

## Castle of Black Iron #Chapter 21: Orphanage - Read

### Castle of Black Iron Chapter 21- 30

## Orphanage

### Chapter 21: Orphanage

Teresa's Orphanage was located in the civilian settlement close to the west city wall of Blackhot City. Standing outside the gate of the orphanage, Zhang Tie noticed the 30m odd city wall and the military buildings within it. The city wall made the people in Blackhot City feel confident and safe. Although people also felt depressed in front of the high city walls, none of them would complain that it was too high. As the city wall could bring enough sense of safety to the people, the prices of all the houses within the walls were soaring.

"I wonder if elder brother is standing on the city wall?" staring at the city wall, Zhang Tie thought to himself. As soldiers of the City Guard Army of Blackhot City, they had to defend the city walls. Since Zhang Tie didn't know the daily arrangements and shifts of the City Guard Army, he naturally had no idea where his elder brother was and what he was doing at the moment. Zhang Tie also didn't feel like asking for that information. Strictly speaking, all information on the fortifications of the City Guard Army and military actions were classified. When people casually talked, they would always expose something; however, if someone was excessively curious, they might bring numerous troubles and disasters upon themselves, and perhaps even to their family. As a commoner, Zhang Tie was always cautious and was not overtly that curious. Nevertheless, considering the news of the Red-scarf Burglars, Zhang Tie paid special attention to the top of the city wall. No matter what, he felt that there were more soldiers patrolling on the city wall than usual and the atmosphere was more serious than before.

When he recovered his composure, he found Grandma Teresa standing outside the gate of the orphanage. As usual, she would wait here at this moment every week for the arrival of Zhang Tie.

As a pious disciple of the Grepis School, Grandma Teresa always wore a green nun's robe that had some white decorative patterns of olive twigs on it,

which symbolized the spirit of the Grepis School. The slightly pudgy grandma in green robes looked very kind, like a neighborhood grandma.

Green and white were the favorite colors of Grepis disciples, which also symbolized their religious doctrine. The combination of colors was always kind and delightful.

Seeing Zhang Tie riding over, Grandma Teresa smiled and raised her voice, "Children, your favorite food is coming..."

When Zhang Tie arrived at the gate of the orphanage, he stopped his tricycle. Five or six nine-year-old children had already run out from the orphanage. In pairs, they started to help Zhang Tie unload the food from the vehicle before Zhang Tie had even asked them for help.

"Ho... ho... be careful. If you can't do it, I'll help you!" saying this, Zhang Tie helped them remove the big clay pots from the vehicle. The children hurriedly brought the clay pots into the orphanage happily. Cheers reverberated from the orphanage as more children ran out. The children with a little bit of strength had already rushed out to help them, while the younger ones stood on the roadside. With eyes widely opened and dripping saliva, they heavily sniffed and gazed at the clay pots that contained rice soup inside. For the children growing up in the orphanage, the rice soup that was as white as snow was already exquisite.

At this moment, Grandma Teresa would always look at those orphans with a kind smile.

Every week, Zhang Tie's family would always have a lot of rice soup left over when boiling rice to make rice brew. This rice soup was extremely precious; it was something which Zhang Tie and his elder brother couldn't grow up without. Their neighbors always fetched some rice soup to feed their babies when the mothers had no milk to feed them, or if they couldn't afford milk.

Rice soup tasted good and was highly nutritious. It was the essence of rice. However, it could not be preserved over long periods of time. Basically, it would spoil in two days. His mom said it was a sin to waste food; therefore, she always kept two days of rice soup for their family and gave the rest to others. Some may look down on the bit of rice soup; however, these half-starved orphans might feel like this was the best food they have ever had. The Zhang family delivered the rice soup to the orphanage every week, which

could feed the children for two days. As Grandma Teresa always said, this was the best gift from God.

At first, it was Zhang Tie's dad who delivered the rice soup. Later on, it was Zhang Tie's older brother, Zhang Yang. And now, it was Zhang Tie's turn. The Zhang family's business has been based on rice brew for many years. They brought the rice soup here every year, and this had become the tradition of the Zhang Family.

Guiding the children to bring in the clay pots containing the rice soup into the orphanage, Grandma Teresa walked towards Zhang Tie and slightly embraced him. She then gave Zhang Tie a slight kiss on his forehead as a blessing,

"Child, God will protect every kind-hearted man. People who give kindness to others will definitely be blessed by God, and they will witness miracles in their lives..."

Grandma Teresa had said this line many times before, but it sounded different this time. Zhang Tie was slightly moved.

"Thank you, Grandma. I also trust that God will bless kind-hearted men!"

Zhang Tie's face slightly blushed. Grandma Teresa's body was plump and soft. He felt nothing when being embraced by her before; however, as he had grown up and had known that men and women should not be that intimate, he felt somewhat uneasy. Although he was not that obscene, he felt somewhat embarrassed.

After carrying the six clay pots inside, the children took them out after a short while. Each clay pot held more than 10 kg of rice soup. In total, they could hold 60 or 70kg of rice soup. This little bit of rice soup was already considered a "generous" gift to the orphanage that was short on food.

"Oh, I forgot. Grandma Teresa, when I went to the rice store, I found that the prices of many grains have risen!"

When the children loaded the clean, empty clay pots onto the tricycle, Zhang Tie mentioned that the prices of many grains had already risen. This was not good news for the orphanage.

After asking about the details, Grandma Teresa looked somewhat depressed. Looking into the distance, she stayed silent and heaved a deep sigh.

Seeing her dejected air and the smiles on the children's faces, Zhang Tie was moved. He stretched his hand into the trouser pocket and pulled out 10 copper coins — the 10 copper coins he received from his mom. He placed them into Grandma's Teresa's hand as he said, "Grandma, here's all the money I have. I'll donate it all to the children. I hope it can help them!"

It was the first time for Zhang Tie to donate to the orphanage. In the past, he was penniless, but now he had some spare money from his mom and felt it was much easier now, as he owned the Castle of Black Iron these days. However, the moment the grandma received the money, Zhang Tie was slightly regretful. He felt that 5 copper coins would have been enough. And now, he was poor again. Nevertheless, he found it too shameful to regret, thus he pretended to be a good boy and grinned bashfully.

Being gifted with 10 copper coins, Grandma Teresa blanked out. She then took a deep look at Zhang Tie and touched his head, "Good child, your kindness will be rewarded!"

Hearing about being "rewarded", Zhang Tie suddenly thought of something. He told Grandma Teresa bashfully, "Grandma, I heard you have many plant seeds. Could you give me some? A classmate of mine moved his home to a new place, which includes a huge courtyard. I'd like to give him some seeds as a present!"

"God, forgive me. I have told a lie to your disciple." Zhang Tie felt a little bit shameful and blushed. When Grandma Teresa mentioned "reward", Zhang Tie suddenly thought that he might "need" something. However, she saw Zhang Tie's uneasy air as the innocence of a "kid".

The Grepis School was also called the School of the Guardian God. The doctrine of which was symbolized by the two colors on their clothes. They used green to safeguard the land and used white to eliminate evil. This school didn't worship any idol or god. Instead, it worshiped the land that everyone stepped on. The land was called Gaia, the Mother of the Land, by the disciples of the Grepis School. The school believed that all living beings on the land were the descendants of Gaia, the Mother of the Land, and all green things on the land were the gifts and guardians given by Gaia to all living beings.

Zhang Tie didn't know whether the Grepis School was accepted in other places, but he knew that the School of the Guardian God was not well accepted in Blackhot City and the Andaman City-States Alliance, which was full of the commercial atmosphere and worshiped gold coins as God. This could be seen from the way the orphanage and Grandma Teresa were treated. In Blackhot City, religions, even with little power, would own magnificent churches or temples, while the School of the Guardian God didn't have a room for praying besides this orphanage. In the eyes of many people in Blackhot City, this school seemed to be nothing special aside from advocating for people to plant trees each year and adopt orphans. On the second Sunday of each March, the "Blessed Day" of Gaia, the Mother of the Land, the school would always present free plant seeds to the citizens in Blackhot City and collect donations for the school. As a bit of time has passed since the "Blessed Day" this year, Grandma Teresa should have some seeds left over. Thinking of the spacious land and the poor aura value in the Castle of Black Iron that only had several potatoes and some niblets sewn, Zhang Tie felt that he might be able to ask for some seeds from her. Whatever they were, if only they could sprout, they would be able to provide sufficient aura value.

Hearing that Zhang Tie wanted some seeds, the grandma showed a big smile. She looked happier than Zhang Tie. "Wait a moment, " she said to Zhang Tie. Several minutes later, Grandma Teresa gave a 0.5 kg cloth bag that was filled with seeds to him. Zhang Tie didn't open it. After thanking her, Zhang Tie rode his tricycle and rushed home with rising excitement.

## Chapter 22: Land Reclamation

After two or three hours of riding, when he returned home, dusk had already fallen. On his way back, Zhang Tie's legs already felt a bit weak. He slowed down, thus it took him longer to arrive home. To put it straightforwardly, Zhang Tie was happy to help others. He was really satisfied at the sight of the innocent smiles on the poor children. Although the rice soup he sent over was not valuable, and some may not even think highly of it, Zhang Tie's family never thought of it as a great or holy task. In regards to that, it was a waste to just pour it out.

Blackhot City owned a rich night life. When dusk fell, some places would become bustling; however, this had nothing to do with Zhang Tie, who whistled and rode back home.

By the time Zhang Tie returned home, the rice brew store had already been closed. The gate of their house was also locked up. Zhang Tie opened it and pushed his tricycle into the courtyard. The tricycle was modified by his dad, and although it looked ugly, the wheel added in the back and the basket in the middle were foldable and could be easily taken apart. This way, it would not occupy too much space in the courtyard. Zhang Tie guessed that his dad and mom were at their friend's place playing cards or at a church, as these were their only hobbies.

Parking the vehicle, Zhang Tie washed his hands and took the bag of seeds into the kitchen. Smelling the rich beef aroma, Zhang Tie's stomach started to make a series of "gulugulu" sounds, while saliva started to flow out of his mouth.

The supper was still steaming in the pot. The main dish was braised potatoes with beef.

Zhang Tie treasured the remaining can of beef and didn't want to eat it alone. He preferred to eat it together with mom and dad, like they did at yesterday's supper. Unexpectedly, his mom braised potatoes with the remaining beef. As a result, the small can of beef became a big bowl of delicacy.

Seeing the bowl of "braised potatoes with beef" and counting the number of slices inside, Zhang Tie knew that his dad and mom didn't even eat a little bit of the remaining beef from last night. They only drunk a little bit of the soup and ate some potatoes, leaving all the remaining beef for Zhang Tie.

Being somewhat moved, Zhang Tie wolfed down the entire bowl of the dish. Even Zhang Tie himself had not noticed that his appetite has been gradually growing recently.

After supper, he cleaned the house. He estimated that there were at least two or three hours before dad and mom returned at night. Thinking of the empty land, the niblets, and the potatoes he sowed in the Castle of Black Iron, Zhang Tie quickly took action.

Zhang Tie felt that he was somewhat a lunatic. When he returned, although he clearly remembered that he had locked the door from the inside, he persuaded himself to check again. Zhang Tie mocked himself, "Could this be the feeling of a trivial figure who hit the lottery and is always scared that the place where he hid his money would be found by others?"

“Then, just be a trivial figure. No matter what, I am a real trivial figure and should not fear being mocked by others.”

After making the decision, Zhang Tie moved faster and faster. He fetched two metal barrels and ran towards the well. After a while, he filled the two barrels and quickly moved back to the narrow washing room in the backyard.

The washing room inside Zhang Tie’s home was only more slightly more than two or three square meters and was usually well cleaned. As the first gift given by his elder brother to his dad and mom after receiving his salary and subsidiary, the bath tub occupied more than half of the washing room. As tall as half a person, the bathtub was not delicate, but very firm. Being painted with lacquer, it was heavy and smooth. Splash. Zhang Tie poured out the two barrels of water into the bath tub. The water level in the wooden barrel was as high as Zhang Tie’s ankle. He took two more barrels of water, rushed into the washing room, and poured them into the bath tub again.

It took Zhang Tie about ten minutes of repeating this series of actions eight to nine times before he filled the bathtub. If mom were home, she would definitely have prepared hot water for Zhang Tie to take a bath, but whenever Zhang Tie wanted to take a cold bath like his elder brother, his mother would scold him. However, he was not really planning to take a bath. Zhang Tie put the last two barrels of water beside the bathtub and took the small bag of seeds back to the washing room. As he had just finished supper, the violent movements made Zhang Tie’s stomach and intestines slightly uncomfortable, though he had no time to care about that.

Back in the washingroom, Zhang Tie closed the door from the inside. With a small bag of seeds under his right armpit, Zhang Tie lifted the two barrels filled with water and stood steadily. He then took in a deep breath to recover his composure and kept his eyes closed in order to look for the mysterious “arched door”...

This process seemed much easier. After his attempts in the past couple of days, Zhang Tie found that he could clearly “see” the “arched door”, only if he concentrated his consciousness between his eyebrows and the “arched door” that was the gate of the Castle of Black Iron.

Zhang Tie couldn’t figure it at all, “Whatever, nobody would spend time on it...”

See——Lock——Enter——

Lifting the two barrels of water, Zhang Tie, who held onto the small bag of seeds, disappeared in the narrow washing room.

Feeling that everything in his surroundings had changed, Zhang Tie opened his eyes and found himself already in the Castle of Black Iron.

He was facing the empty land and the “Manjusaka Karma Fruit Tree” in the middle of the land. Naturally, the following line made Zhang Tie’s humble ego expand.

——Handsome and Magnificent Castle Lord, Welcome to the Castle of Black Iron!

Seeing this line, Zhang Tie suddenly felt his spirit rise. He didn’t feel pain in his stomach anymore, and neither did his intestines convulse nor did his legs shiver anymore.

“I am the motherfucking lord here... Ahhh...” sensing the expanding ego, the miserable youth exclaimed like a horny beast. If he was outside, his noise would definitely have attracted the nearby magistrates. However, in the Castle of Black Iron, he couldn’t even hear any echoes.

He had never shouted like this when he was outside in the real world. However, after he released what was buried in his heart, he suddenly felt cool. It was a strange feeling as if he suddenly became more comfortable after that.

Then, Zhang Tie decided to yell again...

“I am the motherfucking lord of this world... Ahhh...”

More comfortable now, one more time...

“I want dad and mom to have beef to eat everyday... Ahhh...”

More comfortable...

“I love you, Miss Daina... Ahhh...”

One more time...

“I want to be a rich man... Ahhh...”

One more time...



“All beauties with plump butts and breasts, your Mr. Perfect is me... Ahhh...”

After a space of growl, Zhang Tie felt much better and cool. He didn't know if anyone else had tried it, but he found it to be a really nice means to release his own tensions.

After that, Zhang Tie threw the bag of seeds that was under his armpit onto the land. With the two barrels of water in hand, he moved towards the patch of land where he had sown niblets and potatoes. Although he felt that the soil in the Castle of Black Iron was suitable for growing plants, he was still worried about them if he didn't water the seeds. It seemed that it doesn't rain in the Castle of Black Iron, thus Zhang Tie feared that the seeds would go bad without water.

Arriving at where he had sown the niblets and potatoes, Zhang Tie put down one barrel on the ground and spread the water from the other barrel onto the niblets that had not sprouted yet. With the water from one of the barrels, he only finished watering less than a quarter of the niblet's land. He then spread the water of the other barrel, which only covered half of the niblet's land. He then held the two empty barrels. Keeping his eyes closed, Zhang Tie concentrated his consciousness between his brows...

See——Lock——Exit

...

The next moment, Zhang Tie appeared in the narrow washingroom again, even though his feet didn't move. Turning on the faucet at the bottom of the bathtub, Zhang Tie filled the two wooden barrels and kept his eyes closed.

See——Lock——Enter——

...

He entered and left the Castle of Black Iron in this matter for five consecutive times. Looking at the two patches of land where he had sown niblets and potatoes, Zhang Tie stood in front of the marked steel bar. Taking in a deep breath, he was very satisfied. However, he suddenly felt his brain ache. It felt like his brain was blank. Previously, he had not noticed it when he was busy watering the seeds. He tried to focus between the eyebrows and saw the marvelous “arched door” soon. However, being different from the several instances before, this time, the arched door became very unstable and

gloomy. When Zhang Tie seized the door consciously and ordered “Exit”, an unexpected event happened.

Abruptly, Zhang Tie suddenly felt lightheaded and dizzy, as if he was dropping from high altitude into a bottomless dark tunnel. All of a sudden, he lost his balance and sat on the ground, before passing out. After quite a while, he woke up with a pale face...

“What happened? How could this happen?” Zhang Tie became frustrated.

The sudden following tip provided him with the answer.

——It was detected that you, the Handsome and Magnificent Castle Lord, had been excessively spiritually exhausted. It is suggested that for you, the Handsome and Magnificent Castle Lord, to have a rest inside the Castle of Black Iron before you leave. Caution: Frequent entering and leaving within a short period of time will consume a lot of your spiritual energy. While you lack spiritual energy, please do not frequently enter and leave the Castle of Black Iron, so as to prevent damage to your spiritual energy...

## Chapter 23: The Poor Lord

“It turns out that I have to pay a price to access the Castle of Black Iron!” cried Zhang Tie while sitting on the ground. The feeling of his brain suddenly going blank and the feeling of falling into a dark tunnel was really horrific. Moments before, Zhang Tie even thought that he would kick the bucket in this manner. If this was how excessive consumption of spiritual energy felt, Zhang Tie would never try it again.

He recovered at this moment and noticed that his body, within a few minutes, was covered with cold sweat. He became weaker. “It seems that excessive consumption of spiritual energy is serious,” he sharply shook his head and felt that the buzzing sense of being engulfed by darkness in his mind was not fully eliminated yet.

There must be something wrong!

Although there was some discomfort in his mind, Zhang Tie could still think about some things.

He realized that his behavior towards the Castle of Black Iron was really stupid. Obviously, the Castle of Black Iron was immortal. Even now, the increase of “spiritual energy” required the “potential life energy” from plants. Zhang Tie had to solve the lack of a water source problem. The Castle of Black Iron would never let the lord of the Castle of Black Iron water the plants here in such a foolish fashion. Even though the soil here was fertilized and didn’t need to be irrigated, what about the “Basic Energy Storage” and the “Pool of Chaos”? Didn’t the rubbish disposal plant need something inside to convert matter into basic energy? Would it require Zhang Tie to access the Castle of Black Iron to gain the “Basic Energy Storage”? Did he have to move things inside?

When he thought of the huge amount of basic energy storage that needed to be consumed to realize some functions inside the Castle of Black Iron, Zhang Tie became irritated. Motherfucker, it shouldn’t be like that. What a motherf\*cking castle lord he was! He was just a porter in the railway station! He had to access the Castle of Black Iron five to six times a day for thirty to fifty years to expand to 666 square meters of land. What the hell!

No way! It’s not like this! There must be something wrong or he hadn’t yet discovered some mysterious function in the space. The Castle of Black Iron looked like a very senior system. How could it make such a low level mistake!? It would be like the tycoons in Blackhot City heading for Black Gold Hotel, only to take off their clothes, grow vegetables, prepare coal, and cook food for themselves.

Thinking for quite a while, Zhang Tie still couldn’t find the answer. Feeling like he was insulted, Zhang Tie cursed inwardly and decided to leave it alone. “Motherfucker. Whatever, just be a porter! So what? Others are unqualified to even be a porter. It’s more perfect now with the defect. The Handsome and Magnificent Castle Lord will be a poor hardworking porter in the future! The Castle of Black Iron is finally perfect now! Is there anything better?”

This was Zhang Tie’s temperament. He was sometimes a lunatic and always became pessimistic when encountering frustration. Sometimes, he was simple and would do that once he made the decision. He would then find numerous reasons to comfort himself and strive to reach his goal. Previously, he regarded Miss Daina as his beloved, but moments later, he felt that a man who had a multitude of concubines is successful. He believed that the love he had never experienced should be great and dreamed about sexy younger sisters, beauties, and mature ladies with sexy figures...

Human beings — perhaps just be a contradictory group.

When he left the problem alone, another urgent and unavoidable problem also appeared in front of Zhang Tie. Namely, how does he recover his spiritual energy? How long will it take to recover? If it took too long, and dad and mom found nobody home while the door to the washing room was locked from the inside, and they shouted but got no response, then it would be a big problem. How would he explain it then? Otherwise, what if he abruptly appeared in front of dad and mom who had already returned home?

This problem couldn't be solved by Zhang Tie. Whatever, if this happened, he could tell them a little bit of the truth. The worst case scenario would be beaten by slabs fiercely. However, he had always been beaten by slabs before. Though, they would never beat him to death!

Once he thought it through, he felt that it was nothing terrible. Zhang Tie then patted his butt and stood up. He walked a few steps, and then returned. Lifting the two empty barrels, he moved towards the small tree. The small bag of seeds, which Zhang Tie had not opened yet, given by Grandma Teresa still laid there. It was the perfect moment to open it.

Moving to one side of the tree, Zhang Tie put down the barrels in hands, squatting on the ground, he picked up that cloth bag of seeds. He undid it and poured all the seeds inside out.

Moving to one side of the tree, Zhang Tie put down the barrels that he held in his hands. Squatting on the ground, he picked up the cloth bag of seeds. He undid the bag and poured out all the seeds.

It could be said that Grandma Teresa was a caring person. The cloth bag was composed of eight small paper bags, and on each bag was the name of the seed.

"*Hygrophila polysperma*" was written on the smallest bag, while the names on the bigger paper bags were: "Morning glory", "Olive", "*Ligustrum obtusifolium*", "*Photinia fraseri*", "Honey pear", and "Radish". Seeing the word "radish", Zhang Tie scratched his head gloomily. He doubted that Grandma Teresa made a mistake. Why would she give me radish? "Olive" was understandable because it was the symbol of the Grepis School. "Honey pear" was edible and could bloom into nice flowers. Why radish? Including "olive" and "honey pear", three of the seven seeds were edible. With one more, half of them could be eaten.

What does it mean? Zhang Tie scratched his head. Was Grandma Teresa using these “seeds” to give thanks for the soup given by the Zhang family all these years? It seemed a little bit weird.

Seeing the biggest paper bag, that laid on the ground, was filled with something, Zhang Tie ignored the name and directly opened it. Several walnuts rolled towards Zhang Tie’s feet, which made Zhang Tie utterly started. Another edible.

What the fuck. Whatever, once they grow, they could provide spiritual energy to this space. Whatever seeds they were, it was better if they were edible! No matter what, he had to sow something in such a huge piece of land; however, he would have to sow the seeds in separate pieces of land. These seeds could also be natural landmarks. When they grew, Zhang Tie might be able to distinguish the four directions in the Castle of Black Iron.

With the Manjusaka Karma Fruit Tree at the center, according to the preset view of Zhang Tie when he opened the map of the Castle of Black Iron, the upper part of the map was north, where he would plant the olive trees. The lower part of the map was south, where he would plant the photinia fraseri. In the west, he would plant honey pears, and in the east, he would plant walnuts. Other seeds like the hygrophila polysperma, morning glory, and ligustrum obtusifolium would be scattered in each direction, which would not be planned. Though, edible vegetables like radish could be planted beside the potatoes and niblets for the sake of collective management.

Once he made the decision, Zhang Tie acted on it. First, he opened the bags of hygrophila polysperma, morning glory, and ligustrum obtusifolium, which were easily sown. He gather them together and casually poured them out. Zhang Tie was not good at planting these seeds. Instinctively, he felt that those plants were seen everywhere in the wild. They grew naturally and wildly, thus he didn’t want to waste time on them, treating them as they would in the wild.

More than twenty meters away from the small tree, Zhang Tie trotted one circle and spread the seeds casually. In less than three minutes, he had finished sowing the three bags of seeds.

After finishing the first three bags, Zhang Tie became much more serious. He made a row of pits by the steel bar about 50m away from the small tree in the north, then he buried the olive seeds. He did almost the same thing in the south, east, and west. As he found the walnuts to be large, he dug holes that

was especially deeper than those of other seeds. Zhang Tie didn't know if this was correct or not. The rest is up to God.

As walnuts were very expensive, Zhang Tie had rarely eaten them since he was young. As a result, when he was burying the walnuts, he couldn't help but eat one. In the end, there were only seven walnuts left.

After he finished sowing the walnuts, he ran towards one side of the "vegetables" land and found a piece of land beside the niblets to sow the radish. He inserted the steel bar into the soil and clapped his hands in satisfaction.

For Zhang Tie, this was the most he could achieve today. As for whether to water them or not, Zhang Tie planned to make the decision in a month. One month later, if the seeds didn't sprout by then, he would learn from this experience and water the new seeds.

After these tasks, Zhang Tie opened the basic attributes panel of the Castle of Black Iron. With his mouth gaping, Zhang Tie was startled by the huge changes.

#### Chapter 24: Merit Value

——Castle of Black Iron

——Length: 1 Krosa

——Width: 1 Krosa

——Spiritual Energy : 0.7

——Merit Value: 35

——Basic Energy Storage:0.2

——Special Output: Void

Zhang Tie was not startled by the growth of spiritual energy, as the sprouted potatoes could grow day by day, which would result in them providing more and more spiritual energy. The peak of the growth of spiritual energy would

come when all the seeds sprouted later on. There was no change to the other attributes except for merit value. He remembered that the number of merit value was 3 this morning; therefore, he tried to input two merit value points into the mutation and evolution of potatoes. As a result, only 1 merit value point was left by then. How could it increase by so much within only half a day? To answer this question, Zhang Tie opened the log for merit value.

——On the afternoon of February 14th, 889th year of the Black Iron Calendar, Handsome and Magnificent Castle Lord helped his mom make rice brew, which lessened his mom's load and made her comfortable. As a result, merit value was increased by 1.

——On the evening of February 14th, 889th year of the Black Iron Calendar, Handsome and Magnificent Castle Lord sent rice soup to the orphanage and donated 10 copper coins. As a result, many people benefitted from you. As a result, merit value has been increased by 32.

——On the evening of February 14th, 889th year of the Black Iron Calendar, when Handsome and Magnificent Castle Lord returned home, he took the initiative to clean his house, wash bowls, and sweep the floor, which made his family members pleased.

Seeing the sharp increase in merit value, Zhang Tie thought for a while and moved his eyes to the words to the beginning of the log:

“Do good deeds and destroyed evils——the largest mercy in the human world; worship the gods and love people——the nearest staircase to the heaven; lucky people, please show the mercy of the creator to the secular world so that those gods could understand you; please receive the most sincere pleasure and thanks presented to you by hundreds of millions of people; please end those evil souls and endless darkness to make yourself a light and when You are a light, you are definitely walking on the light and a magnificent road are paved on your foot!”

Although he was confused at some parts, reading the paragraph and peering at the sharply increased merit value made Zhang Tie greatly inspired. He now had a deeper understanding of how to gain merit value. Although he was not able to eliminate evil, he could still do something good, whether it was small or big. He could gain merit value points by making others happy, more or less. “Haha, Nice! I love you too much....”



Remembering the numerous “fruits” that grew behind the small tree, Zhang Tie laughed out loudly. If the Castle of Black Iron turned into a woman and appeared in front of him, he would definitely kiss her for a long time...

After sowing the seeds, he checked the basic attributes of the Castle of Black Iron. He then ran towards the Manjusaka Karma Fruit Tree and circled the small tree a few times. Being stunned, he gazed at a twig on the strange tree.

He remembered that there was nothing on that twig. However, a light blue grape-sized fruit was now hanging on it. The moment he wanted to touch it with his hand, a line appeared in front of him.

——Leakless fruit is in production and is currently inedible. Once the unripe leakless fruit leaves the Manjusaka Karma Fruit Tree, it would directly turn to gas and disappear. 124 hours left before it becomes ripe...

After reading the line, Zhang Tie instantly pulled back his hand. He recalled that when he found the Castle of Black Iron for the first time, the manjusaka tree asked him to choose whether to use his leaked energy to produce the leakless fruit or not. Is this that leakless fruit?

It took 168 hours to produce a leakless fruit, which was a week. This meant that by next Friday, the small fruit would be ripe. At this moment, although couldn't wait to eat the fruit to test its effects. He also knew that a watched pot would never boil; he had to control his desires. He circled the tree a few times and even touched the various strange leaves before sitting down on the nearby soil. With his hands supporting his jaw, he became absent-minded. After more than an hour's work, looking at the barren land, he felt that it was really boring, although it was honestly strange at the start. Now, he could only slowly wait until he recovered a little bit of his spiritual energy. In here, it was a nice place to do exercise and run; however, he was truly tired today and didn't feel like running at all. He didn't know if dad and mom had returned or not. They should not have returned this early since it was a Saturday and his dad would take a rest on Sunday. If it was like usual, they would come back late.

What should he do then? Just sit here and do nothing while waiting for his spiritual energy to recover? Otherwise... meditate? Zhang Tie burst into laughter at his thoughts. Hahaha... no kidding, how could a commoner of Blackhot City know how to enter meditation, a senior technique and skill? There might be someone in Blackhot City who knew how to increase spiritual energy through meditation, but it was monopolized by a few people and was something that commoners could never touch. Captain Kerlin said that the



minorities who knew how to increase spiritual energy through meditation had various backgrounds. Even Captain Kerlin himself didn't know about it, let alone others.

It would be impossible to light the burning points in the Shrine. Thinking for a while, he suddenly patted his head, "How could I forget this? I got the book . No matter what, I have some time to practice it now. Why not test it out now?"

Zhang Tie instantly moved. He quickly recalled the relevant content that he had recited more than ten times over the past few days from . He could fully understand it. Zhang Tie sat down with his legs crossed and hands naturally on his legs. He kept his eyes slightly closed. After a short while, he recovered his composure. He didn't know why, but he calmed down faster than before.

After calming down, Zhang Tie started to form an abacus in his mind according to the skills he learned from . This was the most important step and was the foundation of . After forming the abacus in his mind, he could make quick mental calculations. If you had to ask for a single line to explain the principle of , it would be the following: Replace your hands with your consciousness, use the abacus in your mind. That was all.

What made Zhang Tie puzzled was that the book required him to form a golden abacus in his mind. It should be brilliant. However, the reason for it was not mentioned. Zhang Tie couldn't figure it out and neither did he feel like exploring it. He just felt like it was just the way it was supposed to be.

According to , Zhang Tie should imagine the abacus from outlines to details and from simple to complex. He should firstly imagine a rectangular abacus frame, then a horizontal beam within the frame, and then three vertical beams, which represented the addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division operations within three-digits. When the entire image is stabilized, he started to imagine the upper bead between the first vertical beam and the farthest left frame, then the four lower beads between the first vertical beam and the farthest left frame. After that was the upper beads between the second vertical beam and the first vertical beam. Next was the lower beads between the second vertical beam and the first vertical beam, followed by the upper beads between the third vertical beam and the second bead. And then the lower beads between the third vertical beam and the second vertical beam...

The first time, the moment he imagined the upper beads between the first vertical beam and the farthest left frame, the entire image in his mind broke apart...

The second time, the same thing happened...

The third time, he finished imagining the first lower bead between the vertical beam and the farthest left frame...

The fourth time, he finished the second lower beam between the first vertical beam and the farthest left frame...

.....

Even Zhang Tie didn't know how many times he had failed. After another four attempts, the poor abacus with three vertical beams was finally imagined successfully and seemed stable. What's 125 plus 579? Spinning his brain, he moved the beads to the right places on the abacus in his mind, and it turned into a readable number — 704.

What's 18 multiplied by 39? He recited the formula and moved the beads to the correct places... 702!

What's 987 minus 789? He recited the formula and moved the beads to the correct places... 198!

Zhang Tie laughed out loudly. He was happy and tested it a few more times. As a result, he could calculate in his mind on the abacus faster than before. How about 56 multiplied by 29? He recited the formula and moved the beads to the correct places. The golden abacus shook and suddenly disappeared in his mind.

Zhang Tie opened his eyes. As the last calculation result surpassed the domain between the three vertical beams on the abacus, the image exploded like a steam boiler that couldn't handle the high pressure.

"The book was really valuable," Zhang Tie reconfirmed its value. He never thought that he could gain such a treasure.

"Alas, what time is now? If dad and mom returned, it would be bad!" abruptly remembering it, Zhang Tie quickly stood up. He made no preparation, and neither confirmed whether his spiritual energy had recovered. With eyes closed, he locked onto the door between his brows with his consciousness and said to himself, "Exit" ...

The next moment, Zhang Tie appeared in the washroom room of his courtyard. Along the light of the oil lamp, he saw that the door of the washroom was still locked. He heaved a deep sigh. If his parents came back and found him not there, and yet the washroom was locked from the inside, they would shout from outside the door. If they got no response, the door would have long been kicked open. He opened the door of the washroom and slid out to look around. It was only 11 pm, the gate of the house was still locked from the inside. Thankfully, they hadn't returned.

Standing in the pitch black courtyard alone, Zhang Tie stared at the stars in the sky. He patted his chest and comforted himself, "I'd better be more careful when I access the Castle of Black Iron. If this happened again, my secret might be found by others. I'd better learn to save my spiritual energy." Zhang Tie reflected, but then suddenly became still. "How could my spiritual energy recover so fast?"

## Chapter 25: Belief

"Alas, dad and mom, leave me alone. Look, there's such nice weather today! Why not take a stroll at the downtown park or at the reservoir in the suburb? There must be many people over there. Since I trained really hard today, I'd rather stay back and watch the store for you today!"

After lunch, Zhang Tie diligently cleaned the house and then pushed his dad and mom out. His dad worked six days a week in the mill, which meant that he often had poor air quality. His mom was even more miserable. She had to stay in the rice brew store six days a week. Thus, at each weekend, in order to make his dad and mom live a better life, he would always persuade them to take a walk, so as to breathe fresh air outdoors. As for himself, he would help them look after the rice brew store.

Seeing their son being obedient and sensible, his dad and mom were naturally happy. However, when they left, his mom still muttered to Zhang Tie, "Remember not to increase the price of the rice brew. When frequent customers come, tell them about the increasing price of rice and grains. Tell them that if the purchasing prices are still that high next week, then we'll have to increase the price a little bit in response. Since they are frequent customers, don't make them feel like we're greedy!"

"I know, mom. You've mentioned it more than thirty times. I've grown up already!" explained Zhang Tie. "I'm already fifteen, you don't need to tell me like you would a small kid or a slow-witted guy. It really hurts my self-esteem!"

"I haven't said it thirty times, five times at most!" His mom pretended to glare at Zhang Tie furiously. At the same time, she also pretended to twist Zhang Tie's ears. In response, Zhang Tie hurriedly slid backward and grimaced at his mom. He then ran into the brew store and yelled loudly, "Zhang family's fresh rice brew. Fragrant, sweet, and delicious. Men will grow stronger with it, and women will be more beautiful with it. Hey, you passersby, six copper coins for a bowl. More sales, less profit..."

"This kid..." Dad shook his head with a smile.

.....

Seeing his dad and mom disappearing at the end of the street hand in hand, Zhang Tie touched his fuzzy jaw with one hand. He stared at them for a long time before moving his gaze to their shadows. As his dad and mom have been married for dozens of years, each time they walked outdoors hand in hand, it served as a reminder to Zhang Tie that they were not simply just a couple who had married for many years, but rather a couple of youths who are still passionately in love with each other. This gave Zhang Tie an indescribable feeling.

"Is this love?" Zhang Tie wondered. To be honest, he was not experienced enough to have feelings about it; however, seeing how his mom and dad treated each other, he felt a sense of happiness inside.

After they left, Zhang Tie sat in the rice brew store boringly. He took a fly whisk to drive away the flies. Since rice brew gave off a sweet scent, it naturally attracted flies, even more so on hot days.. Summer would arrive in a couple of months. When it arrives, the door of the rice brew had to be fitted with a bamboo curtain to prevent the flies from entering. However, the delicate exhibitions on the counter would also be covered by the bamboo curtain. As a result, business in the store would decrease. This happened every year in this manner without exception.

It was right in the afternoon when the sun was still hanging in the sky. All the birds were silent as they perched on the parasol trees. After a cold winter, they were finally emerging from their nests, jumping and singing happily as the mottled spots and shadows of the trees were cast onto the streets.

A board had been hung outside the door of the rice brew store: "Sorry, due to the rising prices of grains and other raw materials, it's expected that the price of our rice brew will rise..."

"Lovely dad, if it were Donder, he would definitely have increased the sales price of the rice brew as soon as the price of rice increased," Zhang Tie admired.

After sitting in the rice brew store for half an hour, Zhang Tie sold seven or eight bowls of rice brew. He put the scattered copper coins into a drawer and soaked the empty rice brew bowls and spoons left by the customers into the bowl washing barrel. Watching the rising sun, the hand flicking the whisk became more and more powerless. Zhang Tie felt bored. Surprisingly, as an adolescent, he stayed in here to drive away the flies while other boys his age were playing outside! However, the more bored he was, the more he admired his mom, as she stuck to this for twenty years.

People would always do something when they felt bored, Zhang Tie was no exception. At this time, he practiced the Mental Arithmetic by Abacus, which included many states. The lowest state was what Zhang Tie had reached last night. Before he is able to use the abacus within his mind, he had to close his eyes and think quite a while to form the abacus in his mind. In the second state, one didn't need to close their eyes. Within a few blinks, one could form the abacus in their mind and use it. After all, this was a mental arithmetic skill, which meant it was a practical skill. Naturally, it would be useless if you had to spend hours to form it within the mind with eyes closed.

In the third state, in order to reach the essence of Mental Arithmetic by Abacus, one would have to form an imaginary abacus in their mind and be able to get the answer instantly when they saw any mathematical question. At this stage, one should be able to create an abacus with two to eleven vertical beams, or perhaps even more in mind. Finally, one would be able to form several abacuses in their mind simultaneously and would be able to get the answer within a single blink. This was the sublime state of Mental Arithmetic by Abacus. Once one got to this stage, they would be a super human-sized calculator.

Zhang Tie actually doubted whether it was possible or not for humans to achieve the sublime state. However, when he remembered the blurry words, "Recommended after-class reading for preliminary school students", Zhang Tie heaved a deep sigh. No comparison, no anger. "What are these preliminary school students? They must be really motherf\*cking smart."

Finally, Zhang Tie even began to think that this book might really have been fetched from the ruins of the Catastrophe. Since the age before the Catastrophe was lustrous and dazzling, things from the ruins were strange and diverse. Expensive crystals used to practice cultivation in this age were just decorations in that age, a time where many people even looked down on it. What if this strange book was truly an ordinary after-class reading material for preliminary school students?

“Whatever, I will practice it and check its effects. It seems that I can recover spiritual energy by practicing in accordance to Mental Arithmetic by Abacus.” Zhang Tie intended to confirm it; however, when he thought of the word “whatever”, Zhang Tie became absent-minded and the abacus with two vertical beams in his mind instantly collapsed.

Naturally, he needed to treat it seriously...

He found this really hard to accept.

Zhang Tie tried it many times and lowered the time needed to form an abacus with three vertical beams in his mind from ten minutes to approximately five minutes. Unexpectedly, two people suddenly appeared in front of Zhang Tie.

Fatty Barley and Doug were on a bicycle. Doug awkwardly rode the bicycle with difficulty but with happiness as sweat covered his entire forehead. Barley was sitting behind the bicycle cunningly. The moment Zhang Tie noticed them, Fatty Barley, who was glancing over the two sides of the street, also found Zhang Tie.

“Right here, stop!” Fatty Barley shouted and deftly jumped off the back seat of the bicycle and stood on the ground. Hearing this, Doug, who was riding happily, was frightened and shouted, “Argh, brake, brake, how do I brake? Argh... help...”

Bang...

“Bastard, this is a new bicycle dad bought for me!” Barley screamed bitterly.

With his hands on his forehead, Zhang Tie became speechless and closed his eyes...

Two minutes later, Barley and Doug, who were gritting their teeth and rubbing their butts, appeared in front of the Zhang Family’s rice brew store. Seeing

Doug, who was taking in deep breaths of the aroma of the rice brew and swallowing his saliva, and the obscene smile covering Barley's face, Zhang Tie cursed inwardly. He took out two sets of bowls and spoons and opened one clay pot. He scooped a bowl of rice brew for each of them using a huge spoon and pushed it in front of them. Their eyebrows instantly danced. Without even a word of courtesy, they held the bowls, wolfed down its contents, and cleaned the bowls with their tongues instantly. "Can you be more disgusting?" Zhang Tie complained. The bowls had to be sterilized with boiling water.

Seeing the insinuating smiles over their faces, Zhang Tie instantly collected their bowls and spoons and became serious. "That was my treat just now. Now, it's six copper coins a bowl, do you want more?"

Doug instantly cast his sight towards Barley. Fatty Barley slapped his waist and put a handsome amount of copper coins onto the desk. "Delicious! Two more bowls!"

Zhang Tie also felt it was natural to put their money into the drawer and scooped another two bowls of rice brew for them. Soon after, they finished it. Under the fascinated gaze of Doug, Zhang Tie put their bowls and spoons into the water basin. When Doug moved his sight onto Barley, Barley automatically ignored him and started to talk to Zhang Tie.

"Well... well... what was that? Rice brew?"

"Yes, rice brew! What's up?"

"Heh, heh, home visits are a good tradition of our Hit-Plane Brotherhood!" Barley laughed.

"Well, let's get to the point since time is money"

"Have you heard of the Red-scarf Burglars?"

Hearing the words "Red-scarf Burglars", Zhang Tie was surprised. "Yea, what happened?"

Barley looked around before lowering his voice and repeating the news that Zhang Tie had heard from his brother, "I heard about it last night. That's why I came here to tell all of you today. It's estimated that only a few people know about this news. Whatever, these days, you have to watch out and stay home

at night. Do not go out of the city casually. Those Red-scarf Burglars are all cold-blooded butchers. Isn't there a proverb in your Chinese clan that a fire on the city gate brings disaster to the fish in the moats? I hope my brothers won't be those unfortunate fish!"

"You came here today to tell me this?"

"Of course, you think Doug and I like to come out to be burned by the sunlight? After warning you, I still have to warn Sharwin and Hista. Well, I won't disturb your business..."

Seeing the fatty's face, Zhang Tie was slightly moved. "Thank you, brother!"

"Another free bowl for us?" Barley smiled obscenely.

Zhang Tie stretched out his hands and rubbed his fingers. Everyone knew the meaning.

"Ha... ha... see you. We still have other brothers to warn!" Barley slapped the seat of the bicycle and urged Doug to get on immediately. Doug pushed the bicycle a few steps forward before turning around and looking at Zhang Tie as he murmured, "Barley said... men should learn how to ride a bike for the sake of girls!"

"Trust me, I won't tell the others about it. You are really good at riding!" Zhang Tie raised his thumb.

Doug was satisfied. He nodded and awkwardly got on the bike and took Barley away...

It was really unexpected that the news of the Red-scarf Burglars would spread so fast. People in Blackhot City has already become worried about them within two days...

"Never mind, I will keep practicing Mental Arithmetic by Abacus earnestly. Is there any relationship between the Red-scarf Burglars and a trivial person like me?" A self-deprecating smile appeared on Zhang Tie's face.

In the evening, Zhang Tie's dad and mom came home with news. The city defense of Blackhot City has become strict. Identification was required to access Blackhot City in the evening.



After supper, Gregory, the magistrate of this area, knocked at the gate of the Zhang family with a barn lantern in hand. He was sending a notice door by door and told them not to keep strangers at home in the evening. Besides that, they should instantly report any suspicious individual. Additionally, from midnight onwards, night meals in Blackhot City were forbidden...

Half a day after the fatty left, the news of the Red-scarf Burglars had completely spread throughout Blackhot City. An uneasy atmosphere covered the entire city.

However, this had nothing to do with Zhang Tie. After supper, when the magistrate left, Zhang Tie brushed his teeth, washed his feet, and then entered his small room. He then entered the Castle of Black Iron and threw a bag of garbage into the Pool of Chaos. After that, he patted his hands and opened the Basic Attributes Panel of the Castle of Black Iron, staring at the latest attributes of the Castle of Black Iron ——

——Castle of Black Iron

——Length: 1 Krosa

——Width: 1 Krosa

——Spiritual Energy: 1.8

——Merit Value: 43

——Basic Energy Storage: 0.5

——Special Output: Void

.....

5 merit value for watching the rice brew store for dad and mom for one day, 3 merit value for doing housework, 8 merit value in total; 1.1 spiritual energy for sprouting potatoes; 0.3 basic energy storage for a bag of rubbish. That was all I gained today...

He took a look at the Manjusaka Karma Fruit Tree again.

103 hours before the first leakless fruit becomes ripe...

Being unable to sleep, Zhang Tie took out the crystal that had been dried under the sunlight for a day. With his legs crossed in the Castle of Black Iron, he started to practice igniting the Shrine burning point. Through a few days of experience in the Castle of Black Iron, Zhang Tie found that he could calm down and easily enter the state to practice cultivation by staring at the colorful mist that swirled in the Castle of Black Iron.

He soon entered the state to practice igniting his burning point in the Castle of Black Iron. Even though it was the first time, he took several breaths and the Shrine burning point soon radiated with indigo colored flames.

Only by making yourself powerful could you survive in this age. There was no shortcut, except for diligent work — this was the belief that Zhang Tie held for the past fifteen years.

It was the same even in the Castle of Black Iron...

## Chapter 26: What Would You Do in Front of a Red-Scarf Burglar

Similar to a few days ago, Zhang Tie accurately woke up at about 6:00 am. He had no dreams and his mind was as clear as a crystal. Brimming with vitality, Zhang Tie felt as fresh as a cabbage that had been soaked in water overnight.

When he got out of bed, Zhang Tie peered at the clock. It was currently 6:08 am. He then lowered his head to look at his underwear. His p\*nis was erected like a study pillar; however, Zhang Tie didn't think about it too much. He touched the inside of his underwear and found no glutinous feeling on his underwear or his belly. He did not have a wet dream for the past several days, and he really slept well recently. He remembered that he had a pee in the Castle of Black Iron after he cultivated last night. After that, he fell asleep until now. This situation may occur occasionally before, but now it had occurred for four consecutive days. Therefore, Zhang Tie felt it was strange and would like to know the reason. He thought for a while and recalled that it had occurred ever since the night he entered the Castle of Black Iron for the first time. Even now, the Castle of Black Iron was related, which made Zhang Tie lose interest. For Zhang Tie, besides the soil that allowed potatoes to sprout, everything else in the Castle of Black Iron was incomprehensible.

Zhang Tie got up quickly. After brushing his teeth and washing his face, he started to ignite a fire in the kitchen. He then made breakfast for his dad and mom by putting several washed sweet potatoes into the boiling pot. After preparing breakfast for his family, he picked up a washed raw sweet potato and walked out the door. Today, he had left for school one hour earlier than usual.

It was slightly dark outside. After wolfing down the raw sweet potato for breakfast, Zhang Tie sped along the old road towards the school. However, he felt that this road was different from before and everything had become interesting. Even the raw sweet potato seemed to be much more delicious than before. At this moment, Zhang Tie became determined to test out the sweet potato on the soil of the Castle of Black Iron. No matter what, it wasn't complicated to plant them.

Mood determines one's view of the world.

When he arrived at school, the sky was completely bright and the school gate had just opened. Although he was not the first to arrive, he was one of the earliest. Looking around, he found almost no other students on the spacious campus.

Nobody else was in the teaching building meant for the undergraduates; Zhang Tie was definitely the earliest person among all the undergraduates. After entering the classroom, Zhang Tie silently closed the door like a thief.

After the two days of weekend, the floor was still clean, but inevitably, a layer of dust had already fallen on the desks and chairs. Zhang Tie took a dried piece of linen cloth from the window sill and looked around to ensure that nobody else was in the classroom. He then started to mop all the desks and chairs, diligently and bravely.

Naturally, they were easily cleaned. First, he wiped the desks and chairs with the cloth, and then he patted the dusty cloth over the window. This was also what each student would do when they entered the classroom.

Twenty minutes later, Zhang Tie had cleaned all the desks and chairs. Seeing that some students had already entered the teaching building, Zhang Tie silently slid out of the classroom. He entered the washroom and took a long stroll before he slowly returned to the classroom. When he returned, he found that more than half the students had already arrived. "Here's a big surprise!" Zhang Tie pleasantly thought to himself.

Just as he imagined, the classroom was truly bustling. Everyone was curious as to why all the desks and chairs had been cleaned.

“Are you kidding me? Who’s that warm-hearted!?”

“Heh, Bighead, come here...” Seeing Zhang Tie enter the classroom, Fatty Barley walked towards him and hung his arm over Zhang Tie’s shoulders. “Have you noticed that something’s different today?” he asked obscenely.

“What’s different?” Zhang Tie pretended to be calm while laughing inwardly. “Praise me. Come on, praise me. I’m waiting for it.”

“A motherf\*cking idiot mopped all the desks and chairs in our classroom, ha... ha...”

Zhang Tie’s reserved smile suddenly froze. Gritting his teeth, Zhang Tie gazed at the fatty and wanted to beat him until his nose bled once again.

“Did you brush your teeth this morning? Your mouth is so smelly!” Zhang Tie pushed Barley away in a stern expression and sat back in his own chair.

Barley stayed there, yawned on his palm, and smelled his breath. “No way, I brush my teeth every day!”

Hearing the surrounding merciless discussions, Zhang Tie became more gloomy.

“Argh, who’s that bored? What a big surprise!”

“Yea, so foolish. Is he in our classroom?”

“Don’t say that. You might hurt someone’s innocent soul. Maybe a lower-grade classmate wanted to find an elder brother among us to protect him!”

“I guess someone is expressing his love to me!”

“Then, how could he mop all the desks and chairs!?”

“Is he secretly falling in love with all of us? Hahahaha...!”

“Sh\*t, watch out for your ass, guys...”

“You sons of b\*tches, who cares about you if not for merit value.” Zhang Tie continued to grit his teeth. He made a decision that if the merit value increased by no more than 2, he would never do such a stupid thing again. These sons of b\*tches!

This was just a small matter. When the first class of the day began, they had already forgotten about it. The first two classes on Monday morning were survival classes. It contained a lot of things and the teachers always changed. In each class, the teacher would teach them about a topic concerning survival. One day, a teacher taught them how to seduce girls for two hours. He explained that it was an essential skill for posterities and was the most important class for survival. As a result, the horny students became eager to test it out for a whole week.

The survival class was their favorite class since the class atmosphere was relatively relaxed. Rather than being taught, it was more about talking to their seniors about their survival experiences. Therefore, it was the most popular class. Under their anticipation, the teacher appeared.

Seeing the most terrifying one-eyed man in Blackhot City, the carefree atmosphere in the class suddenly froze. Everybody sat straight up and dared not to suck in even a single breath of air. Captain Kerlin’s aura was powerful enough to crack down all the bustling students.

The one-eyed man stood at the podium peacefully as his sharp eyes glanced over each face. He was silent for half a minute.

Zhang Tie was curious about his intentions and was also moved by this atmosphere. His heart started pounding.

The classroom became so quiet that even the sound of an ant crawling on a piece of paper could be heard. Captain Kerlin then opened his mouth.

“You have heard about the Red-scarf Burglars, so I will not repeat it again. I will teach you the most important survival skill today; it’s related to the Red-scarf Burglars. Suppose you met a Red-scarf Burglar outside the school gate and the guy was as strong as me, what would you do? Don’t tell me so quickly, I will give you two minutes to consider your answer. I will award you if you are right and I will punish you if you are wrong. You can discuss amongst yourselves...”

The moment Captain Kerlin finished talking, the whole class became lively as they discussed fiercely. What would you do if a Red-scarf Burglar was standing in front of you? Looking at the heroic and powerful stature of Captain Kerlin and his seemingly anticipating look, the horny students became thrilled. What could we do facing such an infamous scumbag? The only answer was naturally...

“Kill him of course!”

“Yea, surge forward to kill him!”

“Kill him for the ordinary people!”

“Surge forward to kill him!”

The horny students exclaimed. Some of them were still hesitant, while other speculators also became lively when they saw Captain Kerlin smiling with the corner of his mouth after their blood-boiling “declaration”. Fatty Barley was that kind of speculator. Zhang Tie was also observing the reaction of others. At first, only Doug and Bagdad from the Hit-Plane Brotherhood were shouting to kill the Red-scarf Burglar. At that moment, Barley lowered his head, narrowed his eyes, and looked at Captain Kerlin’s facial expression, while the other members were still thinking. Seeing the others excited, Sharwin was also influenced, and seeing Barley yelling, he also followed. At the beginning, Leit and Hista were somewhat hesitant, but after they noticed Barley’s reaction, they also joined in. As a result, the classroom became chaotic.

Zhang Tie was also thinking about Captain Kerlin’s question. Compared to the thrilled fellows, Zhang Tie had two questions: Why did the brave and powerful Captain Kerlin ask such a question in the survival class? What would he do if he actually encountered a Red-scarf Burglar in the classroom at this moment?

Some followed the masses to make their decisions, while Zhang Tie always asked his heart since he was young. This was something his mom had taught him. His mom once said that life is a series of choices under different situations. Those choices determine your life, and life is the path towards your heart.

No matter what others thought, he would always ask his inner heart when facing questions. His heart was innocent, and he felt he had nothing to regret.

Chapter 27: Feel No Regret

“What would I do when faced with a Red-scarf Burglar?” Zhang Tie asked himself. Some people asked the sky, some asked the land, some asked luck, some asked the situation, some asked others, and Zhang Tie asked his inner heart!

“When you have nothing to regret, you will live a happy life!” Zhang Tie thought to himself and an answer came to mind slowly and clearly.

The classroom was bustling. The smile on Captain Kerlin’s face gradually became prominent. When he stretched out his hand, the entire classroom suddenly regained its peace. Everybody stared at the one-eyed person and wondered what he would say.

“Well, now that you’ve already made your decisions, everybody stand up!”

After a period of bustling, everybody stood up from their chairs.

“Those who want to fight the Red-scarf Burglars, come to my left...”

Most of the horny students crowded to the left. Standing, Zhang Tie had made his own decision. A few people stood still; Zhang Tie was somewhat surprised when he noticed that as fatty Barley intended to move his legs to the left, his face suddenly turned pale, and he moved back. Doug and Bagdad had already ran to the left side, and Leit and Hista moved too fast. By the time fatty Barley moved his legs, they had already run to the left side. Finally, they gaped when they found out the fatty was not with them. Sharwin, the pious follower of Barley, also stood still. As a result, only the three members of the Hit-Plane Brotherhood who were standing still and another student didn’t move to the left. Under such a situation, even the people who had their own decisions would simply follow the majority.

Seeing Zhang Tie not on the left side, Barley was also slightly surprised. He gazed at Zhang Tie’s facial expression as if there was a flower on Zhang Tie’s face.

“Well, have you made your decisions?”

Everybody nodded while those who stood to the left of Captain Kerlin casted a contemptuous glare towards the four individuals.

Captain Kerlin didn't look at those on the left; instead, he looked at the four who stood still. He casually pointed at Sharwin and said, "Tell me, why not surge forward?"

Sharwin was very nervous at this moment; sweat even began to cover his body when he saw the one-eyed man pointing at him with his wooden club-sized finger. Under the majestic glare of the one-eyed person, he swallowed his saliva a couple of times and weakly pointed at fatty Barley, "He didn't go over there... I followed him!"

"What about you?" Captain Kerlin slightly shook his head and pointed at fatty Barley with his wooden club-sized finger. Fatty Barley instantly made a smile like a chrysanthemum. He almost bowed, "If I saw a Red-scarf Burglar, I would firstly report to the magistrate or Captain Kerlin instead of surging forward!"

The moment Captain Kerlin saw that expression of flattery, he felt uncomfortable and moved his finger instantly towards another person, "What about you?"

That guy hesitated for a while before saying, "If they could solve the problem of the Red-scarf Burglar, then it's not necessary for me to be there. If they couldn't, I would be useless as well!"

"So you're saying that if you saw a Red-scarf Burglar, you would prepare to escape!" Captain Kerlin emphasized the word "Escape" and turned stern. He made others feel pressured.

Under Captain Kerlin's forced question, that guy felt like he was accepting the strictest accusation. He couldn't stand it any longer, "I... I...." He was very brave for mentioning escape in front of Captain Kerlin. The boy was not sure if Captain Kerlin would jump from the ground and slap him directly into the wall when he heard the word. Everybody knew that a tough guy like Captain Kerlin hated cowards the most.

Seeing his silence, a sort of unnoticed disappointment slightly appeared in Captain Kerlin's eyes. He then moved his finger to the last one who was still standing there, "What about you? Do you also plan to escape?"

"Yea, I would!" Zhang Tie answered without any hesitation.

Instantly, contemptuous whispers drifted from the left side.



“Why? They are all surging forward, so why do you turn your back and escape?” Captain Kerlin forced him with a sharp glare, “ Don’t you want to kill the murderers to protect people like them? To put it straightforwardly, the head of any Red-scarf Burglar is very valuable!”

“They are just going to their deaths. Based on their force, even if they had another group with the same size, they would still be easily killed off by any member of the Red-scarf Burglars within moments. I heard that even the most ordinary Red-scarf Burglar is a LV 5 soldier, and if they surged forward against this LV 5 Red-scarf Burglar, they wouldn’t even be cannon fodder!”

“What are you talking about, you timid bastard!” someone on the left side had already begun to verbally abuse him.

“Yea, don’t try to find an excuse for your cowardice, you timid bastard. So what if we fought to the death? It would still be much better than escaping and being a coward like you!”

“Pah.....”

“Shut up!” Captain Kerlin turned around and shouted; the whole classroom became quiet. Captain Kerlin looked at Zhang Tie in the eyes and asked another direct question, “Are you saying you’re afraid of death? Don’t you find it shameful to escape? Aren’t you afraid of being called a coward?”

“I don’t think it’s shameful to run from an enemy who is much stronger than myself because I know I have no chance to win and would lose my life! Neither am I a coward! If possible, I would take more people to escape with me...” Zhang Tie dauntlessly stared at Captain Kerlin, whose eyes became more and more stern. “They are the ones who are shameful” Zhang Tie pointed at people on the left. As a result, those people became irritated as they rubbed their hands and prepared to fiercely beat Zhang Tie.

Zhang Tie suddenly became enraged and started to shout at those people, “Shut up, you sons of #\$%. You rush forward to end your lives, never considering your parents’ and other family members’ feelings. Your enemy could turn you into a corpse with the flicker of his hand. It takes your parents dozens of years to bring you up. You feel cool that you’re sacrificing yourselves meaninglessly in the bravest and greatest manner you can think of, yet you leave long lasting pains for your parents and other family members. Do you know how much pain parents feel when they lose their son? Do you know how sad they would be when they hear of your death? Have you

ever seen your parents cry? You guys don't know anything..." Those on the left turned silent. They began to consider what Zhang Tie had said as he continued to curse them, "You big muscles and #\$ing bastards, you're the most shameful ones, and you're also idiots. If I were a Red-scarf Burglar, I would also love to kill opponents like you. They could kill you as easy as slaughtering pigs. In front of machetes, even pigs would escape wildly, while you sent yourselves there to your death. You are the most adorable opponents! I'd escape; however, as long as I'm alive, I could continue to give them trouble and divide them. If they were careless enough, I would use other methods to kill them. I can use fire to attract them to dangerous places and poison them to death.

I will grow up to give them more troubles. Perhaps even one day, when I am more powerful than them, I would kill them. The day I kill them, the grass on your tombs could already feed cows, you idiots who not even as smart as pigs!"

"Damn you, bastards. I got up earlier to clean your chairs and desks, and you cursed me and called me an idiot. Now, it's my turn to curse back, otherwise I would be dejected. I am cursing you on the behalf of your parents." Zhang Tie felt so cool inside...

After a while, the whole classroom was silent. The only sound that could be heard was Zhang Tie taking deep breaths.

"Did someone from your family members sacrifice themselves before when they served the army?" Captain Kerlin suddenly questioned Zhang Tie after a long silence. Zhang Tie gaped.

He never thought that Captain Kerlin was that sensitive. In an instant, Zhang Tie recalled many memories. Finally, Zhang Tie lowered his head, "I had two elder brothers before, but now I only have one. That bastard turned himself into a cremation urn and a medal of bravery on the second year he joined the army during the participation of the war between the Andaman Alliance and Scots. He was brave and always surged forward in each battle."

As he had lost an elder brother, he knew how painful it was to lose a family member. And his parents hoped him to be as firm as steel that could never be broken by naming him Zhang Tie(TL: Tie means iron in Chinese). This topic was forbidden in Zhang family. Zhang Tie had never seen his late elder brother. He only saw how his mom and dad would silently cry with a photo in their hands. This sadness was deeply rooted in Zhang Tie's heart. Later on,

Zhang Tie knew that he had a bastard eldest brother named Zhang Yong(TL: Yong means braveness). He was so excellent that he was promoted to first lieutenant on the second year he served the army.

Zhang Tie and Zhang Yang(TL: Yang means happiness) once swore to never turn themselves into a medal of bravery in their lives. Thus, Zhang Tie considered it to be reasonable to escape from a powerful enemy, and if necessary, he would even surrender. He had never thought of being the great hero who saved the world. His objective in life was to make his mom and dad happy, to make those who are close to him happy, and to make those whom he liked happy. As for the Red or Green-scarf Burglars, he didn't care about them at all...

## Chapter 28: Rewards from Captain Kerlin

Everybody was silent after hearing what Zhang Tie had said. There was a special feeling floating in everyone's heart. They were somewhat moved by Zhang Tie. As a classmate and an alleged brother to them, he was the very person who jumped out to scold them when they were doing foolish things! It turned out that everybody mistook him for a coward. Nevertheless, the air in the classroom when he abused them was really annoying and made them feel like beating him.

Captain Kerlin was still silent; however, something special filled his eyes.

"I saw you last week in the woods, I remember your name was..." Captain Kerlin scratched his head, gradually remembering something,

"Zhang Tie!"

"I remember now, it's you. Your words are very right. I was a bastard before that was more foolish than a pig!" after a deep look at Zhang Tie, Captain Kerlin turned and took in a deep breath.

Towards those horny students to his left, he suddenly roared towards at them, which consequently made the whole teaching building tremble, "You, the bastards who are even more foolish than pigs! Do you know why you are wrong? Go run twenty rounds around the training ground and keep shouting 'I'm more foolish than a pig' before the bell rings. In this class, what I want you to remember is that sometimes ruthlessness doesn't mean bravery, and

escape does not equate cowardice. When you face the enemy on the battlefield, you have two tasks: to survive; to make your enemy uncomfortable until they ultimately die. Whatever you do, you have to complete one of the two above tasks to be considered a qualified fighter, otherwise you were born just to be buried underground...”

.....

They finished the rest of the class in the training ground. The group of horny students ran around the Training ground and shouted, “I am more foolish than a pig”, “I am more foolish than a pig”, “I am more foolish than a pig”. As their voices were super loud, even the other teachers and students were attracted as they watched the group during intervals between classes.

Captain Kerlin dispatched the fatty Barley, Sharwin, and the other student to the training ground to monitor the running guys. Then he called Zhang Tie to see him.

“Heh... Heh... What you did in the woods really impressed me. It’s rare to see a student who can take such a beating like you!”

In response to Captain Kerlin’s words, Zhang Tie forced a smile. He knew that the excuse he gave didn’t escape the experienced one-eyed man. He was sensitive despite being tough. Since it wasn’t a serious problem, Zhang Tie didn’t want him to punish the others, “That... was just a game... We were playing a game and we are good friends, so we didn’t treat each other too fiercely!”

Seeing Captain Kerlin touching his mustache, Zhang Tie felt something was wrong. From the experience exchanged from blood and tears by numerous predecessors in the school, when Captain Kerlin pretended to think in front of an individual as he stroked his mustache and spoke like a leader, that individual might get some bad luck.

When Captain Kerlin pretended to think in front of someone by touching his mustache and spoke like a leader, someone might go bad luck.

“Haha...Don’t be that reserved, Zhang Tie. I have seen your miserable attitude. Energetic, very energetic. Young men should be very energetic, that’s how it should be...”

"I won't do that anymore, I won't!" Zhang Tie's heart began to race. He couldn't figure out how Captain Kerlin would punish him.

"I now see you differently because of your escape theory. You can not only take a beating, but also know how to protect yourself when confronted with danger. This is a rare quality, heh, heh, and you are a rare talent!"

"You must be joking, Captain Kerlin!" Zhang Tie began to sweat.

Another experienced learned in the Seventh Male Middle School was that when Captain Kerlin started to touch his mustache as he praised someone like a leader, the other person would definitely get bad luck. "Captain Kerlin, no more joking... I will go watch them run in case they slack off!"

"Don't worry, I've got a special reward for you!"

"Argh, no, Captain Kerlin, how could I receive your reward!"

"Erm...erm... You have to. Are you doubting my, Captain Kerlin's, promise?" saying this, Captain Kerlin had already placed his two fan-like palms onto Zhang Tie's shoulders. Zhang Tie couldn't move at all. An expression of 100 percent sincerity appeared in front of Zhang Tie, "I will introduce you a part-time practice. It's very good, and you will be highly paid. Besides, you can also strengthen your body and get to know more rich and powerful figures. This is a chance to broaden your vision. If you can do well, you will be much stronger and more powerful. Additionally, there is a handful of beauties over there. This means that you have a chance to get to know some beautiful girls. Many people have begged me for this job, but I didn't agree. I think that you are the perfect person for this job!"

Zhang Tie gasped, "The experience of the predecessors didn't come true? There is truly such a marvelous thing in the world! Otherwise, was it because of luck? I have been very lucky in the past few days, and a series of good things have happened to me. Could such a perfect job actually fall into my hands?"

Zhang Tie was just slightly moved and then considered whether Captain Kerlin was telling the truth. Before he was able to nod, Captain Kerlin's hands had already patted Zhang Tie's shoulders and seemed like he couldn't wait to foist the paper into Zhang Tie's pocket, "So you've agreed, great. Here is my letter of introduction. After school today, you can go to No.18 Bright Avenue to

report. Once you present this letter of introduction to him, someone will make arrangements for you”

Bright Avenue? Is it that Bright Avenue? Hearing this, Zhang Tie began to trust in Captain Kerlin’s words. Bright Avenue was the prime location in Blackhot City and had the highest price for land. It was where all the rich people congregated. Any commodity shown in the windows of the stores were worth at least a year’s worth of salary for an ordinary person. It was the essence of Blackhot City. Owning a personal apartment in Bright Avenue was a symbol of status.

Could it be that he misheard Captain Kerlin’s words? The words “ Bright Avenue” made Zhang Tie dazzled. He instinctively clasped the letter of introduction, looked at Captain Kerlin, and seriously said, “Thank you”

Captain Kerlin was a good person, Zhang Tie teemed with praise towards Captain Kerlin.

“Erm... you’re welcome. Don’t try to live up to my expectations, just do your job well!” Captain Kerlin’s face blushed slightly and laughed as he left...

“ I am more foolish than a pig.”

.....

“ I am more foolish than a pig.”

.....

“ I am more foolish than a pig.”

.....

Looking at those guys who were running and shouting in the playground, Zhang Tie was filled with a sense of excellence. He took out the letter of introduction and knocked it with a finger. He was fully anticipating what would happen after school — I will soon go to the Bright Avenue and try to become familiar with the upper classes. “Envy me, you bastards...!” Zhang Tie muttered to himself.

At lunch, Captain Kerlin honored his promise and added a meat dish for the four individuals. Gazing at the alluring red-braised meat in their plates, Doug

and Bagdad were so aspired that they even had saliva flowing down the side of their mouths. Doug stretched out his spoon towards Barley's plate; however, Barley fiercely pierced his hand with his fork. As a result, Doug screamed and didn't dare to try anything like that again.

Bagdad was a bit self-reserved. He closed his eyes while he ate his potatoes, muttering to himself, "This is red-braised meat, this is red-braised meat..." which really made him lose face.

In contrast, Hista and Leit sat on both sides of Sharwin. They aimed at those pieces of alluring meat in Sharwin's plate and spoke with a kind expression, "Sharwin..."

After that, they found that Sharwin had directly spit out the half-chewed red-braised meat along with a lot saliva onto the plate full of red-braised meat and mixed it with the other pieces. When Sharwin saw Hista and Leit twisting their faces, he winked and innocently asked, "What's up? Oh, well, would you like some red-braised meat? Come on, it's delicious! We're good brothers, so please try some..." Sharwin pretended to give the half-digested red-braised meat to Hista and Leit which scared them off instantly. However, seconds later, the two bastards started to bet with the red-braised pieces of meat on Sharwin's dining plate. The wager was if one of them dared to eat one piece of the meat, the other would have to pay one silver coin. They continued quarreling...

"Oh, I almost forgot. This morning, I saw that one of your feet had already moved towards the left, so why didn't you move to the left then?" Zhang Tie asked Barley while chewing a piece of red-braised meat happily.

Being silent for a while, the fatty explained, "When I wanted to move, I glanced at Captain Kerlin's eyes. All of a sudden, I found the same smile on his face as when he had caught me climbing the school wall two years ago. I was instantly frightened..."

Being captured by Captain Kerlin while climbing over the school wall? Zhang Tie silently prayed for the fatty. He didn't continue to ask how Captain Kerlin had dealt with him because he could imagine that that event was definitely a dark memory for the fatty during his stay at the Seventh Male Middle School. However, after this event, Zhang Tie really praised Barley's ability to recognize people's facial expressions. Zhang Tie could never master that advanced skill...

Glancing over those naive bastards in the Hit-Plane Brotherhood, Zhang Tie found they were all talented!

“Oh, I almost forgot. I saw Captain Kerlin giving you something privately!” fatty asked absent-mindedly. At the same time, all the bastards of the Hit-Plane Brotherhood raised their ears.

Zhang Tie slapped the fatty’s shoulders so hard that the fatty even gritted his teeth and almost spat out the piece of meat from his mouth, “This guy... Just ask straightforwardly! See, this a letter of introduction. Captain Kerlin said he had found a part-time job at the No.18 Bright Avenue for me...”

Kneading his shoulders, Fatty forced an obscene smile. At the same time, Bagdad, who kept muttering red-braised meat, had a strange look and almost choked on the potato in his mouth when he heard “No.18 in Bright Avenue”.

Zhang Tie didn’t notice the change on Bagdad’s face. Instead, he was still thrilled with a full sense of vanity, “Captain Kerlin said that this reward was especially for me and it didn’t fit others. He was deeply impressed by me in the woods. He said that I would be highly paid and could meet many rich and big figures. I could strengthen my body and be more powerful over there. Additionally, I will have a chance to touch beauties! Alas, I actually didn’t want to be there, but he forced me. You know, I am a soft-hearted man. After his long-time persuasion, I finally agreed with him. I have done too many good deeds, and as a result, even beauties and high compensation would fall to me. Moreover, I can even strengthen my body there. Although I won’t be thinking about the beauties, but what if some of them wanted to be #\$ed by me? Would I agree or not? What a happy boring thing! It really tests my self-restraint. However, I am not a self-reserved guy. Heh, heh, don’t go, I’m not done yet... ”

Finally, Zhang Tie saw a row of middle fingers raised towards him...

## Chapter 29: Molesting a Beauty

After school, Zhang Tie once again ran to the railway station to see Miss Daina off. Waiting until the passenger train disappeared from his sight, Zhang Tie didn’t leave the alley nor did he run towards Bright Avenue.



Although he could only see her in secret, Zhang Tie felt time elapsed. If it was possible, Zhang Tie wanted to see off Miss Daina's shadow like this for the rest of his life. However, when Miss Daina finally left, Zhang Tie found his stomach growling.

In the past couple of days, Zhang Tie found himself to be easily hungry. Previously, he could still stand his hunger after school; however, his stomach had already been growling by this time. Feeling frustrated, Zhang Tie muttered to himself and patted his deflated belly, "You had already eaten red-braised meat at noon!"

Recalling the red-braised meat, Zhang Tie naturally remembered the part-time job introduced by Captain Kerlin. There were passenger trains heading for Bright Avenue in the railway station ahead, but the cost of the ticket was four copper coins, a price that he was reluctant to pay. Therefore, he decided against taking the passenger train. As he sped up while walking, he comforted himself. "I am a young man and I am energetic, so I should do some running!"

This was not the first time for Zhang Tie to be here in Bright Avenue. Despite this, each and every place in Bright Avenue made Zhang Tie feel self-abased and out of place.

On both sides of Bright Avenue sat numerous stores that showcased various commodities. Just now when he had passed by a shoe store, Zhang Tie could not help but stare at the pair of shoes which were showcased within the store. The price on the tag was an amount that almost frightened Zhang Tie to death—16 gold coins! For the god's sake! That was the amount his parents would earn after a whole year of hard work. 16 gold coins, 1600 silver coins, 160,000 copper coins. This was enough to buy almost 7 tons of grains. Thinking for quite a while, Zhang Tie still couldn't think through trading 7 tons of grains for a pair of leather shoes. Although Zhang Tie knew that this was how rich people lived, this really challenged his capability to withstand these stimulations.

After seeing that tag price, Zhang Tie became immune to all the other articles displayed in the stores on both sides of Bright Avenue. The more he saw, the more bored he felt towards them. Gradually, he felt self-abased. Hence, standing on the Bright Avenue, Zhang Tie pretended to look straight ahead and ignored the brilliant articles displayed in the stores.

Nice cars parked on both sides of the street and uniformed drivers who accompanied them as they cleaned them diligently. Zhang Tie swallowed saliva and continued to look straight ahead, pretending to see nothing...

Various tempting aromas drifted from the high-end restaurants situated on both sides of Bright Avenue. Zhang Tie swallowed saliva and continued looking straight ahead, pretending to see nothing...

A row of high and slim sexy beauties were standing outside the doors of the clubs. Their skirts opened from their ankles all the way to their buttocks. At the sight of this alluring scene, Zhang Tie swallowed saliva and continued looking straight ahead, pretending to see nothing...

Outside the gates of the hotels on both sides of Bright Avenue were doormen and servants who wore white gloves as they diligently and sincerely served the customers that entered and exited the hotels. Staring at the beautiful angel sculptures outside the gates of the hotels, Zhang Tie swallowed saliva and continued looking straight ahead, pretending to see nothing...

When handsome boys and beauties passed by him, he noticed their exquisite clothes. Then, he looked at his own old-fashioned school uniform. Zhang Tie swallowed saliva and continued looking straight ahead, pretending to see nothing...

Gentlemen and ladies were muttering and joking in the coffee houses on both sides of Bright Avenue. Glancing at the tag prices outside the coffee houses, Zhang Tie swallowed saliva and continued looking straight ahead, pretending to see nothing...

At this moment, in the eyes of the servants who stood outside the gates of the numerous shops and hotels on Bright Avenue, Zhang Tie was just a country hick and a person of low value from the rural areas. Nobody paid attention to him.

Wandering on the Bright Avenue like a ghost for half an hour. Zhang Tie had finally arrived at No.18 Bright Avenue. No.16 was in front of him, while No.20 was behind. Seeing the wrought, copper "No.18 Bright Avenue" sign that hung on the pillar and the staircase of at least ten steps beneath it, Zhang Tie instantly gasped. What was more impressive than the house number to Zhang Tie was the large words on the gate at the end of the staircase — Iron Thorns Fighting Club.

Fighting Club? Fighting Club... Fighting Club!

It was a part-time job in the martial club. All of a sudden, Zhang Tie almost dropped down tears. He was really mistaken about Captain Kerlin. He was really a good good person!

In this age, fighting force was of the utmost importance, and fighting clubs were the best place to improve one's fighting force — at least in the Blackhot City.

Taking a deep breath, Zhang Tie raised his chest high. He then touched that letter of introduction in one of his pocket and strode towards the gate of the Iron Thorns Fighting Club.

“Gold coins, beauties, here I am!” Zhang Tie shouted inwardly...

“Stop! Who are you!?” One of the four terrifying armored guardians, who held a sword in hand as they stood outside the gate of the Fighting Club, stretched out a hand to stop Zhang Tie the moment he moved close to the gate.

Seeing the polished, full-body armor on that tough guy, who was two heads higher than him, in a split second, Zhang Tie felt weak. “I... I am here for a job. Captain Kerlin introduced me to this place!”

“Captain Kerlin? Do you have any evidence?”

“Yes, yes...” Zhang Tie hurriedly took out of the letter of introduction. Right at that moment, Zhang Tie realized that the “thorn” pattern on the upper right corner on the back of the envelope was somewhat related to this place.

With the letter in hand, the tough guy read it and stared at Zhang Tie. Finally, he gave it back to Zhang Tie. “Take your letter and follow me!”

Taking the letter, Zhang Tie followed the tough guy past the gate of the Iron Thorns Fighting Club. Contrary to the scene he envisioned that a scene of a pile of tough guys fighting fiercely, when Zhang Tie entered the fighting club, the first sight he caught was a hall with a fountain that sat in the middle. No other surplus decoration was left on the mirror-like marble stone floor. There were no flowers nor grass. Everything was very neat and tidy. The scene was somewhat similar to the lobbies in the high-end hotels he saw in Bright Avenue. The only thing that made this look like a fighting club was the armors

and weapons displayed on both sides of the hall. Some were new, while others were damaged. From them, a chilling killing intent could be felt.

The hall was extremely quiet. Quiet to the point where only the sounds of the trickling fountain could be heard.

There really were beauties. When the armored, manly guy led Zhang Tie to detour the fountain, Zhang Tie saw beauties — not one, but a row of them. They were standing behind the reception desk. Zhang Tie felt dazzled when those beauties gazed at him. He slightly became anxious. Before he could carefully appreciate those beauties, the armored, tough guy pointed to a beauty. “He’s here for a part-time job. Take him to the office of Manager Hance!” The moment the manly guy explained that he was here for a part-time job, Zhang Tie felt the curious gazes of the beauties suddenly leave him. All of a sudden, he became a trivial person once again.

“Follow me!” that beauty moved out of the reception desk and talked to Zhang Tie. Then, she walked directly to a path nearby. Zhang Tie hurriedly followed.

The beauty in front of him had a ponytail. She was older than 20 years old. She wore a black elastic, sleeveless sweater and a pair of white sweat pants, which palpably accentuated her great youthful figure. She smelt fragrant. Behind her, Zhang Tie saw the wiggly butt beneath the slim waist. It was really seductive. Zhang Tie could only feel that blood rushed to his head as his penis became sturdy in a split second. It was too embarrassing, thus Zhang Tie hurriedly put his hand into a pants pocket to press it down.

With the exception of this sexy beauty and Zhang Tie, nobody else was on the carpeted path. Seeing her figure, Zhang Tie felt that he should say something at this moment. Finally, after ten more steps, Zhang Tie plucked up his courage to ask in a foolish way,

“Hello. I... am Zhang Tie. What’s your name, miss?”

The ponytailed girl stopped and turned around. She glanced over Zhang Tie and raised her eyebrows. Then, she forced a somewhat distant, ironic smile. “I am Mary. Actually, you don’t necessarily need to know my name. Although we are all here to make money, you should know that there is no chance for you, a toad, to fuck me, a white swan...”

For the first time in his life, Zhang Tie was destructively destroyed. His face turned slightly pale. He also realized that his face twisted. He was really wronged and neither did he know where his fault was. He was simply asking her name. "Do I look like a toad?" At the same time, his fury rose as a result of being ignored and insulted by others.

Being insulted, Zhang Tie had to pay it back many times over. Additionally, with rich experience since he was a kid and being influenced by the atmosphere in the male middle school, he deeply realized that when you were bullied or insulted by others, you had to fight back... Not tomorrow, not the day after tomorrow, not after you had prepared well, but right now, at this moment. Therefore, anyone who ignored the rule of "fighting back in front of insult" would unexceptionally become an unfortunate guy and a coward who would be casually bullied by others.

Therefore, at this moment, Zhang Tie was so brave that he stepped forward and stared at Mary's eyes sharply. Under the frightening glare of this girl, he seized her exposed shoulders, "Woman, do you believe that one day, you will strip off your clothes and kneel down me to beg me to f\*ck you!? Like this..." saying this, Zhang Tie thrust his waist twice fiercely towards the girl in a manner that Hista had always done. Unluckily, the moment he let go of his p\*nis, it suddenly popped back up and formed a high tent underneath his pants. As a result, the high tent hit Mary's stomach twice...

Being knocked by a d\*ck and being pressed down by the shoulders, Mary was really scared. She had never before thought she would be treated like this by a poor, part-time, and immature boy in the access of the Fighting Club in broad daylight.

Before she screamed, Zhang Tie loosened his hands and retreated. Then, he foisted his right hand into his pant pocket once again to press down on the p\*nis. Raising his jaw, he looked like a rascal. "Lead the way, woman!"

Zhang Tie's heart was also thumping at that moment. He never thought that he would do something like this. Recalling the pleasant feeling, Zhang Tie became exceptionally thrilled as his hair stood on its ends.

Mary's face blushed. She opened her mouth but closed it again. Shivering, she pointed at Zhang Tie. After glaring eye-to-eye with Zhang Tie for more than ten seconds, she finally turned around furiously and moved ahead without speaking a word. Zhang Tie finally let out a deep breath. He had made

a decision just now that if the girl in front of him dared to shout out, he would escape immediately...

The Iron Thorns Fighting Club was very large. The two of them walked for almost one minute in the deep path before arriving in front of a well-decorated room marked with “Manager’s Office”...

“This is Manager Hance’s Office. Since I’ve brought you here, you can go inside by yourself!” After saying that, Mary raised her head and, like a swan, drifted away without even glancing at Zhang Tie.

Zhang Tie knocked on the door.

“Come in!” a man’s voice that reminded Zhang Tie of Donder, the mean fatty, drifted over. He pushed open the door and actually saw a fatty who sat behind a broad desk made from Nanmu wood. He was trying to wipe the glittering brass buttons on his coat with a piece of green flannelette and subsequently blew on them...

The moment Zhang Tie saw him, he felt that Manager Hance was definitely more stingy than Donder, who didn’t even provide him with a supper.

### Chapter 30: The First Close Encounter with the Upper-Class Society

In front of such a stingy and arrogant guy, who was seriously doing something that he considered important, if you could not bring him gold coins or benefits at this moment, you should not disturb him. Instead, you should be patient and wait for him until he has finished his matter. Zhang Tie learned this experience from Donder. Thus, since the time he entered the room, he has said nothing. He just stood by the broad desk of the Manager Hance, being patient as he waited for him to polish those nice buttons. Meanwhile, he silently looked around the most luxurious room that he has ever seen.

It was truly the most luxurious room that Zhang Tie had ever seen, as he had not seen any high-end places at all in his poor 15 years. Fortunately, the part-time job at the grocery store gave him a sharp eye. The moment he entered, he could identify that the floor was made of cedar wood, the desk of Manager Hance was made of Nanmu wood, and the other furniture, including the cabinets, seemed to be made from Golden Pomelo wood. In a corner of the office, Zhang Tie also noticed a huge, naturally-born one-headed crystal that

was heavier than 5kg, resting inside a basin of crystal sand. God! He had never seen this before. Before the Catastrophe, people only used crystals as decorations. However, after the Catastrophe, the real application and knowledge of the crystals were popularized. In this age, everybody knew that any natural crystal heavier than 3 kg was called “Crystal Generator” — this was common sense. Wherever you put it, its energy and magnetic field could purify and improve the energy within dozens of square meters. It was of great importance to the health and cultivation of human beings. Some even believed that people’s negative moods could be purified and they would be lucky if they were constantly in an energy field created by such a crystal...

Zhang Tie estimated that this qualified “Crystal Generator” that weighed 5 kg was worth at least 40 gold coins... “How motherf\*cking rich!” Zhang Tie heaved a deep sigh. This crystal was at least Class 4 which meant it could not even be bought at Donder’s store. It was palpably a standard “strategic material” that could not be seen in ordinary stores. Only a few franchised stores were permitted to sell them. In Blackhot City, it was monopolized by the commercial groups directly designated by the CSIF. Despite knowing that someone was in the room, Manager Hance, who was polishing his coat buttons, didn’t speak for almost three minutes before he sighed satisfactorily. He took off the flannelette and the monocle, put them away in a drawer, and then glanced at Zhang Tie.

“Sensible boy!” Manager Hance praised. He seemed to have been satisfied with Zhang Tie, as he had not bothered him when he was doing something elegant. “Well then, show me your ability!”

Being a fatty, Manager Hance’s face looked like a steaming bun that had been punched fiercely. His eyes, ears, nose, and mouth were completely buried in his fat. Compared to him, Donder was slim.

Zhang Tie hurriedly moved forward and handed over the letter of introduction to Manager Hance. Then, he stood straight in front of the broad desk and pretended to be innocent. “I am a student from the Seventh National Middle School. Captain Kerlin said that this was a nice part-time job!”

“Ha, nice, of course. Nice...” Taking the letter, Manager Hance swept over its contents and smiled. Then he glanced over Zhang Tie for a while with a stern stare that made him look creepy. “You will work here from 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm after school. How many days could you come in per week?”



“Monday, Wednesday, and Friday...” Zhang Tie replied after a few seconds. Since he had to work for Donder on Tuesdays and Thursdays and had to help his mom on the weekends, he was only available on those three days.

“Only three days. Although it’s not too much, it’s fine...” Pulling out a piece of paper from his drawer, he rapidly scrawled on it. Meanwhile, he poured out without any signs of stopping, “You can get your payment once a week. You will be paid 70 copper coins per hour when there’s something you have to do, and you can get more paid more if you perform well. Remember to be here on time! If you’re late even one minute, that day’s work will be done without payment. As for your personal expense to get here, we will not reimburse you for it. If there’s any tip from the guest, you can foist them into your own pocket. Kerlin should have already told you what you’re going to do here...”

“Captain Kerlin said...” The moment Zhang Tie wanted to repeat the nice promises told by Captain Kerlin, the door to the room was abruptly pushed open by a man, who hurriedly reported, “Manager, the guest in Room No.6 has been impatient...”

“Where is Harry?” standing up, Manager Hance shouted furiously. “If you offend our noble guests, our gods of wealth, you’re basically sending me to be stripped and thrown into the sewers. Is that what you’re trying to do?”

“The contract terminated yesterday. Harry has already resigned!” the man replied with a cry. “I have already reported this to you. What should we do now...”

Hance instantly recovered his composure. Two seconds later, the two of them cast their sights onto Zhang Tie at the same time. Hance suddenly gave a friendly smile. “ You... little boy, what’s your name? Come on, sign the contract. You’re very lucky... yep...”

The fat on Hance’s face shivered painfully. “ I will pay you an additional 10 copper coins per hour and this part-time job will be yours!”

Zhang Tie was thrilled. He never thought that he would encounter such an event on the first day. This job paid very generously and could make him stronger. What was more was that he could meet numerous important people. A job of touching beauties closely might even fall on him.

Zhang Tie was really lucky. His compensation had been increased within one hour of arriving. This was the first paid job he has ever had in his life.



Therefore, Zhang Tie didn't hesitate in the least. He directly took the pen passed by Manager Hance, and without even glancing over the contract, he scribbled down his name.

After signing the contract, Manager Hance hurriedly put away the contract into the drawer. Before Zhang Tie had a chance to speak, the other man couldn't wait and began to drag Zhang Tie by the hand towards the door. At this moment, Manager Hance remembered something and shouted, "He reeks strongly of sweat. Take him to the bath..."

Unexpectedly, he got such a high compensation of 80 copper coins per hour working for the Iron Thorns Fighting Club. Doesn't this mean that he could easily make three or four silver coins through four or five hours of work? Three or four silver coins? The happiness arrived so fast that Zhang Tie felt dizzy after hearing the news about his increasing salary. He simply followed others' orders mechanically, which made him feel like a machine on the production line. He got the full experience of what a streamlined production was — being urged to take a bath, then putting on soft cotton linen clothes and a pair of stockings.

After his bath and putting on clothes, he was pulled aside by someone and was covered in another layer of protective pads and armor. These protective pads and armors were worn on his front chest, back, crotch, and his limbs. They made him feel mighty. Eventually, when half his head was covered with a huge helmet, Zhang Tie felt something was amiss. "Is this the working uniform? So strange? Something must be wrong!"

Nevertheless, before Zhang Tie was able to ask, he had already been taken into a room...

It was a huge room covering about 200 square meters. The floor felt elastic, as it was paved with skid-proof rubber. The four walls were covered in padding that were akin to leather bags. The only person in this huge room was a 12-year-old kid. With red-brown hair, he wore a white uniform that was purposely made for practicing fighting. In a cold demeanor, the kid beat a figure-like doll.

Staring at that kid, who also noticed Zhang Tie, he stopped instantly. Zhang Tie also forced a kind smile, striding towards that kid. Lowering himself, he spoke. "Hey, little friend..."

Without any warning, the kid turned and made a side kick directly towards Zhang Tie's head. Zhang Tie didn't have a chance to say anything before his vision turned dark and passed out...

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After quite a while, Zhang Tie's nose felt itchy. When he sneezed, he finally woke up. Waking up, Zhang Tie still felt dizzy, as if there were dozens of small figures hammering drums in his brain. "Kid, you're awake..." A bald muscular man that was more than 30-years-old stood before him. There were some wounds on his face. This man looked like he was as strong as an ox. Seeing Zhang Tie open his eyes, the tough man sneered and put away the small porcelain vial on the tip of Zhang Tie's nose. After putting away the small porcelain vial, he opened a locker beside him and started to change his clothes.

Zhang Tie tried to sit up with difficulty. He found that he was lying on a broad and long chair. There were four or five other people in the room. Before he was able to speak, he suddenly felt nauseous. Noticing the trash can at a corner of a locker cabinet, he covered his mouth with a hand and dashed towards it. While vomiting, even his eyes almost popped out; however, besides some viscous saliva, he vomited nothing else. After a while, he finally felt better and returned to that chair. He shook his head and tried to remember what had happened...

"Wait..." Zhang Tie suddenly stood up, looking around for that kid. "I swear I'm going to beat the sh\*t out of you when I see you again!"

"Boy, we're training partners. Faithfully, we're just flesh-bags. However, you need to learn some skills. Bruises are nothing serious, but you still have to protect your head and your d\*ck. You are the first person I have ever seen who sent out their head towards someone's kick without any protection..." The tough guy, who had just changed his clothes, walked over. He patted Zhang Tie's shoulders and left the dressing room with a bag in hand.

What? Training partner? Flesh-bag? Zhang Tie gasped...