Ego Extreme Realm Cultivation Feat - Chen Ran



Introduction

Chen Ran has matched with his team and has the help of other 7 stars to face Yue Guanshan, but nobody in this temporary alliance is loyal to each other including Chen Ran. All the events leading upto this has been orchestrated behind the scenes by the Leader of the Liar Killer Alliance, “Omnipotent” and the Leader of the Whisperer Alliance, “Omniscient”

Currently, Omniscient and Omnipotent are in a power struggle against Ten Star Near-True Self Level Players, especially the alliance of Ninth True Self Player, Chen Yang (Fifth True Self Player) and Future Chen Ran from the future of a nearby timeline.

These three have made a defence against Omniscient and Omnipotent in the river of time with the help of Ninth True Self’s Time Travelling Skill, to prevent these two from directly killing their past selves. But for Omniscient and Omnipotent to break this equilibrium, Chen Ran must die, and is the easiest to kill since the current Chen Ran is only 5 Stars while the others are at the top of the verse.

So they(the Omnis) have created this dungeon deliberately, naming it Chen Ran’s Tomb. They have anticipated the arrival of all the participants, and have thus prepared Yue Guanshan’s team to kill current 5 Star Chen Ran in the instance, which will kill Future Chen Ran too (Since Current Chen Ran’s Timeline is the Base Timeline for all the branch timelines).

But Chen Ran has crossed the First Secret Chamber/Puzzle Room, albeit due to the dungeon’s specific mechanic he wasn’t exposed to all the puzzles, he doesn’t have enough clues to deduce the overall Dungeon/Instance’s “Story”. Similarly various levels of traps act in tandem to ensure Chen Ran’s death.

Meanwhile, Omniscient and Omnipotent have also made a trap for future Chen Ran with the Second Secret Chamber and the Andersen Special Forces. Thus Chen Ran has to save himself and his future self with his insane reasoning and strategy.

Facing the Psychological Warfare by An Sheng

Chen Ran has cleared the 1st Secret Chamber and has entered the 2nd along with 18 other participants. The psychological warfare started against Chen Ran as soon as he deduced the invincible set up of another player - Chu Yun

An Sheng has a team of 5 including himself waiting for Chen Ran in the 2nd Secret Chamber, and were able to participate in this battle against Chen Ran with Omnipotent's setup. He hides behind 4 of his team members, and each don a particular mask to further emphasize on their identity being a dungeon NPC. Even if they possess Liar Killer Guns, the Dungeon BOSS's skill can mark a player NPC, and by the virtue of the dungeon being a 5 Star dungeon, the victims must also be of 5 star or lower intelligence in the player's minds.

An Sheng has his team member, Pumpkin Head to start predicting all of Chen Ran's actions with the use of An Sheng's skill effect, "*Spring and Autumn Brushwork"* to

1. Circumvent the condition that every secret chamber has to have a solvable escape mechanism, giving an opportunity for Chen Ran to deduce one of their skill effects, which will further unnerve Chen Ran in exchange to complete the below objectives
2. Serve as a warning for other players. Since all players know the dungeon is specifically targeted against Chen Ran, seeing the squad only target Chen Ran would make others think of escaping the arena first.
3. Start unnerving Chen Ran, saying aloud every one of his next actions to make Chen Ran despair and doubt himself

Chen Ran responds by testing Pumpkin Head, he signals Jiang Zhe to use No-Distance with him, where Chen Ran immediately forms a strategy to kill Chu Yun and conveys it to Jiang Zhe. Jiang Zhe is shot dead at a very high speed by Pumpkin Head after he states Chen Ran's moves one second in advance.

Chen Ran knows Jiang Zhe can revive after death, so this was an effective way to convey to others a strategy to kill Chu Yun (which can also be used to mislead Chu Yun) while also testing Pumpkin Head's capabilities. With this Chen Ran narrows down one of the squad's skill effects. (Since Pumpkin Head was able to say the content shared in No-Distance).

Chen Ran further tries thinking of singing a song, which Pumpkin Head sings even before Chen Ran opens his mouth. With this, Chen Ran deduces and rounds down the cause of the situation to the following : They either have a Mind Reading skill, a

Precognition skill, a Save State skill (as in they are repeating a save point action but are unaware of that), or the players are directly covered by their No Distance (Players with higher heart cultivation can straight up simulate Low level players and thus, predict their actions in No-Distance).

Chen Ran further eliminates the option of No-Distance after testing it. Chen Ran rationally analyses all the clues he has gathered and starts the participation in the dungeon by crossing the red line.

Meanwhile, Pumpkin Head warns Chen Ran to not underestimate things, and not to exclude the presence of Superego level players, who have heart cultivation higher than all the players present there, and are terrifying in their ability (Not even Chen Ran has been a match for Superego lvl players till now). This is to plant a seed of doubt in the minds of all the players, who have let down their guards due to Pumpkin Head's performance.

After all the players have crossed the red line, An Sheng uses the Uncanny Valley Effect as a means of Psychological Warfare. He has his team dressed up in funny suits, and makes them perform an introduction with each member striking different poses. He even makes a surprise entry with a Batman like costume. But he utters a single terrifying sentence that directly breaks the player's confidence, and causes everyone to panic.

"Andersens Fairy Tale Nine-Star Superego Special Forces, assemble!"

Nine Stars are just below the top brass of the verse, and Superego level means they are immune to most of the player skills, while their manipulation and outsmarting ability are hard to defend against.

This causes visible panic among the players, causing everyone to try use their skills and distance themselves (Chu Yun literally commits suicide to wait out this face off). Using Liar Killer Skills also results in a blackout, so in the darkened environment, even though Lin Xuan uses his skill, Chen Ran is unable to be relocated due to the nature of the dungeon design.

Thus after the lights come on, Chen Ran finds not only have everyone else escaped, Chu Yun and Jiang Zhe had commited temporary suicide to escape this faceoff, he has to face off against 5 Nine Star Superego Level players by himself, if he looks at things from the surface.

To explain this adversity better, current Chen Ran is 5 stars. He has just deduced a way to fight against 7 stars. In the previous 1st Secret Chamber, he had to ally with 14 other players just to withstand the onslaught of a Near-Superego level Player Yue Guanshan. And now he has to face 5 Nine Star Superego Players alone.

But Chen Ran is still able to maintain his cool. He thinks to himself “Don’t Panic” and starts smoking. He even devises a way to verify if he has been pulled into a No-Distance of the squad members, by reaching for his gun to make the squad think that he is going to use his skill, while testing for No-Distance by manifesting a gold coin inside his mouth.(At high enough heart cultivation, players can manifest and simulate objects in No-Distance).

Chen Ran even tries attacking a member of the Andersen squad(An Sheng) with the gun he manifests in No-Distance named “Wait a minute”(To make opponents think he is asking the opponents to wait a minute, while he is actually manifesting his Sniper Rifle in No-Distance). The attack still fails though.

An Sheng resumes his psychological warfare. He knows of his reputation as the best Superego level player. He uses this reputation to try rattle Chen Ran even more, with the following introduction

"Let me introduce myself. I am An Sheng, a Nine-Star Liar Killer and a Nine-Star Whisperer. I am a senior consultant for the Underworld, the honorary leader of the Rogue Players, and hailed as the number one person under the Half-Step True Self state of mind. I once won first place in the Eighteenth Floor Novel Writing Competition. I'm a famous unscrupulous merchant of the Eighteenth Layer, and the thug who incited the Ninety-Nine Battlefields. I am the first and current captain of the Andersens Fairy Tale Nine-Star Superego Special Forces, and I should also be a candidate for the Tenth True Self Player.”

Each of the achievements he boasts of makes him look super dangerous, powerful and intelligent, which is true. An Sheng deliberately stated his status in Hell to rattle Chen Ran, adding on the introduction of his team as full of Nine Star Superego level players.

Chen Ran still doesn't panic, he thinks Don’t Panic to himself and stops himself from panicking, showcasing great Mental Discipline. He even deduces that things are not as they look, and further deduces from the following premises and conclusions.

P1 : Downward Compatibility in Hell applies to only two stars above the dungeon rank, i.e, for the current 5 Star dungeon, the participant rank shall not be more than 7 Stars

P2 : A dungeon can only be matched with 20 Players

P3 : The dungeon boss has the ability to make Players to be tagged as NPCs of the dungeon though his/her Mental Pollution Skill

P4: Dungeon NPCs rank is limited to the rank of the Dungeon and its Dungeon Boss.

P5 : This particular dungeon is named Chen Ran's Tomb. This dungeon was designed by Omniscient and Omnipotent to target kill Chen Ran (10 Star Near True Self level Players, leaders of the Liar Killer and Whisperer Alliance respectively)

P6 : Future Chen Ran hasn't interfered in any way to help Current Chen Ran

P7 : Future Chen Ran's Alliance will not interfere in Current Chen Ran's adversities or progress, unless his opponent directly outclasses Current Chen Ran by 2 Stars

P8 : Future Chen Ran's Liar Killer Skill is Eternal Prohibition, which is able to destroy any skill effect and permanently disable the skill of the user

P9 : Dungeon NPCs usually involve the people the Dungeon BOSS has encountered in his/her life while he/she was alive

P10 : Chen Ran is 5 Star Level with Near Superego level of Heart Cultivation, and is also able to contend with 7 Star Players

P11 : Both Omnipotent and Future Chen Ran's Alliance which includes the Ninth True Self Player, has access to Time Travel

P12 [Observation] : Omniscient and Omnipotent haven't directly interfered with the dungeon after its start, unlike previous dungeon/instances, even allowed Chen Ran to develop his own heart cultivation system in the First Secret Chamber without intervention

C1 = P2 + P3 = Andersen's Fairy Tale Squad members are NPCs of the dungeon, with the sole motive to oppose Chen Ran (observation of previous events)

C2 = P1 + C1 + P4 + P7 = The squad player(NPCs) levels are restricted to 5 Star Half-Step Superego level

C3 = P5 + P6 + P7 = Omnipotent and Omniscient must have made a truce with Future Chen Ran's Alliance for Future Chen Ran to not interfere

Further derivation of C3 = C3' : Future Chen Ran's existence depends on present Chen Ran, so Future Chen Ran's deal will also protect present Chen Ran in some way

C4 = C3' + P12 = Future Chen Ran refrains from interfering in this dungeon in exchange for Omniscient and Omnipotent to not interfere anymore in the dungeon

C5 = C4 + C1 + P8 + P11 = The presence of Andersen's squad as NPCs would mean

- Either Omnipotent has used his skill combinations to tag them NPCs and insert them in which case Future Chen Ran's squad would have interfered with Time Travel and Eternal Prohibition
- Omnipotent has circumvented this by utilising a loophole

C6 = C5 + P9 + C2 = Omnipotent had teleported the squad(or a version of them) back in time to the living world, back when dungeon BOSS was alive, and the squad had involved themselves in the BOSS's life to eventually fight Chen Ran as NPCs. Since all Omnipotent did was transport someone and this event does not interfere with current Chen Ran directly but through eventuality, with the side effect of restricting the Andersen squad to 5 Star levels, Future Chen Ran hasn't intervened

Chen Ran states his conclusions C2 and C6 to An Sheng, which is also a form of a Psychological warfare, by revealing An Sheng's scheme in the open as a challenge. And he doesn't take any time to think while deducing, as he replies these Conclusions after An Sheng's Provocation "Aren't you afraid"

But An Sheng again goes on an offensive, not only deducing that Chen Ran had deduced the Greatest Gui Yu in hell, but also stating that Chen Ran is actually mediocre and also laying bare Chen Ran's ultimate goal, which was kept a secret by Chen Ran.

An Sheng also states his current goal is to eliminate Chen Ran to create chaos and a chance for An Sheng to become a True Self level player. He also emphasises that Chen Ran is disposable in the grand scheme of things and An Sheng will take the place of Chen Ran. But Chen Ran still doesn't panic

An Sheng further uses other ways to psychologically destabilise Chen Ran. He states they are going to use the skill combination of the team to trap Chen Ran. He knows Chen Ran's reliance on his own skill *"Eternal Kingdom"* and Chen Ran also knows his reliance on Eternal Kingdom is a weakness.

This is An Sheng indirectly declaring to Chen Ran that he is well aware of Chen Ran's weakness, and if the dungeon specifically designed against Chen Ran were to prohibit

player skill usage, the NPC Andersen team would have an overwhelming advantage. An Sheng takes it even further and stalls for time, letting Chen Ran get completely polluted mentally due to the dungeon boss's skill(effects explained later), stating he won't underestimate Chen Ran.

Chen Ran realises the whole dungeon was perfectly designed to trap him, and starts deducing further clues to escape An Sheng.

P13 : An Sheng is the strongest player in Hell at Superego level

P14 : This showdown was specifically designed by Omniscient and Omnipotent.

P15 : Since Chen Ran is already Near Superego level in heart cultivation by now, He can easily outsmart/ outmaneuver players with lower heart cultivation.

P16 : The 1st Secret Chamber already focused on dismantling Chen Ran with an attack against his strategic prowess and his Military Form ideology of solving problems

P17 : One of their skills must have an effect similar to foreseeing the future (From Chen Ran narrowing Pumpkin Head's behaviour)

C7 = P13 + P14 + P15 + P16 = This 2nd Secret Chamber to trap Chen Rn should specifically involve a combination skill attack. Specifically, it should be the strongest Five Star (Refer to prev deduction's C2) Combination Skill after being suppressed to Five Star.

Further Chen Ran starts analysing his current situation, inferring that there is an internal strife within the NPC from the information he has observed at the 1st Secret Chamber with the Boss's Mental Pollution effect (Every dungeon has a basic plot structure). But still due to circumstances, essential clues have been hidden from him

Thus P18 : The Plot Information Gap can be used to outsmart Chen Ran, but further clues can be inferred from NPCs and Boss's actions, along with the Secret Chamber Puzzles (As all elements of a dungeon must be related to a common dungeon plot)

P19 [observation] : In the Game of "Drop the Handkerchief," the participants didn't think of the most rational way to clear it while they were strategizing.

P20 [observation] : Facing Yue Guanshan's No Distance, we didn't think of the most rational way to counter it.

P21[observation and experience] : the dungeon BOSS's Mental Pollution skill also has the effect of Plot Simulation

C8 = P19 + P20 = Mild Mental Pollution from the boss's skill causes Players to be unable to think of the most rational solution.

C9 = C7 + C8 = Chen Ran will lose the ability to think of the most rational way to clear the 2nd Secret Chamber. Either he will fail under the Combination Skill effect, or infer the most complicated way to clear it

Further Inferences were done Chen Ran on the effects of the Combination Skills

C10 = P13 + P14 + P17 + C7 = Out of 5 skills in the combination, One is related to Foresight-type, while the other is a situation/ plot altering skill, likely a Gui Yu Secret Chamber or Plot Simulation skill, to effectively trap Chen Ran while also fulfilling the conditions of being an NPC

The ability to still deduce and infer even when facing off the strongest Superego level Player's psychological attacks showcases Chen Ran's EM, Reasoning, Thinking and Mental Discipline.

An Sheng, observing Chen Ran, launches yet another psychological attack. This time, he uses his knowledge of Chen Ran's previous experiences, where Chen Ran's enemies like DiWu ZeYi and Shu Renjun sang the following same poem, but incomplete.
An Sheng adds the last four lines, signifying the impending death of Chen Ran

"But now, the soul is severed on the Yellow Springs Road."
"In the end, the mortal realm cannot keep him."
"This body, once dead, is as light as a feather."
"Living up to neither youth nor autumn."

The poem itself signifies the untimely death of an ambitious youth, signifying Chen Ran's to be untimely death. This is using Chen Ran's familiarity with the enemies he faced, and their last act of leaving their hopes to Chen Ran, and using it against Chen Ran himself. An Sheng doesn't wait for Chen Ran's reaction and the team activates their combination skill, with Chen Ran only being to hear "Whisperer: Death Rewind"

The Trap against Future Chen Ran

I'll first explain the trap made here against current and future Chen Ran at the same time.

The aim of Omniscient and Omnipotent in this particular trap is to kill Future Chen Ran. Future Chen Ran is someone from a nearby alternate timeline, protecting Current Chen Ran against direct intervention from these two. He time travels to the point whenever a

Terminologies and Skill Effects

Heart Cultivation : Cultivation/Progression of the State of Mind and Thought to higher levels using specific procedures, which can offer benefits ranging from increased mental capacity, higher thinking functions and varied thinking due to various States of Mind resulting in varied ideas, and some amount of immunity to the Liar Killer/Whisperer Skills.

There are 3 main levels of Heart Cultivation : Id level, Ego level and Superego level, with various methods of heart cultivation to reach these levels. Each level of heart cultivation is so much higher than the lower one, the difference is described as the difference between the thoughts of an author and nd the thought process of the characters within his novel

No-Distance : Think of it as a mental domain expansion players can use to communicate in secret(can't be noticed from the outside) or pastiche mental attacks of various kinds. Higher levels of heart cultivation can enable players to stimulate parts of reality in this domain expansion.

Spring and Autumn Brushwork : Superego level skill of An Sheng. Two major effects can be observed.

1. Life Editing : Before numerical inflation, An Sheng could edit players created by skills or dungeons, such as clones. After upgrading skill to high levels and achieving Numerical inflation, can edit a player's Life, including their Loss of Ego trigger (with the condition the player doesn't know An Sheng can do this). The edited player will be counted as independent from the original.
2. Copy : Copy a player's life. This so-called copying requires a sample first. The copying effect is equivalent to an early-access screening. This effect also enables An Sheng to predict said player's future actions.

Eternal Kingdom : True Self Level Skill of Chen Ran, meaning every other skill is lower in priority than Eternal Kingdom, whatever its rank might be. It has the following effects

1. Dispel : Decrypts all existing Skills within the entire space, regardless of whether they are covered by non-Skill secret chambers. This effect, simply put, means that 'space' here refers to large-scale spaces like dungeons and the Eighteenth Layer, not small spaces like a single secret chamber.
2. Prohibit : Prohibits other players within the entire space from using Skills for one hour, regardless of whether they are covered by non-Skill secret chambers

3. Silence : After using Eternal Kingdom, the holder is immune to the effects of any non-True Self Skill within that space for ten days. Note: This is a passive effect and can be actively toggled off.

Note: Silence is much stronger than State of Mind Skill immunity. For example, the Superego State of Mind can negate some effects of Superego Skills, such as the temporary memory loss from Wheel of Time, but it cannot negate time resets. Silence, however, can, and this passive effect can even be turned off.