisite teleported right next to Han Sen.  
  
"Yes, but I did not get any fish. The stuff I've been collecting is pretty weird," Han Sen with a strange tone of voice.  
  
"Underworld Lake is connected with the anti-material world. It is normal to fish up odd things. What did you get?" Exquisite asked.  
  
"I got some paper," Han Sen said slowly. Liyu Zhen had seen these yellow sheets of paper before, so there was no use in hiding it. He had no choice but to reveal what he had found.  
  
"Paper? What sort of paper?" Exquisite asked with curiosity. Although anything could show up in Underworld Lake, it was rare to get something like paper.  
  
"About that..." Han Sen was frozen. When he thought about the lewd content on the yellow pages, he didn't know what to say.  
  
Exquisite could sense what Han Sen was thinking. So, she blushed and said, "Never mind. You don't have to tell me. Whatever you get from Underworld Lake belongs to you. Even if you collect a deified treasure, it is all yours. When you leave Outer Sky, you can even take them with you."  
  
"Thanks." Han Sen pretended to be relieved.  
  
"I thought you always wanted xenogeneic resources. I have found some for you already. How much you get will depend on your power, though," Exquisite said to Han Sen. She appeared rather mellow.  
  
"What do you mean?" Han Sen asked, curious.  
  
"Outer Sky has a star tree. The tree produces star fruit, and it is surrounded by powerful space xenogeneics. They are King class, at least. Of course, some can even reach deified. Now, you can collect the star fruit, but how many you can collect will depend on you."  
  
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# 2652 Headstrong Elder

Han Sen listened carefully as Exquisite explained the situation to him in more detail. The star tree was guarded by seniors of the Very High. Every silkworm of the Very High was allowed one chance to claim star fruit from its boughs.  
  
But how many star fruit could be collected would be determined by tests conducted by the aforementioned seniors of the Very High.  
  
The test results correlated with how many star fruits could be obtained. Even if the results weren't great, a participant was always guaranteed at least one. Ten star fruits was generally the most one could receive.  
  
But the tests were highly variable depending on which Very High senior was administering them.  
  
"The personality of your particular administrator is very unique. If he likes you, he will only ask you a few questions. Then, he will let you claim seven or eight fruits. If he doesn't like you, he will give you a very difficult question. If you answer correctly, you will only be allowed a small number of star fruits... I hope the man will like you." Exquisite's eyes looked strange as she spoke.  
  
"Is he often that unreasonable? Is there any point of a test if he just gets to decide regardless? Just make it a beauty contest or something, then," Han Sen thought to himself.  
  
Exquisite could feel what Han Sen was thinking, so she laughed. "The star tree belongs to the uncle alone. Who he shares the fruit with is entirely his decision. Being willing to share with those far younger than him is already a grand act of kindness. So, even if he gives you only one star fruit, you should still be appreciative."  
  
"I see. That makes sense then. If they are his items, then he can definitely dictate the distribution of them," Han Sen said with a nod.  
  
"This is just a small reward. My generation will soon begin testing silkworms in earnest. If you perform well when that happens, the resources you receive will far exceed the star fruit," Exquisite said.  
  
"How long must we wait?" Han Sen asked.  
  
"There are thirteen of us in my generation. Now, there is only one little sister who has yet to decide on a silkworm. Once she has made her decision, the tests will begin." When Exquisite spoke of her little sister, her eyes glimmered strangely.  
  
Han Sen's heart felt weird hearing this, too. But he carefully kept his thoughts away from the subject.  
  
The little sister Exquisite was referring to was undoubtedly Li Keer. Li Keer wanted Dollar, so Han Sen knew all about that.  
  
"Let's go. We should head to the star tree." Exquisite placed a hand on Han Sen's shoulder. Then, she teleported Han Sen and Bao'er away from Underworld Lake.  
  
There were still many Xuan Yellow Sutra pages left to collect, and Han Sen wanted to carry on fishing them all out, but it was a long task that he couldn't rush. He would have to wait for the chance to fish again later.  
  
When Han Sen saw the star tree, he was shocked. Its boughs almost blanketed the whole sky. It was like a big umbrella that formed a bridge between the land and the sky itself.  
  
Many pieces of fruit hung from the tree's branches. They looked like suns, and their light made the leaves of the tree shine like jade. It was so very beautiful, and Han Sen squinted against the light.  
  
According to what Exquisite had told him, the test administrator's personality was quite strange. But his story was a legendary one.  
  
When a child of the Very High was born, it would be put into one of two factions. One faction was responsible for reproducing. They were the ordinary Very High, and they didn't practice the Very High Sense. Their personalities were comparatively normal, and they retained emotions like an ordinary person would. They were similar to Liyu Zhen.  
  
The other faction was the one Exquisite studied with. They learned the Very High Sense, and at the end of their practice, their emotions were practically non-existent. Their strength and combat prowess, however, were the best of the Very High.  
  
When a Very High was born, it was decided which path they would take.  
  
This man was like Exquisite. He practiced Very High Sense, and he had reached deified class with it. He had been only a step away from becoming a true god.  
  
But then, he destroyed his Very High Sense and started anew. Not even Exquisite knew why the man had taken such drastic action.  
  
But as he began practicing again, the elder guarded the star tree and never left its side. Even the other Very High didn't know what level he was at currently.  
  
"Uncle." Exquisite brought Han Sen beneath the boughs of the star tree and bowed to the roots of the tree.  
  
Han Sen and Bao'er looked in the direction she was bowing, and there, they saw a giant stone tree root. Despite being made of stone, the root still seemed to be alive and growing. There was a gray-haired man of the Very High sitting on it.  
  
The wrinkles in his face appeared rougher than the bark of the tree. His white beard reached the ground. He remained sitting where he was, his eyes closed. He was so old that he looked like he'd been petrified.  
  
Han Sen wasn't sure what to make of the man's appearance. With the power of the Very High, they could keep themselves looking young until the moment they died. Doing that wasn't difficult. He wondered why this man's face looked so old.  
  
Upon hearing Exquisite's voice, the old man opened his eyes. His eyelids were very wrinkly, too. He could barely open a small slit to see through. If one didn't look closely, one would never realize that his eyes were open at all.  
  
The old man looked at Exquisite. Then, he turned to Han Sen and Bao'er. With a rough voice, he said, "It is Exquisite. Have you brought your silkworm? Is it the big one or the small one?"  
  
"His name is Han Sen. He is a crystallizer..." Exquisite introduced Han Sen and Bao'er to him.  
  
"You selected a crystallizer? That takes a lot of courage," the old man said. He observed Han Sen's body well. He started to say something more, but he suddenly saw a person teleporting in front of him.  
  
"Uncle," the new man said, bowing to the elder.  
  
"Liyu Zhen, what are you doing here?" Han Sen and Exquisite's heart asked the same question.  
  
"Liyu Zhen, please wait aside for a moment. Allow me to help Exquisite's silkworm conduct the test. Then it will be your turn," the old man said, signaling him to stand aside for a while.  
  
When Liyu Zhen heard the command, he bowed to the old man and said, "Uncle, if things are like that, why don't we conduct our tests together?"  
  
Han Sen and Exquisite, when they heard it, felt a shock. They didn't know what was going on in Liyu Zhen's mind to make such a proposal.  
  
When the old man heard this request, he went silent. Then, he nodded and said, "Why not? We can save some time. Let us do the tests together, then."  
  
Exquisite was unsettled. Usually, ordinary Very High silkworms conducted their tests alone. And people of the Very High never had to undergo these tests at all. She was confused by why Liyu Zhen wanted to take a test, as well.  
  
The old man seemed to understand what Exquisite was wondering. And so he said, "I have to travel soon. Others have recommended that Liyu Zhen protect the star tree in my absence. If he can pass the test, he will be in charge of the star tree temporarily."  
  
Han Sen felt lucky. It was good that they had come now. If they came when Liyu Zhen was guarding the star tree, there was a chance Liyu Zhen would deliberately make the test difficult for him.  
  
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# 2653 Star Beetle

It really had been a coincidence that Liyu Zhen ran into Han Sen at the star tree. He had only just received the order to go there and take the test. He was there to take charge of the star tree in its current master's absence.  
  
Liyu Zhen had received a piece of news that few others knew. Once the star tree's elder left on his journey, he might never come back. If Liyu Zhen took the star tree now, it was likely that the star tree would forever belong to him. That was why Liyu Zhen was so hyped when he arrived there. Watching over the tree temporarily wasn't a very important task, but becoming its permanent care-taker...  
  
But when he found Han Sen already standing before the tree, he thought about how rude Han Sen had been to him at the lake. He was just a silkworm, and even so, he dared to offend the Very High's Second Brother to his face. This was a chance to teach the whelp a lesson, or so Liyu Zhen thought. This wasn't an opportunity that he could allow to pass him by.  
  
"Out in the rest of the universe, you might be some kind of generational prodigy. I can understand why you might believe you have a right to be so arrogant. But amidst the Very High, you are lower than dirt. If you don't know that already, there is a high chance you won't survive your tenure with us. I'm just trying to be nice so that Exquisite won't end up being dragged down with you." Liyu Zhen smirked to himself.  
  
The old man then glanced at the tree around him and said, "If this is the way that we're going to proceed, why don't you two remove the bugs from the star tree?"  
  
"Remove bugs?" Han Sen asked, raising an eyebrow. This massive holy tree needed insect extermination? That was surprising, to say the least.  
  
Because Han Sen had just learned of the tree's existence, he didn't know that part of the tree guardian's job was to remove bugs from it every now and again. Otherwise, the bugs would eat and destroy the three's fruit. That was what Liyu Zhen would have to do if he took over the job, anyway.  
  
If Liyu Zhen hadn't been present, Han Sen's challenge would likely have been something different. However, because of the unique circumstances, the elder had decided that this test would be appropriate for both of them.  
  
"While we are performing this test, you cannot use treasure or any other special powers. You need to use your own strength to remove the bugs. And while you are doing so, you cannot bring any harm to the star tree. If you damage the tree, you will receive no reward. You will, however, be given punishment," the old man said warningly.  
  
"Uncle, what kind of bugs are we removing?" Han Sen asked the old man politely.  
  
"There is only one type of bug that dares come close to the star tree," the old man answered. "It is called a star beetle. You will know them when you see them. I will give you a day. You will pass if you can remove one thousand bugs. Each hundred you remove will account for one star fruit."  
  
Han Sen was delighted to hear this. He had been worried that even if he did his job correctly, the old man wouldn't allow him to collect any star fruit. Now that he had been given terms and conditions, he could rest easy. This was the best way to conduct business.  
  
"We start now. Tomorrow, at this time, you must return here. The bodies of the star beetles can stay on the tree. They will be cleared afterwards," the old man said.  
  
Han Sen and Liyu Zhen bowed to the old man. Then, they both flew to the top of the star tree. Liyu Zhen looked at Han Sen and used Galaxy Teleport. He vanished into the tree while Han Sen had to continue flying up.  
  
The star tree was a goliath. Each star fruit looked more like an asteroid. Han Sen flew as fast as he could, but it still took him an hour to get to the top of the tree.  
  
Liyu Zhen had started killing bugs a long time ago, but the tree was simply too large. Han Sen couldn't see where Liyu Zhen was. So, he had to look for the bugs alone.  
  
Seeing the star tree up close, Han Sen noticed that the star tree's leaves really did look like jade. The giant fruits were crystal-clear.  
  
Because the old man's request was very strict, Han Sen couldn't do any damage at all to the star tree. Therefore, he didn't dare touch the tree. He kept flying around it.  
  
Soon after, Han Sen found a bug lying on a branch of the star tree. It looked as fierce as a dragon, and it was the size of an adult bull. Its armor was sky-blue. The light coming from its shell shimmered and glittered like a tapestry of stars, and its face looked like the face of a stag beetle. It had eight claws, and it had a weird horn that was like a pincer.  
  
It looked much more polished than an actual stag beetle, though. Its body was crystal blue, and it shone. It was hard to imagine it was considered a pest.  
  
The old man had given him the order to remove the bugs without damaging the tree. Han Sen looked at the bug from afar, but he didn't dive right in to kill it. He observed the bug with his Purple-Eye Butterfly first.  
  
Without a doubt, the bug was King class. Judging from its lifeforce and presence, Han Sen was able to predict that it was a third or fourth-tier King. Such a creature wouldn't be difficult for him to deal with.  
  
Han Sen wasn't in a rush to do anything. He looked at the bug and thought to himself, "He said I cannot hurt the star tree. That means I cannot hurt it while I fight. I need to kill this bug in one blow so that it can't damage the tree itself by attempting to fight back."  
  
"It's an empty-type xenogeneic, so its body doesn't have an element. It is a xenogeneic based purely on raw strength. That means its shell must be extremely hard, far harder than those of xenogeneics of a similar level. Taking down a creature like this in one hit will be difficult," Han Sen thought to himself.  
  
After observing the creature for a while, he was unable to discern any potential weak spots. Its entire body was clad in that starry shell. To kill the bug, Han Sen knew he would have to break through that surface.  
  
"If there are no weak spots, then I will just have to break it open with brute force. But using brute force will still have the same risks if I miss. If I don't kill the bug instantly, and it struggles, it will likely harm the bark and the leaves on the star tree," Han Sen thought, continuing to observe the beetle intently.  
  
Liyu Zhen, meanwhile, had reached the tree one hour before Han Sen had. And before he arrived, he already knew a lot of information about the beetles. Liyu Zhen knew their weak spots, and he knew how to kill them effectively.  
  
After finding a beetle, Liyu Zhen started taking it down. Liyu Zhen hadn't practiced the Very High Sense, but the Very High had many geno arts. There were many top-notch geno arts available to learn. Liyu Zhen was a King; one of the best within the Very High, in fact. With many geno arts at his disposal, it wouldn't be difficult for him to kill a King class beetle.  
  
The beetle's shell was extremely hard. Ordinary King class fighters of the same tier would have a hard time breaking through its shell, but Liyu Zhen only needed a few punches to destroy the beetle. He moved with insane speed.  
  
Liyu Zhen had found a few dozen beetles to kill before Han Sen had even reached the tree.  
  
Plus, when Han Sen found the beetle, he didn't immediately attack. He stayed where he was, observing them for a while. By the time Liyu Zhen had killed a hundred beetles, Han Sen hadn't even started fighting one.  
  
"Why isn't Daddy doing anything?" Bao'er was holding Exquisite's hand and looking into a mirror while she spoke.  
  
The image in the mirror displayed both Han Sen and Liyu Zhen. Liyu Zhen had already killed one hundred beetles, but Han Sen had yet to do anything.  
  
"He is thinking about how to kill the star beetles," Exquisite said.  
  
"What would he need to think about? Even Daddy's fingers are enough to crush those little bugs," Bao'er said curiously.  
  
Exquisite didn't answer, but the old man said, "He's thinking about how to avoid harming the star tree if he moves to attack the bugs."  
  
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# 2654 An Accurate Kill That Is Like a Surgical Incision

Han Sen spent several long minutes in observation before he finally flew forward to strike that bug. When he was close enough to it, he suddenly disappeared. When he reappeared, he was already above the bug's shell.  
  
"God's Wander?" Exquisite was shocked to see this. She was intimately familiar with the teleporting method he had used. Although he was only teleporting a short distance, the move was still impressive for a beginner. It was strange, though, considering she had only given him God's Wander a short while ago. If Han Sen had become this proficient with it already, he was more than brilliant. His talents really were out-of-this-world.  
  
"Does he really have an eleven armor talent?" Exquisite couldn't help but wonder. Han Sen's body was unique. If the God Spirit Touch's result was genuine, it was nuts.  
  
Han Sen teleported behind the star beetle, but the star beetle didn't react. And then, Han Sen pointed a finger at its brain.  
  
Ding!  
  
There was a small ringing noise, like a steel needle striking bone. It was barely even audible. And right after, Han Sen pulled his finger away. The star beetle didn't struggle at all after the strike. It simply gave a tiny shiver. The beetle grew still again as if nothing had happened, but its lifeforce was waning fast. It didn't take long for its flame to fully extinguish.  
  
The star beetle was in the same position as before. It was lying atop the branch, but if one looked closely, one could see a very small hole in its head that led down to the creature's brain.  
  
"Xenogeneic King hunted: Star Beetle. Xenogeneic gene found."  
  
A hunting announcement rang in Han Sen's head.  
  
"What excellent powers of observation. That was a very strong ability. His body is evolving fairly well. Exquisite, I think you found yourself a decent silkworm," the old man said. He looked at Han Sen with a genuine sense of appreciation for the young man's performance.  
  
Han Sen's attack had been very good. What the elder admired most about the scene was that Han Sen had taken the time to observe the creature before committing to action. He wasn't a reckless man whose body operated faster than his brain.  
  
Recklessness wasn't always a bad thing. If a warrior fought someone of the same tier, the fight was usually a matter of life or death for both combatants. Neither fighter would have the opportunity to spend time deliberating their actions. The body's first response was usually the most useful.  
  
But taking care of those bugs didn't require those instantaneous reactions. Han Sen had no idea what the star beetles were before this day. He had only observed them for a moment before killing one in a single hit. He had managed to sever the star beetle's nervous system. It couldn't even react before it died. So, the damage dealt to the star tree was minimized. That was why the old man really admired Han Sen.  
  
Liyu Zhen had known all about the star beetles before he even began this test, but his methods of attack were still obscenely rough. He wasn't dealing much damage to the star tree, but compared to Han Sen, he was leaving a lot of wreckage in his wake.  
  
Han Sen started to attack more of the star beetles. He teleported and used his Under the Sky knife skills. The knife silks he controlled were as accurate as a surgical blade. His strikes would pierce through the beetles' shells and sever their major nerve pathways. Under such precise attacks, each star beetle died without the chance to fight back.  
  
Star beetles were falling to Han Sen one after another. Han Sen was like a skilled surgeon. Each cut he made had the precision of a razor. He was able to kill a hundred star beetles without missing once. None of the beetles stood a chance of resisting.  
  
The old man was shocked. Exquisite's eyes were glued to the video. Her mind was also connected to Han Sen's mind, and it was as if she was with Han Sen, killing those star beetles right then and there.  
  
That was the benefit of having a silkworm. She could share a bond and feel the same things as her silkworm did, thereby learning and experiencing something that she wasn't familiar with. It was a learning experience for her, too.  
  
As Han Sen went from King class to deified or even further, Exquisite wouldn't level up with him. However, she would feel his evolution process as if it was happening to her. So, when she became deified, she would have all that experience. It was like she was being reborn, and there was no need for her to worry about going along the wrong path.  
  
The King class star beetles were nothing compared to Exquisite; she could kill them with ease. Being as accurate as Han Sen and obliterating a beetle's nerves so that it couldn't even struggle—in addition to the fact he was killing so many star beetles without making a mistake—Exquisite couldn't have done the same.  
  
Exquisite could feel Han Sen's reactions, and that was what shocked her the most.  
  
Han Sen's simple finger attack looked easy. But before he did it, he used a lot of predictive powers. He calculated everything that could happen while he was performing the strike.  
  
Even a straight strike had many potential ramifications depending on its speed and power. If Exquisite hadn't been able to feel what Han Sen was thinking, she never would have guessed that there were so many complicated calculations running through his mind.  
  
"This guy's power is so strong. It is something you rarely see. Even those of us with the Very High Sense aren't capable of insanity like this." Exquisite's emotions were quite conflicted.  
  
The more she studied Han Sen, the more she believed him to be a scary person.  
  
Han Sen no longer looked like he was fighting. It was more like he was finishing work that was supposed to have already been finished. He didn't have to worry about much because everything was under his control.  
  
Sharing Han Sen's mind allowed Exquisite to learn a lot, but it also made her feel even more conflicted with facing Han Sen now.  
  
The Very High were quite full of themselves, and that carried through strongly in how they treated their silkworms. The masters often acted high and mighty. Right now, Exquisite was feeling the complete opposite.  
  
The more she learned about Han Sen, the more she thought Han Sen was scarier than she was.  
  
"Xenogeneic King hunted: Star Beetle. Xenogeneic gene found. Obtained Star Beetle beast soul."  
  
After Han Sen killed a hundred star beetles, he earned a star beetle beast soul. He looked into his Sea of Soul, and he immediately noticed that the star beetle beast soul was an armor-type.  
  
That didn't surprise Han Sen. He had guessed that the star beetles would drop armor beast souls as soon as he saw them.  
  
"Armor beast souls aren't bad. When I take control of the Constellation Sea, I can build a human army. At that point, beast souls like this will definitely prove their worth." Han Sen thought about a human army decked out in beast soul armor. It would be a shocking sight.  
  
"It would be great if there was a deified class star beetle beast soul up for grabs," Han Sen thought to himself.  
  
This was merely a random thought, of course. He didn't think he would actually have to fight a deified star beetle because the old man said he wouldn't be allowed to use geno treasures. He didn't have enough power to kill a deified xenogeneic on his own yet.  
  
Han Sen flew around the tree, searching for more star beetles to slay. He eventually heard a buzzing noise in his ear.  
  
The sound seemed to be coming from above. Han Sen raised his head and glanced through the gaps between the leaves. There, he saw a whole bunch of star beetles descending from the sky. They were all coming to the star tree.  
  
The leader of the star beetles had a body that looked like icy jade. It glowed with a blue light, which was a beautiful sight. The scary presence proved its identity, as well. It was a deified star beetle.  
  
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# 2655 Deified Star Beetle

"This is exactly what I wanted, but this isn't the right time. I can't use beast souls to fight. I would have to use my own power to fight it, but I'm afraid that wouldn't be enough to defeat a deified star beetle." Han Sen was troubled by this most recent development.  
  
Star beetles were very good at physical-reinforcement. Even a primitive deified beetle would have a shell that was considerably harder than most primitive deifieds. Even if Han Sen could make use of his peacock soul robe or his Six Core Snake Bow, punching through that shell would be no small feat. Plus, there was the added fact that he couldn't make use of those tools right now.  
  
"Don't even think about tackling a deified star beetle. You are better off sticking with the King class star beetles to get your star fruit." Han Sen continued looking around for star beetles to slay.  
  
He didn't know where the star beetles had flown in from, but there were indeed many of them. Han Sen had been worried that the tree might not have one thousand star beetles for him to kill, but now it looked like there were at least ten thousand star beetles descending on the tree.  
  
When the star beetle swarm reached the tree, they spread out and landed on its leaves, branches, and fruit. Their sharp teeth began to gnaw on the star tree. And while the star tree was very hard, their teeth were sharp and hard enough to leave marks in the bark. It didn't seem like a big deal now, but if they kept chewing the tree like that every day, it would only be a matter of time before the tree fell.  
  
Han Sen continued killing all that he could. He slew many star beetles, and in three or four hours, he had brought down five hundred of them. He had also earned three beast souls.  
  
"It looks like I should be able to kill two thousand star beetles before the timer is up. That means I will be able to grab twenty star fruits. But the star fruits are so big, how will I even cart them off?" As Han Sen pondered this conundrum, he felt something cold approaching his back. He immediately teleported away.  
  
After he teleported off, the deified star beetle reached his old position. It landed on a branch, and its small blue eyes peered at the newly re-positioned Han Sen.  
  
"Oh no! Why did this guy come here?" Han Sen had deliberately avoided the deified star beetle as he moved on down the tree. He hadn't expected the powerful beetle to come after him and attempt a sneak attack.  
  
Han Sen didn't have much time to think about it. The deified star beetle was attacking him again. Its blue body became lightning that zapped its way forward to reach Han Sen.  
  
Han Sen wasn't fast enough to dodge the beetle's charge with speed alone. He teleported away again. He put some distance between himself and the deified star beetle. He didn't stop there, either. He teleported again to get even farther away from his attacker.  
  
But the deified star beetle wasn't keen on letting Han Sen off the hook. It continued to use its blue light to try to attack him, and Han Sen's teleportation skills weren't taking him far enough away. He couldn't shake off the star beetle. Every time Han Sen appeared out of a fresh teleportation, the star beetle was coming for him like a beam of blue light. Han Sen had no choice but to continue teleporting. He no longer had enough time to continue killing star beetles, as his focus rested on dealing with his new deified foe.  
  
Han Sen couldn't help but frown. Because he was being pursued by the deified star beetle, he was missing out on any chance to kill the average star beetles. If he didn't kill one thousand beetles, he wasn't sure if the old man would allow him to collect star fruit.  
  
"Weird. Why won't this deified star beetle let me go?" Han Sen frowned. This creature seemed very driven to attack him.  
  
"This is so strange. Why does this deified star beetle keep chasing Han Sen?" Exquisite was confused, too. Star beetles weren't very intelligent, and even finding the star tree was a matter of instinct for the creatures. If their intelligence had been higher, they would have fled the moment they saw the old man sitting beneath the tree.  
  
Liyu Zhen laughed to himself. The moment the star beetles descended, he and Han Sen both saw them. After seeing the deified beetle, an idea hatched in his mind.  
  
He didn't have the power to control the star beetle, but he didn't need to control the deified; he just needed to give the creature a target. Han Sen was hunting the star beetles, and wisps of the dead beetles' presence would be clinging to his body. Liyu Zhen merely used a secret trick to enable the deified star beetle to smell the presence of the exterminating Han Sen. It drew the deified fiend to Han Sen exclusively.  
  
"This deified star beetle's appearance has saved me a lot of trouble. I do still need to teach him that lesson, after all. I didn't even have to do this myself." Liyu Zhen stopped focusing on Han Sen, and he returned his focus to killing King class star beetles.  
  
Even if Han Sen was able to escape the attacks of the deified star beetle, he wouldn't have the time to kill the King class star beetles anymore. He wouldn't achieve one thousand star beetle kills, which would keep him from earning any star fruits.  
  
The old man squinted, but his face didn't change. Liyu Zhen's trick had been done in secret, but it hadn't managed to escape his attention. Still, the old man didn't say anything.  
  
He cared very little about a grudge between two boys. He only needed someone who could effectively protect the star tree.  
  
For now, Liyu Zhen's performance hadn't been bad. His abilities were higher than others of the same class. He could scrape by and be labeled guardian of the star tree.  
  
The trick he used on Han Sen had been unfair, but it was also another way of proving his power.  
  
Han Sen knew things couldn't keep going on this way. He didn't have the time to kill other star beetles, so if this continued, he would fail the test.  
  
"It looks like I can't get rid of it. In that case, I will just ignore it." Han Sen's brain was spinning quickly.  
  
Exquisite was worried about Han Sen, but what he did next shocked Exquisite even more.  
  
Still being chased by the deified star beetle, Han Sen evaded the next attack, then headed toward a King class star beetle.  
  
From the perspective of others, it might have looked like a coincidence. It would appear that when Han Sen dodged, he had just happened to encounter a King class star beetle and randomly kill it before teleporting away from the deified star beetle's next attack. It all played out so smoothly. It was like one grand move that happened to look like a coincidence.  
  
But Exquisite could clearly feel what Han Sen was thinking. This wasn't a coincidence. Han Sen was planning every move he made.  
  
In this high-speed chase, Han Sen still had the power to plan all that. Exquisite knew his methods, but if she was in his shoes, she didn't think she could have pulled it off.  
  
The old man, as he watched Han Sen's latest performance, looked stunned.  
  
Under the continued pursuit of the deified star beetle, Han Sen took down another King class star beetle. It was the same as before, and just as precise. The deified star beetle's attacks didn't seem to be hampering him significantly. And he maintained the surgical precision of his attacks. The King class star beetles never had the chance to fight back, either, so they couldn't deal damage to the star tree.  
  
"He is so young, and yet he is still so calm. He hasn't freaked out, and he has continued to do everything he has planned to the best of his abilities. This crystallizer really is a genius. You picked a tremendous silkworm," the old man suddenly said to Exquisite.  
  
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# 2656 Who Will Take Care of I

As Liyu Zhen was slaying star beetles, he would occasionally hear the roaring of the deified star beetle.  
  
"Not bad. He has been holding on for this long, but why hasn't he tried to escape the star tree?" Liyu Zhen murmured casually to himself. He glanced in Han Sen's direction but didn't go towards him.  
  
The deified star beetle was pursuing Han Sen because Liyu Zhen had enhanced the presence of death around him. Liyu Zhen had killed many star beetles himself, though. The deified star beetle could smell that, too.  
  
Luckily, Liyu Zhen was far away, and he was using a secret skill to suppress the stench of death around him. If he was any closer, there was a chance that the deified star beetle would sense the presence of its fellows' deaths on him, and go after him instead.  
  
So, Liyu Zhen stayed away from Han Sen's part of the tree. He didn't know that his plan to keep Han Sen from killing star beetles actually wasn't working very well.  
  
Han Sen kept evading the deified star beetle's attacks, and all the while, he continued to kill the King class star beetles. He was taking them down faster than Liyu Zhen.  
  
The old man underneath the boughs of the tree stared upwards in astonishment. The deified star beetle had been chasing Han Sen for an obscene amount of time, attacking continuously. But even so, not a single speck of damage had been brought to the tree.  
  
Clearly, it was because Han Sen was kiting the creature quite carefully. Otherwise, any of the deified star beetle's attacks could have hit the star tree and damaged it.  
  
"That is very unique," the old man complimented Han Sen even more.  
  
Although Liyu Zhen was very good, compared to Han Sen, the elder thought he was a bit rough around the edges. It wasn't that Han Sen was stronger, but there was a finesse to his performance that put him far above his opponent.  
  
Han Sen might not have outclassed Liyu Zhen much in terms of power, but the way Han Sen dealt with this problem was outstanding. Liyu Zhen, under the same circumstances, wasn't performing nearly as well.  
  
"Exquisite, can I borrow your silkworm?" The allotted day had almost passed when the old man asked Exquisite a serious question.  
  
"What do you mean, uncle?" Exquisite had an inkling of what the elder meant, but the possibility didn't seem realistic.  
  
"I would like him to spend a year guarding the star tree for me. If I'm not back in a year, you two can take ownership of the tree for me until I return," the old man said with gravity.  
  
Exquisite stared at him. She couldn't believe the old man had come to this decision. Allowing a silkworm to guard a star tree, or even get half-ownership of it, was something that had never before happened among the Very High.  
  
"Uncle, are you sure you want him to take care of the star tree?" Exquisite couldn't believe her ears, and so she had to double-check.  
  
"Yes, I have thought about it a lot. He really is the best choice for this. Are you willing to let him stay here for a year?" the old man answered with certainty.  
  
"If you really have made this decision, then I would like that," Exquisite stuttered, unsure what to make of this strange turn of events.  
  
Han Sen was a silkworm. She should be helping him collect resources, but now Han Sen had been given authority over the star tree, and if the elder didn't come back in a year, Han Sen and Exquisite would be allowed to take control of the star tree completely; half and half. For Exquisite, the star tree represented incredible wealth.  
  
Outer Sky was rich in resources, but it was a very dangerous place. With the rules of the Very High, after she got a silkworm, she had to gather resources on her own. Collecting resources would be very difficult for her.  
  
The star tree was different, though. All you had to do was pick the fruit. The xenogeneics inside weren't as dangerous as the deified xenogeneics to be found out in the wilds, either.  
  
The time limit approached. Due to Han Sen's teleportation distance being too short, he was unable to go straight back to the base of the tree. So, he left the tree an hour early to reach the old man on time.  
  
The deified star beetle stopped chasing Han Sen after he left. It didn't want to leave the star tree.  
  
Liyu Zhen didn't hear the deified star beetle anymore, so he knew Han Sen had finally left.  
  
"What was the point in holding on until now? He let himself get chased around by a deified xenogeneic for most of the day. There's no way he actually finished the elder's test," Liyu Zhen said as he continued killing star beetles. After an hour, when the time was up, he teleported back to the old man.  
  
Because Han Sen was flying back, he reached the elder at the same time as Liyu Zhen.  
  
"Uncle, I killed 2416 King class star beetles. Did I pass the test?" Liyu Zhen bowed before the old man.  
  
The old man nodded and said, "Little Crook taught his student well, it would seem. Although you haven't practiced the Very High Sense, your power is no worse than those that do."  
  
Liyu Zhen was exuberant after hearing this. Being complimented by an elder like that was something to be very happy about, especially for Liyu Zhen.  
  
Plus, the elder sounded very satisfied with his particular performance. Liyu Zhen was certain now that he would be taking over the star tree's guardianship.  
  
"I knew this was supposed to happen. I really was always the best choice. Otherwise, my teacher wouldn't have recommended that I come here and show you what I've got," Liyu Zhen said with a wide, grossly self-satisfied smile.  
  
The old man paused, and then he said, "But... I have already found someone to take care of the star tree. Please convey my thanks to Little Crook for his assistance."  
  
Liyu Zhen had been feeling super cocky moments ago, but upon hearing this, he thought something was wrong with his ears. He must have misheard the old man.  
  
"Uncle, you said you have already found someone to take care of the star tree?" Liyu Zhen hesitated to ask this, but he still did. He knew it was bad form to question an elder, but Liyu Zhen was at a complete loss. If the elder had already selected someone, why would he bother going through the song and dance of this test? It seemed pointless, in retrospect.  
  
The old man nodded. In his old, rough voice, he said, "Indeed. I have found someone who is more suitable to take care of the star tree. I apologize for inconveniencing you, but you may feel free to take ten star fruits with you on the way out. That will be my apology to you, as an elder, for making you come here for nothing."  
  
"You brought me here for nothing?" Liyu Zhen didn't know how to react. What did this have to do with the person he selected?  
  
The old man then pointed at the returning Han Sen and said, "I have decided that he will be the one who is in charge of the star tree."  
  
"What... him...?" Liyu Zhen looked at Han Sen with a gaze of utter disbelief. After everything that had transpired, he couldn't believe that Han Sen was the one being chosen. The elder had selected a silkworm to be the star tree's caretaker.  
  
Han Sen was just as shocked when he heard the old man say this. He hadn't expected to be the one taking care of the star tree, either. This had nothing to do with him, and he had only gone there for the star fruit.  
  
"Elder, did you just make this decision?" Liyu Zhen had been trying to keep a lid on his simmering anger, but he couldn't douse the flames of rage in his heart. So, he had to ask. He didn't understand what part of him was inferior to Han Sen. The elder had chosen a mere silkworm over him to take care of the star tree. And on top of that, Han Sen hadn't even finished the task that the elder had given him.  
  
Liyu Zhen thought Han Sen hadn't slain 1000 King class star beetles. There was no way he had finished the mission.  
  
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# 2657 Liyu Zhen Does Not Believe I

"Yes." The old man knew what Liyu Zhen was thinking. After a brief pause, he said, "Han Sen did a better job than you. Therefore, he is better suited for looking after the star tree."  
  
"That is impossible! I bet he didn't even kill 1000 King star beetles. How can you claim he did a better job than me?" Liyu Zhen demanded. He simply couldn't believe this.  
  
He knew Han Sen had been chased by a deified star beetle the whole time. There was no way he could still have done a better job than one of the Very High.  
  
"Go take a look. You can find out for yourself." Instead of explaining, the old man gestured absently up at the tree.  
  
Liyu Zhen had received a recommendation for this job. The old man didn't really care about Liyu Zhen's personal feelings, but he still owed the young man an explanation. Otherwise, others would question the choice. Han Sen wouldn't earn the job properly, and people would speak ill of the events of the day.  
  
Instead of going and looking for himself, Liyu Zhen simply turned to Han Sen. "How many King star beetles did you kill?"  
  
"Three thousand six hundred and fourteen," Han Sen answered.  
  
"Impossible! You were being chased by the deified star beetle. Even if you weren't, you couldn't have killed that many star beetles in such a short amount of time." Liyu Zhen's eyes were filled with disbelief.  
  
Because they weren't allowed to harm the star tree when they fought, they couldn't use geno arts that had an area-of-effect. They had to kill the beetles one-by-one with great care. Killing 2000 in a single day was a shocking sum in itself. But Han Sen claimed to have killed 3614. That was the sort of tally reserved for deifieds only. It should have been impossible for him to achieve that.  
  
And Han Sen had to spend additional time traveling. So he had spent less than a day killing the fiends.  
  
Han Sen smiled, but he didn't say anything.  
  
Liyu Zhen's face hardened. He teleported up to visit where Han Sen had been.  
  
Quickly, Liyu Zhen found the star beetles that Han Sen had killed. When he first saw them, he thought they were alive. It didn't look as if any damage had been done to them.  
  
But their lifeforce was all gone. They were dead.  
  
Liyu Zhen frowned. He examined the body of the nearest star beetle and discovered the tiny wound on the star beetle's forehead.  
  
"One hit to kill them by severing their nervous systems. That way the beetles had no time to struggle. That is both a very powerful geno art and a remarkable control of power," Liyu Zhen murmured.  
  
But he didn't believe Han Sen could have killed 3614 star beetles. Geno arts that accurate could only be used in very favorable conditions, and executing a strike like that would be impossible while being chased by a deified star beetle.  
  
Liyu Zhen quickly flew around. He found many star beetles scattered around, all dead. There were many across the branches, many more across the leaves... They had all died of the same precise head wound.  
  
The damage had been inflicted with such accuracy that Liyu Zhen wasn't sure if he could do the same even if he had time to prepare. And if he was getting chased by a deified foe, he definitely couldn't have done it.  
  
After a short time of searching, Liyu Zhen discovered 3000 star beetles. He then decided to stop looking. Han Sen's number was most likely correct, and there was no way Han Sen could lie to the elder about how many he killed.  
  
But now, Liyu Zhen believed Han Sen must have cheated or made use of a powerful weapon. If he hadn't, there was no way he could have slain so many powerful King beetles while also being chased.  
  
He teleported back to the old man. Liyu Zhen bowed to him and said, "Uncle, can I take a look at your video of the event?"  
  
"Sure," the old man said with a shrug.  
  
Liyu Zhen opened the video of the test. One side of the screen played Liyu Zhen's test, whereas the other was a recording of Han Sen. He didn't watch his own video. He focused on Han Sen's. He watched it at eight times the normal speed, examining how Han Sen progressed in his killing of all the beetles.  
  
In the beginning, Liyu Zhen was trying to find evidence of Han Sen cheating. But after watching for a while, Liyu Zhen's face slowly morphed into a mask of shock.  
  
Despite the hot pursuit of the deified star beetle, Han Sen was able to continue hunting the King class star beetles. Every time he killed one, he moved elsewhere. His progress was as fluid as could be, and there was a satisfaction to watching it all unfold.  
  
After watching for a while, Liyu Zhen came to the conclusion that the way Han Sen killed his enemies was weird, but he hadn't cheated. Han Sen had treated the deified star beetle like a doll, as if it was no more than a puppet on strings.  
  
Han Sen lured it left and it went left. He lured it to the right and it went right. It followed him like a puppy dog.  
  
But Liyu Zhen knew the deified star beetle was no puppy. It was a skilled and dangerous fighter. Even if he used a deified treasure, Liyu Zhen didn't think he could easily kill it.  
  
Han Sen hadn't used any treasures, and he was still able to play the deified star beetle like a fiddle. Liyu Zhen was at a loss. The way Han Sen controlled his surroundings was vaguely reminiscent of a deified using the Very High Sense. Even so, it seemed different.  
  
"Have you practiced the Very High Sense?" Liyu Zhen asked Han Sen.  
  
Han Sen shook his head. "I have never practiced the Very High Sense. I used Sky Palace's legendary knife skill Under the Sky."  
  
Exquisite nodded and said, "Yes. He is known for his use of Under the Sky."  
  
Since Exquisite had just confirmed it, Liyu Zhen couldn't doubt it any further. Han Sen was Exquisite's silkworm, so his thoughts couldn't be hidden from her.  
  
Liyu Zhen was so annoyed. He had planned to teach Han Sen a lesson by beating some manners into him. But he hadn't taught Han Sen a lesson, and on top of that, the silkworm had claimed the guardianship of the star tree—a role that had previously been reserved for Liyu Zhen.  
  
Liyu Zhen really regretted it now. He regretted suggesting they do the test together. If he hadn't pushed it, he wouldn't have lost his bid to control the tree.  
  
After seeing the replay of Han Sen's battle, Liyu Zhen didn't say anything more. He bowed to the old man and left. He was far too embarrassed to stay.  
  
They were both ninth-tier Kings. Han Sen had been chased by a deified star beetle, and he had still managed to kill 1000 more King class star beetles than Liyu Zhen. This result crushed Liyu Zhen.  
  
But when Liyu Zhen left, he took Han Sen's video with him. No one knew what he planned to do with it.  
  
"According to the agreement, you can start off with 36 star fruit. Why don't I round it up and give you 40, then?" The old man smiled, and then he went on to say, "From now on, you are in charge of protecting the star tree. You can have 10 star fruits a month as a reward. You can take the ones for this month now. So, for now, you may take 50 star fruits with you."  
  
Han Sen was delighted. It had been a long time since something this good had happened to him. He quickly agreed.  
  
He would only have to watch over the star tree and slay some bugs. That would earn him 10 star fruit a month. It was easy money. And killing the star beetles yielded a form of reward, as well.  
  
Exquisite explained the method for taking the star fruit to him. Han Sen couldn't wait to start. He flew up toward the star fruits that looked like suns.  
  
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# 2658 Star Frui

The star fruit was like an asteroid, but that was just its outer shell. The core of the fruit wasn't nearly as massive. Inside, all kinds of xenogeneics were bred. Every fruit contained different xenogeneics.  
  
According to legend, the star tree was a shadow of the universe. Star fruit represented the stars of the universe, so each star fruit held xenogeneics that were specific to the star system that the fruit represented. Thus, star fruit from a single tree could produce many different types of xenogeneics.  
  
Of course, that was just a legend. The tree worked a little differently in reality, but the star fruit really did produce different kinds of xenogeneics. And they were at least King class.  
  
"Outer Sky is an amazing place. If this star tree existed within the normal geno universe, it would throw the entire universe into war. No wonder the Very High never ask for anything or fight for resources like the Extreme King. In Outer Sky, even though their race only has a few hundred people, their resources are seemingly infinite."  
  
After Han Sen thought of that, he suddenly realized, "Outer Sky is between the real world and the anti-material world. Is this zone independent? If it is, that means that a few hundred Very High are using a whole dimension's worth of resources. That is pretty awesome. Plus, Outer Sky has that Underworld Lake that connects to the anti-material world. They can get anti-material resources while still remaining connected to the real world. That suggests that the Very High have connections to all three worlds. What could be better than that?"  
  
But this didn't concern Han Sen. Han Sen hadn't been flying for long when Exquisite teleported toward him with Bao'er.  
  
"How long are you going to fly around for? Let me take you there." Exquisite put a hand on Han Sen's shoulder and teleported him to the top of the tree.  
  
Han Sen, eyeing each and every star fruit that was nearby, made his choice of fruit carefully.  
  
Exquisite told him the star fruit didn't really ripen, but the xenogeneics that were growing inside would make the shell turn dark red when they were grown. If someone picked a star fruit before that, the xenogeneics wouldn't be fully grown yet. The creatures within would be low level.  
  
"Let me pick a few and try my luck." Han Sen couldn't tell what xenogeneics the star fruits held. So, he didn't need to choose carefully. He found a nearby star fruit and flew toward it.  
  
The shell of that star fruit was already dark red. It looked like a setting sun, the light of which could still be seen as it slipped beneath the horizon. The star fruit was red like an orb of fire.  
  
Han Sen flew to where the branch connected with the star fruit. Following the instructions that Exquisite had given him, he pressed his hand against it. And then, the giant star fruit fell from the branch.  
  
The star fruit that fell was falling quickly. It didn't have the sense of mass and gravity that Han Sen had expected, though. It was actually very light.  
  
As the star fruit fell, the dark red shell started to melt away. It looked like a giant fireball that was burning furiously, sloughing off layers of itself as it went.  
  
The star fruit didn't release energy like you would expect from a fireball, though. It only took a second, and the shell of the giant star fruit dissolved completely. And there was a xenogeneic curled up inside.  
  
That xenogeneic looked like a flying dragon. Its head was near its tail, and its wings were folded closed. Its body was covered in green scales. Judging from its long body and tail, it had to be at least 40 meters long.  
  
"It looks very powerful. It cannot be a deified xenogeneic, surely," Han Sen pondered, his heart thumping.  
  
Exquisite said the star fruits mostly contained King xenogeneics, and very rarely, they would house a deified. But no matter what xenogeneic it was, it would be low level when it emerged. It would be like a freshly-born, first-tier King, or in rare instances, it would be a primitive deified.  
  
But they progressed like ordinary xenogeneics after that, of course. They could be grown. How much they grew would depend on their talent.  
  
Xenogeneics were woken from a deep slumber as they were freed from the core of the star fruit, so they were easy to kill as they emerged. Alternatively, the person who opened the fruit could allow the xenogeneics to fully awaken. The Very High had a special contract. If the xenogeneic signed the contract, then it would basically become the pet of the person who opened the fruit.  
  
Of course, this process couldn't be completed if the xenogeneic was hostile. If the creature resisted the contract, then it would remain dangerous and uncontrollable. That was why the Very High generally activated contracts when the xenogeneic inside the star fruit was still sleeping. Being asleep kept the creatures from resisting, granting a much higher success rate for the contracts.  
  
"This should be an aran dragon. It is a King class xenogeneic. If it is given enough resources, the aran dragon can be turned into a half-deified creature. It is a good xenogeneic to have," Exquisite said to Han Sen, as she watched the descent of the green dragon.  
  
Han Sen was very disappointed, though. It was a meager King class xenogeneic. For Han Sen, having such a creature would be practically pointless.  
  
Exquisite could sense what Han Sen was thinking, so she said, "It isn't completely useless. Star beetles migrate through space, and they only periodically descend to the star tree. If you guard the star tree yourself, you will have to wait for the beetles to descend before taking them all out by yourself. If you had some helpers, however, they could kill the star beetles before they even reach the star tree. Plus, you might need some help once you begin to travel around Outer Sky. I suggest you sign contracts with most of the xenogeneics that emerge from the star fruit."  
  
Han Sen thought that her suggestions were quite reasonable. The old man who originally guarded the star tree only let the beetles descend on the tree en masse because he needed them for Han Sen and Liyu Zhen's test. If he hadn't, he would have thinned out the star beetles long before they arrived at the tree.  
  
Ordinarily, the star beetles wouldn't even have a chance to touch the star tree. The old man would kill them before they got close. But even if Han Sen set up a defensive net of guardians, beetles would occasionally slip through the net. Han Sen would have to kill those himself.  
  
And of course, the old man had performed the task easily, but he had been much stronger than Han Sen currently was. If a large swarm of star beetles headed for the star tree, he would need some backup.  
  
Han Sen looked at the sleeping aran dragon. He knew it was going to wake up soon. He had to make a decision before then. If it woke up, he would be forced to kill it. It would be harder to force the creature into a contract once it was awake.  
  
Setting aside his hesitation, Han Sen used the method that Exquisite had taught him and initiated a contract with the aran dragon.  
  
When the contract was complete, a weird spell coalesced over the aran dragon. The spell flashed repeatedly, waking the aran dragon up.  
  
The aran dragon spread its wings and unleashed a roar that shook the sky. Then, the beast looked down at Han Sen.  
  
Han Sen curiously sent a thought toward the aran dragon, and the creature responded immediately. With a light flap of its wings, it lowered itself by Han Sen's feet.  
  
Han Sen stepped up onto the aran dragon's back. Feeling good, he said, "Having a mount will be pretty nice. I can use this guy like a transport ship. When I get enough resources from around Outer Sky, he can haul cargo for me."  
  
"I still have another 49 star fruits to select. I hope I can get a few deified xenogeneics!" Han Sen thought to himself. Then he turned and flew toward another star fruit.  
  
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# 2659 Luck Is Broken

Han Sen picked 10 star fruits one after another. Each xenogeneic that emerged was a first-tier King. The only differences between them were their breeds and their potential for development.  
  
Although creatures that came from the star fruits always started at first tier, the lowest King rank, they were still adults. Han Sen could help them develop by providing them with resources, but there was a limit to how much they could evolve. Bringing most of these Kings up to deified would be an impossible task. Half-deified was likely as far as they could go.  
  
He had yet to find a deified xenogeneic, and that alone disappointed Han Sen.  
  
Exquisite comforted him by saying, "Few of the fruit hold deified xenogeneics, so it isn't strange that you haven't found one yet. You still have another 40 chances, too. There is no need to rush this process. If your luck is decent, then one or two of your 50 fruit should hold deified xenogeneics."  
  
What she said was correct, but it still made Han Sen depressed.  
  
"Dad, Bao'er wants to pick some fruit, too," Bao'er said, looking up at Han Sen and tugging at his clothes.  
  
Since Exquisite could feel what Han Sen was thinking, Han Sen was careful to keep his mind blank. He told Bao'er, "Okay. You can help Daddy choose some star fruit, then."  
  
Bao'er was enthused, and she began to look around with wide eyes. Not long after, she pointed at a star fruit in particular and said, "I want that one."  
  
Han Sen picked up Bao'er and went there. He flew to the top of the star fruit, and Bao'er's hand touched the point where the fruit and branch connected. Then, the star fruit fell.  
  
Han Sen watched the star fruit's shell melt away. He knew Bao'er always had good luck with things like this, so he was hoping to take advantage of Bao'er's good luck to amass an army of deified fighters.  
  
The shell began to peel away, revealing the xenogeneic on the inside. Han Sen looked carefully at the strange xenogeneic.  
  
Its body was very small, barely larger than Han Sen's clenched fist. It had really big ears and a tiny, Q-shaped tail. The body was stout and circular. It looked like a fat, little, pink pig.  
  
"What is this xenogeneic?" Han Sen asked, looking at Exquisite. He could sense that the lifeforce of the creature he had just discovered wasn't strong. It was just like the other xenogeneics he had selected. It didn't have the presence that a deified creature would have, either. And presence aside, it certainly didn't look like a powerful warrior.  
  
"I don't know. I can't recognize every xenogeneic in existence," Exquisite said with a shake of her head.  
  
"It looks like Bao'er's luck doesn't always pan out in my favor. I thought she could get me a bunch of deified xenogeneics." Han Sen couldn't help but sigh.  
  
Exquisite rolled her eyes. This man was actually using his daughter for his own gain. She had never seen someone this obscene before. There seemed to be no limits to his shamelessness.  
  
But Bao'er seemed to really love the fat little creature, and she bent over and picked the pig up. She rubbed its fat body because it felt really good to touch.  
  
"Dad! Can I have this little pig as my pet?" Bao'er asked Han Sen while looking at him.  
  
"Of course you can." Upon seeing that the little pig wasn't a deified xenogeneic, Han Sen was fine with giving it to her as a pet. He had enough King class xenogeneics as it was.  
  
Bao'er was so happy to receive the creature, but she didn't sign a contract with it before waking it up.  
  
Exquisite twitched in shock. Bao'er had woken the creature up without signing a contract. Xenogeneics without a contract were as dangerous as any wild xenogeneic.  
  
But after the little pig woke up, it showed no signs of aggression. It lifted its round body and started running around Bao'er joyously. It looked very happy.  
  
Bao'er picked it up, and the little pig didn't resist. It rubbed its face against Bao'er's hand.  
  
"Thank God it isn't an aggressive xenogeneic." Exquisite felt relieved.  
  
"Bao'er, continue," Han Sen said to Bao'er.  
  
Bao'er nodded. She let the little pig go and then flew to another star fruit. The little pig took off after Bao'er, its bum wiggling.  
  
Bao'er swiftly decided on another fruit. The flesh of the falling fruit sloughed away, and when the slumbering xenogeneic inside was revealed, Han Sen and Exquisite were given a fright.  
  
It was another little pig. It looked exactly the same as the first one that Bao'er had chosen, and it was the size of a man's fist. It was chubby, too. The two little pigs now looked like twins.  
  
"Weird. Two different star fruits shouldn't yield the same xenogeneic twice in a row. Yet these two appear to be of the same race. Why has she found two little pigs that are identical?" Exquisite looked at the pigs in confusion.  
  
Han Sen looked at the two pigs, and he realized there was a difference between them.  
  
When he looked closely, he realized there was a white symbol on the forehead of each pig. Since the symbols were almost the same color as the pigs, the symbols were difficult to see unless you were very close to the pigs.  
  
The forehead spell that was on each pig was different, however. Han Sen had no clue what they meant.  
  
Han Sen looked at Exquisite. Exquisite shook her head. "I don't know what this means, either. There are too many different kinds of xenogeneics. Perhaps this is one of the rare breeds. But judging from their presence, they should only be King class. And they aren't aggressive."  
  
"Why is Bao'er's luck broken today?" Han Sen thought glumly. She had just discovered a pair of little pigs, and they wouldn't even attack. They seemed useless. They wouldn't even be useful as slaves.  
  
Bao'er took the two little pigs with her to open up more fruit, and what happened next made Han Sen and Exquisite freeze in place. She found another little pig.  
  
Before Han Sen could say anything, Bao'er started jumping around the star tree. She kicked down many star fruits. More than a dozen of them were falling through the air before Han Sen could open his mouth to protest.  
  
Exquisite quickly teleported over to Bao'er to pick her up.  
  
The star fruits fell, burning like dying suns. They quickly dissolved and revealed the xenogeneics inside.  
  
Han Sen and Exquisite's eyeballs almost popped out of their skulls. Inside those star fruits were more of the little pigs.  
  
The small pigs woke up fast. They opened their eyes as soon as their shells melted away. In moments, they were all merrily running around the first two pigs. They trotted next to Bao'er, and they looked very happy.  
  
"What is this?" Even Exquisite's face was wrought with confusion.  
  
It was a single breed of xenogeneic, yet there were so many of them. The star tree had never done anything like this before.  
  
Han Sen and Exquisite looked over the pigs, and aside from the spells on their foreheads, everything about them was the same.  
  
"Bao'er, you have collected so many pigs. You should let me open the rest," Han Sen said with a strained smile. He'd been hoping Bao'er would get him a few deified xenogeneics, but it didn't look like that was happening anytime soon. And at this point, Bao'er could start her own pig farm.  
  
There were sixteen little pink pigs running around. They all lined up around Bao'er.  
  
Bao'er didn't comment on what had happened, but she seemed very pleased with her choice of fruits. She didn't show any desire to pick more of them.  
  
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# 2660 Physiognomy

"I guess I'm on my own." Han Sen looked around. He saw a star fruit that looked fairly pretty, and so he flew up to it.  
  
"This fruit is very puffed and full. It does seem very rich. It is obviously a sign of happiness. It must surely have generated a deified xenogeneic." Those who studied physiognomy believed they could judge the personality of a person merely by studying that person's facial features. Han Sen attempted to apply the same principle to the fruit, running his hands over its surface.  
  
"Ha! Are you trying to read the fruit's physiognomy?" Exquisite couldn't help but laugh. The Very High had physiognomy skills, as well. But they had never thought about trying something like that on a star fruit, of all things.  
  
"Humans have faces. Fruits have faces, too. If humans can receive physiognomies, then why can't fruit have a physiognomy?" Han Sen replied in a dignified manner.  
  
He actually didn't understand physiognomy; he had merely seen a reference to it in the texts of the Xuan Men. Han Sen had barely glanced over the topic. He couldn't even be called a beginner. He couldn't actually read the face of a human, let alone of a fruit.  
  
Right now, he just needed something to reassure him that he wasn't making another blind choice. He desperately hoped to receive a deified xenogeneic.  
  
But God didn't give people what they wanted very often, and Han Sen had thus far only been able to receive King class xenogeneics. He had selected many fruits, but they all turned out to be Kings. He could only use them for grunt work. So, overall, they wouldn't be very useful.  
  
After choosing more fruit, Han Sen realized he only had two left. Upset by his disappointing results, he grabbed the two nearest to him and slammed them down.  
  
Bao'er was useless now. Han Sen could only depend on his own luck, and that wasn't working out well for him.  
  
The two fruits dissolved quickly, revealing the xenogeneics inside them.  
  
One of them was a wolf. Han Sen immediately recognized that its presence was King class, but the other one made him quite happy for a change.  
  
It was a rock giant. It was in a sitting position, holding its knees. It was ten meters tall, and its body was entirely composed of black rock. It seemed to radiate strength. It looked like a little mountain, in many ways.  
  
"A deified xenogeneic, can you believe it? Finally, I have received a deified xenogeneic." Feeling the mammoth presence of the rock giant, Han Sen was thrilled.  
  
Exquisite felt relieved. One deified xenogeneic out of 50 fruits was an ordinary shake of luck. While the rock giant was still sleeping, Han Sen quickly signed a contract with it. Outer Sky was full of deified creatures, and having a deified fighter by his side would make life much easier for Han Sen.  
  
Especially if he wanted to kill star beetles in the future, having a deified xenogeneic to help would save him a lot of trouble.  
  
Han Sen brought his group of xenogeneics over to the old man. The old man didn't say much. When his gaze passed over the little pigs around Bao'er, he seemed surprised.  
  
"Uncle, I wonder what these little pigs are. Why did xenogeneics that are so similar come out of so many fruit?" Exquisite asked.  
  
"The star tree is a true god plant," the old man said simply. "It possesses the energy of the universe. It isn't something that I fully understand. It has its reasons for existing, however."  
  
After that, the old man brought out another item to present to Han Sen.  
  
"This is my token. You need to use it when you clear out beetles in the future. Every ten days, come back and take care of the star tree. Whenever a swarm of bugs arrives, you must make sure that you clear out each and every one. None of them can be allowed to live."  
  
Han Sen bowed and accepted the item. It was a small stick. It was aqua colored, and it looked like it was made from jade.  
  
The item had a very strong presence. It looked like a deified treasure.  
  
Han Sen hadn't expected to receive a powerful item out of this deal, but he quickly took the jade stick and bowed before the old man. "Do not worry, uncle. I will do my best to take care of the star tree until you return."  
  
"You may leave now. Come back again in 10 days," the old man said dismissively.  
  
Bao'er and Exquisite joined Han Sen as he turned to depart, but Exquisite was unable to teleport so many creatures with her. Even if she had used her small ship, there wouldn't have been enough room for all of those xenogeneics.  
  
So, for now, Han Sen left the creatures there. He would be returning to the tree in 10 days, anyway.  
  
Bao'er's small pigs were only a fist-size, so transporting them wasn't difficult. Han Sen pulled out a bag and stuffed all of the pigs inside it. He carried them to the small ship.  
  
"You should let them out. They won't take up much space, anyway," Exquisite said. She could see the pigs writhing around in the bag in an obvious state of discomfort.  
  
Han Sen realized that she was right. He released the little pigs and allowed them all to happily run toward Bao'er, who was standing in the front of the ship. Altogether, they watched the majestic scenery go by.  
  
"Do you want to go back to Underworld Lake, or would you rather hunt some xenogeneics?" Exquisite asked Han Sen as both of them rested in the back of the ship.  
  
"Let's go back to Underworld Lake. I think it will be safer if I practice more with God's Wander before I begin hunting xenogeneics," Han Sen said.  
  
"Sure." Exquisite nodded and delivered Han Sen to Underworld Lake.  
  
Unless someone had space teleportation, they would have to use a ship like Exquisite's to travel around Outer Sky. The ship had a special power buff that deterred the creatures in Outer Sky from attempting to break it. Not even deified elites could travel through Outer Sky on foot without trouble. And Han Sen wasn't even deified yet.  
  
So, Han Sen wanted to practice space teleportation so he could travel around Outer Sky with greater ease. He didn't plan on hunting down xenogeneics yet.  
  
And of course, Han Sen also wanted to fish-up the rest of the yellow papers he had been in the process of collecting. That was the main reason he had asked her to take him to Underworld Lake rather than the wooden house.  
  
Exquisite could feel what Han Sen was thinking, and it made her blush. She thought Han Sen wanted to see more of the pictures on the yellow papers. She didn't know the yellow papers actually seemed to represent some sort of geno art.  
  
They soon arrived back on the shores of Underworld Lake, but this time, Exquisite didn't leave. Instead, she remained to fish alongside him. That was quite frustrating.  
  
With Exquisite there, he had to control his thoughts. And that was no easy task. Even Han Sen struggled to keep his thoughts in check.  
  
Han Sen enjoyed practicing his geno arts, and Exquisite got to experience everything that he learned as well. Although Exquisite had already learned God's Wander, watching Han Sen practice allowed her to learn some new things at times.  
  
But Exquisite was caught off guard by Han Sen's fishing success. Before she pulled out a single thing, Han Sen had already managed to reel in a few items.  
  
But Han Sen only seemed to be retrieving those yellow papers. Whenever Han Sen looked at them, she could feel it. And every time he did, her face blushed.  
  
Bao'er was now close friends with the small pigs, and she played with them nearby as Han Sen and Exquisite fished. The pigs kept Bao'er occupied; otherwise, she would have been bored out of her mind. The little pigs continued to look passive, and they didn't exhibit an ounce of aggression. While they made for nice pets, they were useless. Han Sen felt a little disheartened every time he looked at them.  
  
After a few days, Han Sen couldn't stand being watched by Exquisite anymore. So, he told her that he wanted to go to the core area.  
  
But Exquisite told him that Outer Sky was between the real world and the anti-material world. Due to the presence of space barriers, he couldn't enter the core area.  
  
Han Sen tried it anyway, and he really couldn't enter the core hall's door anymore.  
  
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# 2661 Taking Care of the Star Tree

In a garden on a mountain in Outer Sky, Liyu Zhen met with another Very High man. They began watching the video that Liyu Zhen had taken, which showed Han Sen slaying the star beetles.  
  
"Li Xue Cheng, what do you think after watching this?" Liyu Zhen asked, staring at the man in green clothing.  
  
"He is very strong. He might even be stronger than a Very High of the same level. Who is he?" Li Xue Cheng asked, not taking his eyes off the video of Han Sen.  
  
"He is the silkworm Exquisite selected. His name is Han Sen, and he is a crystallizer," Liyu Zhen answered.  
  
"I think Exquisite is very lucky to have gotten a silkworm like this," Li Xue Cheng said with a nod.  
  
Liyu Zhen smiled and said, "What does it have to do with us if she had good luck? To be straight with you, she is a very precious person amongst the Very High. We, on the other hand, are just breeding machines."  
  
Seeing Li Xue Cheng frown, Liyu Zhen said, "After seeing this video, do you not have any opinions to share on it?"  
  
"What do you mean?" Li Xue Cheng frowned again.  
  
"When Li Keer gets her silkworm, the fights between silkworms will start. There are thirteen silkworms in total. So, which of them do you think is going to win?" Liyu Zhen asked.  
  
"From what I can see here, Han Sen seems pretty good. But he is just a King class with nine tiers. Most of the silkworms are half-deified. One of them was even born deified. Judging from the power I have witnessed, I think the born-deified is the most likely to win," Li Xue Cheng quietly said.  
  
"Your reasoning is sound, but I have analyzed Han Sen and the other silkworms. Han Sen is amazingly strong, and he has many treasures. He even possesses the true god weapon Shield of the Medusa's Gaze. I think he has a high chance of winning." After Liyu Zhen was embarrassed in the star tree contest, he had taken the time to investigate and learn more about Han Sen. He now knew more about Han Sen than most of the Very High did.  
  
Outer Sky had many resources, so the Very High never lacked anything. They only ventured out into the rest of the universe to find silkworms and people with peculiar talents.  
  
So, the Very High paid little attention to most of the races in the universe, and Han Sen was just a King. Even an ordinary deified wouldn't garner much attention from the Very High.  
  
Liyu Zhen passed the information he had collected on Han Sen over to Li Xue Cheng. The file included a video of Han Sen using the Shield of the Medusa's Gaze to turn Meng Lie into a statue.  
  
"This actually happened?" Li Xue Cheng was shocked. He went quiet, and then he said, "If this video is real, he does stand a chance of winning the battle between silkworms. It is just a chance, mind you. His victory definitely isn't guaranteed. After all, using the power of a treasure doesn't make you as good as a real deified. There is still a big difference in level. But if he can use a weapon like the Shield of the Medusa's Gaze, he might actually win."  
  
"What if this silkworm fight bars the use of treasures?" Liyu Zhen suddenly laughed.  
  
"With his power, of course, he cannot challenge a genuine deified. The video demonstrated clearly that he couldn't kill the deified star beetle no matter how strong he was. His power is no match for a deified yet. His skill will matter little in the face of such absolute power." Li Xue Cheng paused and said, "But the fight between silkworms doesn't prohibit the use of treasures."  
  
"It didn't in the past, but this time will be different. I have a reliable source with sway in this matter. This time, the silkworm fights will ban the use of treasures," Liyu Zhen said with confidence.  
  
"Did your family member..." Li Xue Cheng seemed to have guessed something unsavory about Liyu Zhen. But before he finished speaking, he thought better of it and closed his mouth.  
  
Liyu Zhen smiled. "You just need to know that this silkworm fight won't allow the use of treasures. That is all. Right now, there are only four people who know about this. And you and I cannot tell anyone. The other two won't tell, either."  
  
"But what does this have to do with us?" Li Xue Cheng still didn't understand what the other man meant.  
  
"Did you forget?" Liyu Zhen asked coldly. "Silkworm fights are normally so boring, but this one will be rather interesting. If you send out information about Han Sen, do you think others will be like us and believe Han Sen will win the silkworm bouts?"  
  
"That might be possible... After all, the born deified silkworm is just primitive. He is actually weaker than Meng Lie. With his treasures, Han Sen would probably win," Li Xue Cheng quietly said. As he spoke, his eyes brightened. He finally understood what Liyu Zhen had been implying all along.  
  
"You want everyone to gamble and place their bets on Han Sen, so you can take their money?" Li Xue Cheng's eyes flashed with interest.  
  
"Yes. And after everyone loses because of their faith in Han Sen, do you think they will be nice to him?" Liyu Zhen laughed.  
  
"You are so evil. You'll be ripping off many people with resources, people that Han Sen might have to visit. If they don't like him, it might be hard for him to earn resources," Li Xue Cheng said, understanding.  
  
"I, Liyu Zhen, won't allow something stolen from me to remain stolen." Liyu Zhen chuckled darkly. Then he said to Li Xue Cheng, "They will soon announce that this silkworm fight will ban the use of treasures, so you better move quickly. We need people to place their wagers before the news circulates."  
  
"This seems like quite the opportunity. Why don't you do this yourself? Why did you have to bring me into this?" Li Xue Cheng asked, somewhat befuddled.  
  
"I have a background with him," Liyu Zhen said, shaking his head. "If I bet that Han Sen will lose, people will grow suspicious. You don't know him, however. We can share this business half and half."  
  
"You are right. With your relationship to Han Sen, if you bet that he will lose, they will know that there must be something going on behind the scenes." Li Xue Cheng laughed and said, "Sure. Then it's settled."  
  
Information about Han Sen soon spread across the Very High. The Very High became interested in him, aside from those that studied Very High Sense, of course. They simply didn't say anything. Most of the Very High believed Han Sen had a chance of winning the silkworm fight, as a result.  
  
Li Xue Cheng was able to use this opportunity to make lots of wagers with the Very High.  
  
The results were just as Liyu Zhen had predicted, as well. Soon after the last of the bets came in, the Very High leader announced that the silkworms wouldn't be allowed to treasures in the bouts. Many of the Very High thought Li Xue Cheng had scammed them, and they hated Han Sen, too.  
  
Things would be fine if Han Sen won the silkworm fight, but if he didn't win, many of the Very High would lose their money because of him. Even though Han Sen was completely innocent in this scheme, he was affected.  
  
Han Sen didn't know that any of this had happened. He continued fishing in Underworld Lake, and after ten days, he returned to the star tree.  
  
The old man under the tree was gone. Han Sen took over the guardianship of the tree. He spent some time searching through the tree's branches, but he found no more pesky star beetles occupying the tree. It seemed as if the old man had cleared them before he left.  
  
"The star beetle swarms come every two to three months. You don't have to stay here all the time. Only come when the bugs arrive. Then, you just have to kill them," Exquisite said to Han Sen.  
  
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