

Black Iron 81

Chapter 81: The Storm in Blackhot City

Under the highest tower in the outer castle of Wild Wolf Castle was a conference room, which was where the members of the Temporary Supervision Committee worked. As there was still an army residing within Wild Wolf Castle, every three days, the Blackhot City Military would use a messenger falcon to send a military notice to the castle, so the army stationed in the castle would be up-to-date with the current events in Blackhot City. After Wild Wolf Castle became the base for the students participating in the survival training, the recipients of the notice changed from the army to the members of the Temporary Supervision Committee and the students who were attending the survival training.

Today, after having received and read the letter from Blackhot City that was brought by the messenger falcon, the teacher's face instantly turned pale. He then immediately summoned all the teachers and directors from every school attending the survival training in Wild Wolf Castle and loudly read the notice presented by the military of Blackhot City in the conference room...

Before listening to the contents of the letter, the people in the conference room were all relaxed; however, upon hearing the contents, all their faces turned blue. As a result, the conference room was filled with a solemn air and sound was no longer heard anymore. At that moment, if a needle were to fall onto the ground, the sound would be clearly heard by everyone...

The day before yesterday, Wild Wolf Castle welcomed the first rain of June. On that very day, a big event also occurred in Blackhot City—the military of Blackhot City abruptly dispatched a large amount of soldiers to besiege the residence of the Niumuen Business Group on Bright Avenue of Blackhot City and forcefully carried out an investigation, using the excuse of searching for criminals. However, the forced investigation was met with a counterattack from the guards of the Niumuen Business Group. As expected, the guards of the Niumuen Business Group were completely cracked down and was completely purged by the iron fist of Blackhot City's military. However, not only did the following investigation of the Niumuen Business Group's residence reveal that the fleeing fugitives were not there, but it also revealed something much more frightening. From the indisputable evidence and the interrogation of the director of the Niumuen Business Group of Blackhot City, a huge conspiracy was revealed—the Niumuen Business Group had colluded with the Red-scarf Burglars in an attempt to look for an opportunity for the bandit group to wipe out the major clans that controlled the Coal, Steel, and Iron Federation of Blackhot City.

Blackhot City officials had already delivered the news of this event to the Andaman Alliance last night, greatly shocking them. In the same evening after having received the notice, using its name, the Andaman Alliance submitted its strongest protest to the Norman Empire's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in hopes to receive a reasonable explanation for the event that transpired in Blackhot City and the Andaman Alliance. However, as the Norman Empire chose to remain quiet even until this morning, Blackhot City started to shut down all the industries and business groups of the Norman Empire within its territory, effectively stopping all business with the Norman Empire...

The arrival of the Red-scarf Burglars once again increased the tension in the atmosphere and caused the Blackhot City Military to raise its alertness to Level 1: Preparation for war...

The conference room in Wild Wolf Castle was filled with a weird and solemn air, as the actions of the Norman Empire made everyone breathless. In the eyes of Blackhot City and the Andaman Alliance, the Norman Empire was truly a strong force. There was truly a great gap between the military forces of the two parties: Blackhot City had a military consisting of 50,000 and the Andaman Alliance had an army of 400,000 soldiers, while just the common soldiers on the northern border of the Norman Empire numbered 3 million. If the two parties were to start a war, just the army stationed at the northern border of the Norman Alliance alone could already wipe out the Andaman Alliance. Over the past few years, the major reason that the Andaman Alliance could stay in a peaceful state with the Norman Empire was not because the Andaman Alliance was strong, but rather because of the conflicts and contradictions between the Sun Dynasty and the Norman Empire. The Norman Empire and the Sun Dynasty were both crazy, and when two crazy men stared at each other with the Andaman Alliance sitting between them, neither party would want to make the first move that would start the war. This situation remained unchanged for dozens of years. Blackhot City, who benefitted from this situation, was able to develop well in the past few decades. Now, it seems that one of the two crazy guys had become impatient...

"Do we need to release this news to the students?" one of the teachers sitting at the round desk made of pine wood thought for a while before finally proposing the question.

"I think it's unnecessary to tell them, as they will naturally know of it when they finish the survival training. Let 'em enjoy this temporary time of happiness..." Hearing his words, everyone else in the conference room stared at the kind-looking teacher. The teacher who just spoke gave a casual smile. "Everyone, there has been peace in Blackhot City and the Andaman Alliance for dozens of years, so why would the Norman Empire decide to start a war at this point in time? As we all know, since several weeks ago, the prices of strategic materials in all the countries of the Blackson Human Clan Corridor has been slowly rising. What does this mean? I think we all know the answer to this. Naturally, Blackhot City and the Andaman Alliance are not worth all the countries in the Blackson Human Clan Corridor launching a war for."

Hearing his words, Captain Kerlin frowned. Although Captain Kerlin knew that that teacher's words contained something unusual, as he was neither highly intelligent nor excelled at analysis, he wasn't able to fully comprehend the meaning behind them. "Gerom, you're saying... a big war will break out..."

"I didn't say anything." After looking around, Gerom gently sighed. "We are all small figures and are not able to make the big decisions. It's just that I remembered the end of the second holy war between humans and demons. It seems that more than 170 years has already passed..."

Holy war!

As if a -50 degrees celsius breeze had swept the room, the two words instantly froze the conference room. Hearing those two words, even Captain Kerlin's face turned pale...

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This morning, Zhang Tie was not happy at all; not only was he not happy in the slightest, he was even depressed to death. Nobody would be happy if they spent their entire morning digging 300 kg of ores before carrying them using a mining basket as they walked 1.5 km to submit them in various locations several times. As the amount of iron in the ores varied from 50% and 60%, it was quite heavy for Zhang

Tie to carry, as it would contain almost 200 kg of iron ores each time. For the students attending the survival training, it was impossible for them to carry 200 kg while walking a distance of 1.5 km. Let alone 200 kg, it was even difficult for them to carry 100 kg. For those who were able to carry 50 kg of ores while traversing a distance of 1.5kg, being able to return was already considered good enough. Although it was not difficult for one to dig ores and possibly even obtain up to several tons a day, the real test of strength was if they were able to bring the ores to the correct place.

Zhang Tie kept working for the entire morning. Although he had only finished two-thirds of the mission today, Zhang Tie, as a Level 1 fighter, already felt fatigued all over; his body felt weak. After submitting the batch of ores that weighed over 70 kg, Zhang Tie received two packages of dried rations. Throwing himself onto the ground under the shade of a pine tree, he did not feel like picking himself up from the floor again.

After this experience, Zhang Tie swore that he would dig in the mines every day regardless of the weather. Since he had to submit a minimum amount of ores each day, he realized he would truly be tortured to death if he had to finish three days worth of work in one day.

Much like outside, there were small iron tracks which once allowed the usage of mining carts inside the mines; however, there was clear evidence that the iron tracks had been destroyed by some bastards. As a result, all miners had to walk approximately 0.5 km inside the tunnel, which sharply lowered the transportation efficiency.

Like before, the guys who wanted to try out mining had already decided to leave after just the morning, and many people were reluctant to try it again for the second time.

Leaning against a tree, Zhang Tie was drinking water and eating the dried ration. With slightly narrowed eyes, Zhang Tie looked up at the two happy squirrels on the tree. These days, the squirrels seemed to have noticed that a group of uninvited guests was stealing their pine cones, thus the two began to move the pine cones into their own tree hollow. They were even more diligent than Zhang Tie. Seeing the two busy squirrels, Zhang Tie became somewhat embarrassed, as he was one of the uninvited guests who had taken their pine cones, yet he was not even as diligent as a squirrel...

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On the first day after the rain stopped, all the students began to be busy once more. It seemed that it was hard to associate the survival training with the word "happiness". At a location 10 km away from mine where Zhang Tie was, as Zhang Tie leaned against a tree as he ate his dried rations, Glaze and his followers were doing something that was even harder to associate with the word "happiness"...

A cave within a mountain had already been filled with blood. After killing several female wolves, who were feeding pups, using his sword, Glaze swept through the 20 odd pups who were barely as big as a newborn dog. As the last pup wanted to bite at his heel, Glaze ferociously stomped down onto its head, smashing it into pieces. Only at this moment did the sad howls within the mountain cave finally stop.

The instant the growls stopped, Sharon and Zuhair rushed in. They carefully avoided all the blood on the ground. Much like Glaze, Sharon's and Zuhair's skin had turned a pale green, seemingly as if a strange fluid had been pasted on them.

"Hurry up, let's go. We won't have time to leave if the other wolves return..." Sharon urged.

“Glaze, your shoes have been dyed with wolf blood. You should throw them away. Otherwise, the wolves would come and look for you. Now, everybody should hurry up and leave this place. We should clean off the mixture of bitter taro roots and blood wolf flowers from our bodies. That way, nobody would know that we were responsible for this...” At the sight of the pup who had its head crushed under Glaze’s foot, Zuhair cried out as he awkwardly took out a bag that was sealed in waterproof cloth. Opening the bag, Zuhair picked up a small piece of a towel using his two fingers and threw it on the ground.

After looking at the blood from the pups that stained his shoes, Glaze cursed and then quickly left the wolf den that reeked of death with Sharon and Zuhair.

“Have you finished your job?” as they left, Glaze asked Zuhair.

“Trust me, I have already arranged the other pieces of his towel on the way. Those wild wolves will definitely find Zhang Tie on his way back to his base if they follow the odor trail created by the pieces from his towel. Wild wolves are both cunning and good at bearing grudges...” Zuhair smirked. “A common soldier has nothing to do with us if he was engulfed by a pack of wild wolves!”

“Hahaha...” Glaze and his followers laughed out loudly...

Two hours later, all the male wolves hunting outside returned to their den. The instant they entered, their low howls started to reverberate throughout the entire valley...

Chapter 82: Physical Limit Breakthrough

The ore collection center of Wild Wolf Castle was at the foot of a relatively flat hill south of Wild Wolf Castle. There was an iron rail that spanned hundreds of meters long down from the top of the hill to the collection center. The other end of the iron rail was the raw materials field of the iron smelting workshop in Wild Wolf Castle. The steam engine attached to the wheeled vehicle provided it enough energy so that it could pull carts filled with iron ores from the foot of the hill to the top using steel wires that were as thick as a baby’s arm. Thanks to the iron rail and the vehicle that made use of the steam engine, iron ores could be easily brought into Wild Wolf Castle. If not for them, Zhang Tie really wondered whether there would be any person willing to dig in the mines, as they would have to walk a distance of over 1.5 km in order to reach this location while carrying the iron ores. In order to get here, he would have to walk up a slope and would most likely be tired to death after doing so.

Although some people would be able to accomplish such a feat, others would find it difficult to do the same.

At noon, after raining for a day, the sun finally rose, and it gradually became hot again. Due to the rain, the valley was still rather damp, but under the scorching sun, the water began to evaporate and rise from the ground. In a short period, the entire valley became a huge steaming cage that made people breathless.

Under such a high temperature, it became a huge test as to whether Zhang Tie would be able to traverse a distance of over 1.5 km while carrying more than 100 kg of iron ores on his back. On the way there, Zhang Tie gritted his teeth as he oozed sweat all over and felt as if his shoulder was burning

because his shoulder constantly rubbed against his mining basket. On average, he would have to take a rest after walking every 200 or 300 meters. Finally arriving at his destination, when Zhang Tie placed his mining basket on the scale, it made a “Kuang!” sound. Upon hearing a different sound drifting from the scale, the other male students couldn’t help but stare at the number displayed on the scale.

118 kg!

“Brother, nice work. You are the first to carry over 100 kg of iron ores at once. It seems you were born to do this!” Hearing his words, Zhang Tie did not feel like uttering a single word; he only rolled his eyes. Right now, he was extremely tired and wanted to take a rest for half an hour. Zhang Tie didn’t have the strength to think about whether that guy was praising him or criticizing him. At the same time, the male student took out a notebook. After peering at the number displayed on the scale and checking the quality of the ores brought by Zhang Tie, he started to record the numbers in the notebook.

“Along with this basket... how many kilograms of ores have I carried here today?” After panting for a quite while, Zhang Tie asked.

“Including this time, let me have a look...” Taking the notebook, the male student lowered his head and checked the record. “You are Zhang Tie, right? You brought in 76 kg the first time, 78 kg for the second time, and 69 kg for the third time. This time, you’ve brought 118 kg. Let me calculate it...”

“341 kg...” The instant the male student told Zhang Tie of the weight of the iron he had brought the third time, Zhang Tie had already visualized a seven column abacus in his mind, from which poured out the final result.

After calculating it with a pen, that male student got the same result as the one Zhang Tie got. Slightly amazed, he stared at Zhang Tie, but in the end, he didn’t put too much thought into it.

“Right, it’s 341 kg. This is the record for the most brought in. Since you didn’t come in for the previous two days, you have just finished the amount needed for the past three days of required work...”

“Is there a reward for the highest record?” Zhang Tie casually asked.

“There is!”

“What is it?”

“You will be allowed to continue this promising career...”

Hearing this answer, Zhang Tie’s face slightly turned dark before beginning to laugh. He didn’t expect this guy to have a sense of humor.

Seeing them pouring his iron ores into the mining vehicle, Zhang Tie casually prattled with them and took a rest. Based on the weight of his iron ores, Zhang Tie received 0.35 kg of dried rations. Afterwards, bringing with him the dried rations, Zhang Tie carried the ugly mining basket and climbed to the top of the mountain, arriving at the square outside Wild Wolf Castle.

After having removed the 100 kg burden and taking a break, Zhang Tie gradually recovered his strength and realized that he was much faster than before. This time, since he successfully surpassed his own physical limit and was able to create a record among the group of unlucky fellows, Zhang Tie was in a good mood and felt a bit pleasant. It seemed that what Donder had said was true—people were always

forced to conquer difficulties before they were able to succeed. That was really sincere saying that was often seen in Chinese texts.

As the sun had risen again, the square became more boisterous than before. Compared to the empty and shabby appearance that was here before, there were now some simple trading booths that could also be used as shelter in the square. At these booths, some of the female students would sell the wild fruits and vegetables that they had picked in the valley and would trade them for other food. At the other end of the square, the male students, as usual, grouped together as they showed off their “muscles” and the prey they had caught. Over time, they would find an opportunity to chat with girls. These days, more and more female students had begun to form solid teams with the male students. No matter whether they were male or female, after some time and after understanding each other, they became rather bold.

“Do you need blueberries or hawthorn fruits?” A voice from a booth to the side attracted Zhang Tie’s attention. Turning around, Zhang Tie saw a male student shaking his head and walking away, while the owner of the booth, a female student, looked disappointed as she hugged her legs and sat on the ground. In front of the girl was a lotus leaf on which were a pile of unripe wild blueberries and hawthorn fruits that amounted to less than 0.25 kg. Much like the bashful female owner of the booth, the pile of blueberries and hawthorn fruits looked average. Although they were clean, they were not attractive at all and were not able to arouse the “appetite” of the horny students.

As Zhang Tie remembered that he had not spread the seeds of blueberries and hawthorn fruits on the soil in the Castle of Black Iron, Zhang Tie walked over and squatted in front of that poor girl’s booth. “What do you want in exchange for these fruits?”

Hearing Zhang Tie’s voice, the dejected girl raised her head up from her knees. Although she had freckles on her face, she looked clean and had an average figure; however, she had a pair of blue eyes that were crystal clear, much like a stream of water. She was just like an ugly duckling dwarfed by the brilliant beauties around her.

“0.25 kg of dried rations for both the wild blueberries and the hawthorn fruits. Ah, if you just give me 0.2 kg of dried rations, you can take them away. I’m also willing to trade for 0.1 kg of meat.” Feeling that Zhang Tie was slightly glancing over her body, the girl sitting on the ground leaned a bit more forward, hiding her chest behind her knees.

“Gulugulu” Clear growling sounds drifted from the stomach of that girl into Zhang Tie’s ears. At the same time, the girl lowered her head in embarrassment.

“Fine, I want them all...” Zhang Tie casually took out 0.5 kg of dried rations from his food container. After thinking for a short time, he added 0.05 kg of dried beef to the dried rations.

“This... this... is too much!” The girl was surprised; her pair of beautiful blue eyes gazed at Zhang Tie without blinking, seemingly as if she wanted to find something on Zhang Tie’s face.

“Hmm... I am a disciple of the Guardian God School. During this survival training, I want to collect some seeds from various plants. As you can see from my looks, you should know that I dig in the mines and have no time to do this. If it’s convenient for you and as long as it’s safe, could you please collect some

seeds for me? Whatever they are, I'll exchange food with you. The extra food is paid in advance." Zhang Tie casually said.

"Really?" The girl's eyes instantly became shiny.

Smiling, Zhang Tie put away the two piles of slightly unripe fruits and then pushed the dried rations and dried beef in front of the girl. His actions were more persuasive than any words. Seeing his actions, the girl firmly took the food, seemingly as if she feared Zhang Tie would change his mind.

"What's your name?"

"I am Zhang Tie!"

"After I collect seeds, how will I find you?"

"I come here often, so you don't need to come look for me. I'll come look for you!"

As he said this, Zhang Tie picked himself up and took away those fruits. After seven or eight steps away, Zhang Tie heard the timid voice from the girl behind him. "I am Pandora..."

Zhang Tie turned around and showed a smile to the girl. He then picked up a hawthorn fruit and stylishly tossed it into the air, letting it fall into his mouth; however, upon biting it, Zhang Tie instantly frowned, as it was really sour. What a failure! Seeing Zhang Tie's expression, Pandora giggled. Almost at the same time, she hurriedly covered her mouth with her hands, as she realized that she was the one who had sold him the hawthorn fruit. Raising her head to look at Zhang Tie again, she realized the black-haired adolescent with the mining basket on his back was waving at her before gradually disappearing among the crowd...

"Zhang Tie..." Pandora muttered this name several times.

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After finishing today's work, Zhang Tie felt relaxed all over. Whistling, he began to climb down the mountain while eating the sour blueberries and hawthorn fruits. He then returned to the place where he had dug in the mines. As there were still four or five hours before he would leave the mine, he could casually spend them to do whatever he wanted. At this time, the hidden mining tunnel had become the best place for him to practice cultivation. In addition, after working in the morning, there were fewer people inside the mines, and the knocking sounds became sparser.

Sitting down on the relatively clean ground in the mine as he crossed his legs, Zhang Tie entered the cultivation state. As he had just finished carrying over 100 kg iron ores to the right location, he currently felt that he was in the perfect condition, as he felt relaxed and full of strength all over. Zhang Tie had once heard that every time a person broke through their physical limits, they would see a better effect when cultivating. At this moment, he decided to give it a try for the remaining hours...

Chapter 83: Attack of the Wild Wolves

For the entire afternoon, Zhang Tie was practicing cultivation inside the mines. He felt as if time had flown really fast during the process!

When he walked out of the mining cave, the afterglow of the setting sun had already covered the entire Wild Wolf Valley with a golden color. With narrowed eyes, Zhang Tie peered over the peaceful and beautiful valley. Only after a while was Zhang Tie's able to gradually adapt to the scenery before him.

Currently, he was feeling pretty good, seemingly because of the effects of today's cultivation, which changed the color of the burning point at his rear end to a slightly red color; he never felt better. If it were not for those sparsely lit torches that reminded Zhang Tie that it was already almost dusk, Zhang Tie would have wanted to stay another several hours inside the mine to increase the amount of basic energy storage in the Castle of Black Iron.

Before leaving the mine, Zhang Tie sat in the mining tunnel he had dug in and entered the Castle of Black Iron once again. The whole process only lasted less than three minutes. Entering the Castle of Black Iron with Zhang Tie were the seeds of wild blueberries and hawthorn fruits. After rapidly running a lap around the Castle of Black Iron, Zhang Tie had casually spread the seeds onto the ground and checked the second Leakless Fruit before promptly exiting.

There was another 56 hours left before the second Leakless Fruit would become ripe. Seeing its progress, Zhang Tie felt very satisfied. However, at the same time, he felt a tinge of regret when he looked at the progress bar of the Iron Body Fruit, as it had remained unchanged. The progress of the Iron Body Fruit had probably stalled as he hasn't been to the fighting club to be a flesh bag for the past couple of days. After gazing at that unripe Iron Body Fruit for a while, Zhang Tie suddenly came to the conclusion that he was really impatient and began to curse himself inwardly.

At this moment, those horny male students at Wild Wolf Castle were pretending to be gentlemen despite thinking of dirty things as they invited girls to have supper with them. Over the course of a week, some of the horny male students had already become well acquainted with the female students as they climbed down the mountain hand in hand while chatting happily with each other. This truly made Zhang Tie unhappy and uncomfortable. At the sight of such students, he could only touch his nose and forced a self-mocking smile before heading for the tree base.

On the way back, Zhang Tie was thinking about the achievements of Barley and the other members of the Hit-Plane Brotherhood, wondering if they had successfully invited a group of girls to visit their tree base. Everything he had learned before the start of the survival training regarding the dangers in this place had already been forgotten by him. Zhang Tie himself was most likely the last person who would encounter any danger as a miner, despite having broken two records since the start of the survival training. Even if he met a wolf, would they really be able to pose any danger to him?

In the valley, as he thought of wolves, a pleasant smile drifted onto Zhang Tie's face as a night breeze blew past it. If he were to truly meet a wolf at this moment, he would only regard himself as lucky and treat it as another gift from god. Despite it being a dagger, it was still a weapon; as a LV 1 fighter with a weapon, dealing with a wild wolf was as hard as carrying 100 kg of iron ores and walking a distance of 1.5 km. Although it was somewhat hard work, it still wasn't dangerous...

However, danger would always arrive before one has become well-prepared. It would appear before you like a collapsing mountain, and if you were to make a mistake, you might be broken into pieces.

20 minutes after Zhang Tie left the mining cave, Zhang Tie had already walked several kilometers. Just as he passed by a small patch of grassland and was about to walk through it, Zhang Tie suddenly stopped.

At that moment, his heart suddenly began to pound heavily while blood all over his body rushed to his head. In a split second, Zhang Tie felt dazed and worried as his face turned pale.

Blood sense!

The same blood sense he felt when he encountered Huck and Snade.

This grassland was only half a person tall and was more than 30 m away from Zhang Tie. Beside that grassland was a path which Zhang Tie used to walk on everyday. Facing the breeze, the grass were swaying in a manner akin to wheat waving in the wind, seemingly as if something was hiding within.

Zhang Tie instantly became covered in cold sweat, as he had realized that something terrifying was staring at him within the grass. Zhang Tie didn't know whether the thing hidden in the grass was man or animal. At the same time, the first thing Zhang Tie thought about was Glaze's group, wondering whether they had set an ambush and were waiting to kill him over there.

Slowly putting down his mining basket, Zhang Tie took out the hoe from within the basket. At the same time, he pulled out the ordinary dagger which his elder brother had gifted to him in hopes that he would protect himself with it. As for that poisonous dagger gifted to him by Donder, Zhang Tie had already placed it in the Castle of Black Iron.

With two weapons in hand, Zhang Tie slightly recovered his composure. Widening his eyes, he gazed at that patch of grassland, wanting to see through what was hiding inside. If it was Glaze's group, Zhang Tie swore inwardly that he would definitely beat them fiercely...

The breeze gradually became heavier while the grass was still swaying. However, at this time, Zhang Tie saw something that were akin to rocks in the grass, which changed the form of the grass as they swayed. Before his spiritual energy had sharply increase, Zhang Tie would never have noticed such minute details; however, after his spiritual energy sharply augmented, he was easily able to capture such a slight change. Forcefully swallowing his saliva, Zhang Tie slowly moved backwards; however, the moment Zhang Tie moved backwards, those hidden rocks also moved forward, splitting the grass as they moved towards Zhang Tie step by step.

Then, a wolf drilled out from the grass with eyes fixed on Zhang Tie...

A wolf? Soon after, Zhang Tie slightly became relaxed, but at the sight of the other six wolves who drilled out from the grass, his tension once again intensified...

With red eyes, all seven wolves only glared at Zhang Tie. After looking straight into the eyes of those wolves, Zhang Tie could already feel their mood. They did not show a greedy expression like the one that would be present when they're hunting, but instead, they showed hatred—a hatred so deep that they would not let him go even after draining the last drop of his blood.

Why do these wolves hate me? Zhang Tie was completely dumbfounded. At this moment, the only thing he knew was that he would probably lose his life this time. Seeing them gradually bare their snow-white fangs as they lowered their bodies, when Zhang Tie heard "gulugulu" sounds drifting from the inside of their throats, Zhang Tie could feel all the fine hair on his body standing on their ends...

Zhang Tie instantly turned around and started to run. At that moment, he spent every single bit of effort to stride forward. Zhang Tie's mind was as clear as a crystal; various information flashed in his mind at the same time...

Currently, he was no less than 30 m away apart from the wolves. If he didn't spend every ounce of his effort into escaping, then with his current speed, he would only have a bit more than 20 seconds before they caught him, as he was not their match in terms of speed with his current capabilities...

Once they caught up, he would have less than 30 seconds to choose between life and death choices. Within those 30 seconds, he could only try his best to kill one or two wolves; however, the time it took him to do that was enough for the remaining wolves to tear through his stomach or crush his throat. The moment he was knocked down against those wolves, he would be doomed ...

If he wanted to enter the Castle of Black Iron, he needed at least ten seconds—no, nine seconds. In order to enter, he would need to be calm, which meant that he could not be disturbed during the nine seconds before he entered the Castle of Black Iron. Obviously, he did not have enough time at this instance, and the Castle of Black Iron would not be able to help him get out of his current predicament...

As there was nobody nearby, Zhang Tie realized that nobody would be able to save him within 50 seconds, thus he only had one choice: he had to disappear from the sight of those wolves within the next 20 seconds since he would be killed the moment they caught up...

He could neither run as fast as the wolves nor could he rely on other people. His last beacon of hope was to take advantage of the topography and trees 200 m behind him.

The best terrain to take advantage of would be water, assuming it was present. Unfortunately, there was no water nearby; however, luckily, there were many trees behind him. The fact that he was not the least bit good at climbing trees implied that he wouldn't be able to reach a safe height. At this moment, the last choice appeared in his mind, one which might be his last beacon of hope.

The train of thoughts almost flashed in Zhang Tie's mind within 0.1 second. Within such a short period, Zhang Tie had already determined his final plan to escape. If it were the others, 90% of them would choose to escape towards the direction of Wild Wolf Castle, where it was populated, dreaming about a slight chance of surviving against the pursuit of the wolves; however, Zhang Tie realized that this choice would not work for him—if he chose this option, he would die within fifty seconds. The other 10% would just escape without knowing the direction, as they just wanted to stay away from those wolves, resulting in most of them dying even faster than the other 90% who would die within fifty seconds. Zhang Tie didn't choose this option either. Instead, he chose to rapidly run towards a specific place for the last beacon of hope...

Certainly, it was not enough to just escape. He would never give up, not even losing a bit of hope. As an adolescent with great ambitions in the new age, he could not follow the masses and just wait for death; therefore, the moment he turned around to escape, Zhang Tie used all his efforts to shriek loudly, creating a really terrifying shriek.

"Help..."

Such a voice shocked numerous birds in the valley, causing them all to fly away...

After such a high-pitched shriek, Zhang Tie used all of his strength to run, closely followed by the seven red-eyed wild wolves. They gradually narrowed the distance between them and Zhang Tie.

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As expected, the last “help” was heard by more than thirty male and female students who were roasting meat on the top of a hill more than three hundred meters away. In a split second, they hurriedly took up their weapons and ran out of the woods. One of them was that red-haired beauty who had previously kicked Zhang Tie. From the top of the hill, they witnessed the “final seconds” of Zhang Tie in this world...

The wolves had finally caught up with Zhang Tie, and some of them charged at him, yet their attacks were avoided by him. As if he had an eye on the back of his head, the moment a wolf jumped into the air towards him, he would swiftly move to the side while raising his dagger and slashing the stomach of the wolf. Another wolf charged at him, yet its lower jaw was ferociously smashed by a hoe, causing it to give a miserable howl that was even more high-pitched than Zhang Tie’s “help” that had drifted to their ears. Meanwhile, another wolf had already fiercely bitten Zhang Tie’s shin, pulling him down onto the ground. As the other wolves pounced towards him, the youth instantly stabbed out his dagger at the wolf that was biting his shin. Pulling away the wolf using one hand, he jumped into a jet black hole beside him...

The decisiveness and braveness of Zhang Tie’s “final seconds” deeply shocked those boys and girls who stood on the top of the hill. Seeing Zhang Tie jumping into that bottomless hole, tears began to drip from the faces of many girls. Among them, only Kristine could recognize that boy who was fighting wolves using his hoe.

Perhaps I shouldn’t have kicked him while we were in the square even though he had thought about doing that with me in his mind...

Thinking about this, Kristine slightly felt guilty. As a breeze blew over her face, the girl suddenly felt a slight chill on her face...

For the commoners, they were in an age where youth was as short as the morning dew, while life was as short as a straw.

Chapter 84: A Life and Death Situation

Rolling into that jet-black hole, Zhang Tie quickly pulled out the dagger that had been stabbed in the wolf and stabbed it again. Within a short span of time, he had already stabbed that wolf’s heart and stomach four times before finally feeling the jaw of the wolf who had bit his shin completely lose its strength.

At this moment, he had completely forgotten the injury on his shin. Raising his head, he kept his eyes fixed on the constantly narrowing space ahead... As one of the deepest cave left by the Gold-Eating Boas in Wild Wolf Valley, this was a bottomless pitch-dark hole with a diameter greater than three meters and was also the only chance for Zhang Tie to survive the attack of the wolves.

Being closely chased by seven wolves, Zhang Tie could only survive by doing two actions. The first action he had to take was to jump into the hole before being caught by the wolves within 20 seconds, which he

finally successfully accomplished despite being injured. The second action depended on luck; if this cave completely led to the ground without any obstructions, then he would fall to the ground and die miserably—though, that would still be better than turning into wolf sh*t.

Zhang Tie was betting his life in this wager; however, he did have two assumptions on which he based his actions on. The first assumption was that Gold-Eating Boas would not be that silly to drill a hole like a well, which directly led to the ground, and would always have curved paths, thus Zhang Tie thought that as long as there were any curved sections in the hole that did not lead to the ground, then he would be able to save himself.

The second assumption was that the wolves would not follow him and jump into this pitch black hollow. Zhang Tie was right with this assumption, though the wolves did linger around the mouth of the hole for quite a while. From this point forward, Zhang Tie would have to rely on his first assumption—whether the first turn would appear before Zhang Tie fell to the ground and died a miserable death.

Zhang Tie dropped at a fast speed together with the wolf. By the time he had stabbed the wolf four times, the tunnel had already become completely dark since the sunlight could no longer reach inside.

Zhang Tie and the wolf continued to fall inside that cave...

Even Zhang Tie himself didn't know why he was currently extremely calm despite the critical situation. Although he was also afraid of death, Zhang Tie currently felt no emotions and was precisely like a machine that was calculating and outputting data... Interestingly enough, at that moment, Zhang Tie was not thinking about life or death, but rather right or wrong...

At this moment, when Zhang Tie raised his head to look at the mouth of the tunnel from within, he had already calculated within 0.1 seconds that he was just 10-15 away from it, meaning that he had already been falling inside the hole for 1-2 seconds. He even thought of the formula he had learned at school: $D = D'(2t - 1)$, where D is the distance he had fell in the cave and D' was the free falling distance within the first second, which was 5m on the Kun'ang Continent. Using this formula, Zhang Tie could easily calculate the time which was safe to land. He would fall 5 meters in the first second, 15 meters in the next second, 25 meters in the third second, and 35 meters in the fourth second. He gave up calculating the falling distance for the fifth second. Even if there was a turn or a slope less than 90° after four seconds, on the premise that his bones were not as hard as stones, he would definitely become heavily wounded or die the moment he hit the ground or the walls inside.

"Will I be the first person to die during this survival training? I'm still a virgin, f*ck!"

A thought flashed by in his mind. Zhang Tie, who was free falling, used his feet to clamp onto the wild wolf that was under him, using it as a cushion, and tightly clasped the hoe...

Zhang Tie's fate depended on the next three seconds. Although three seconds would pass by very fast for someone else, for Zhang Tie, three seconds would feel as long as thirty seconds when he concentrated his spiritual energy.

As a matter of fact, god didn't abandon Zhang Tie. Between the third second and the fourth second after he had fallen in—to be precise, right after the third second—that critical turn finally arrived, and the inclination became about 70 to 80 degrees. Certainly, Zhang Tie had no time to measure the concrete inclination. As he fell, when Zhang Tie felt the wild wolf beneath him hit something, he instinctively

stabbed the hoe into the rocks, causing the sparks flying from the friction between the hoe and the rocks to illuminate Zhang Tie's serious face, one which showed his desire to survive. He felt as if his arms were breaking, but he also felt his speed decreasing. Finally, his legs hit a surface. To soften the impact, he instantly began to roll along the steep walls like a ball of meatball, rolling times within a short span of time.

Even Zhang Tie himself did not know how long he had been in the darkness. His body continued to roll several times and collided with many things before finally a huge collision came, causing Zhang Tie's consciousness to fade into darkness.

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When Zhang Tie lost consciousness, the news of a black-haired miner being attacked to death by seven wild wolves 3.5km away from Wild Wolf Castle had already spread and shocked many people.

The news was first brought back to Wild Wolf Castle by the students who had witnessed Zhang Tie's "heroic" actions before he jumped into the deep hole. Hearing the news, everyone in Wild Wolf Castle was shocked.

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"I heard that a male student was bitten to death by wolves..."

"That's right! But I heard he was really brave and had killed three wolves before being killed!"

"Where were his partners? Which team did he belong to? How could a brave male student like him face those wild beasts alone?"

"He's alone and did not belong to any team. I heard he's a black-haired miner"

"What a pity..."

In a room with many girls in the inner castle of Wild Wolf Castle, two female students were talking about the event that had transpired. Without paying too much attention to their surroundings, one of the two girls described the guy who was killed by the wolves as a "black-haired miner". Hearing her words, a girl who was quietly eating dried rations in a corner of the room suddenly became stiff all over. Then, along with her pearl-like tears, the dried rations fell from her hands, and she lowered her head as she hugged her knees as tightly as she could before finally hiding in a dark corner in the room.

"Pandora, could you not stay in the corner all day and scare everyone? If you like that corner that much, why not directly move your quilt over or just move out of this room? That way, we wouldn't have to stay with a hapless woman like you..."

"That's right! How could we be so unlucky to have been assigned to stay with this unlucky star? These past few days when I went out to search for wild vegetables, I was almost bitten by a poisonous snake..." Another two girls entered the room and began to fiercely curse the moment they saw the figure in the corner, not caring in the least about how that girl in the corner felt.

Hearing their criticism, Pandora, the curled up figure in the corner, didn't utter a single word. She simply just stretched out her hand from the shadow and picked up the tear-stained dried ration on the ground and continued to eat it silently...

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As for the other members of the Hit-Plane Brotherhood, it was time for supper, yet they realized that Zhang Tie had not yet returned. After waiting for him for a while, they started to realize that something bad had happened to Zhang Tie, thus while two of them remained to keep watch of the tree base, Barley, Leit, Doug, and Bagdad left the tree base. Agreeing with Leit's suggestion, they lit torches and began to search for Zhang Tie along the route he usually took when walking to the mine while Doug, who carried the terrifying machine bow, walked at the front. About halfway to the mine and about several hundred meters from where Zhang Tie had encountered the seven wolves, they saw many jumping lights, as many people were gathered there with burning torches, causing them to stare at each other in confusion. Barley's group of four rushed over and pulled one of the student's hand, asking about what was happening.

"Haven't you heard the news?" that male student even curiously asked Barley.

"What news?"

"In the evening, a student who did mining work was mauled by seven wild wolves to death. He was a really great guy. It's said that he had killed three wild wolves before being killed..."

Hearing this news, the faces of the group of Barley instantly turned pale. Thinking that Zhang Tie was not powerful enough to kill three wolves at once, Barley asked in a quivering voice, "Do you know that miner's name?"

"The castle officials had verified it just now. He's a Chinese student called Zhang Tie!"

"Bighead..." Doug growled like a wolf as he rushed towards the most crowded place with the most burning torches. In his opinion, Zhang Tie's corpse must have been too horrible to see.

When the four of them rushed ahead with red eyes, they gaped at the scene as the site was surrounded by a group of on-duty students who were wearing red armbands with torches in hand. Nobody was allowed to get any closer, but through the crowd, they were able to see a terrifying, jet-black hole and the corpse of two wild wolves. Several teachers were standing over there, discussing something, while Zhang Tie's corpse could not be seen.

"Zhang Tie, Zhang Tie, he's our brother. We want to see him!" Barley shouted...

"Quiet, I heard Zhang Tie already rolled into the hole with a wolf. Captain Kerlin and the other teachers were talking about how to scoop him out of there..." a student who was responsible for keeping order and protecting the scene warned them.

"Bighead fell into that hole..." Seeing that terrifying hole, a slight bit of hope could be seen shimmering in the eyes of Barley and Doug...

"Mr. Zerom..." Seeing a teacher coming over here, many on-duty students greeted him. Nodding towards them, the teacher entered the site and walked towards several teachers from the Temporary Supervision Committee and Captain Kerlin...

Chapter 85: Surviving the Wild Wolves' Attack

Mr. Zerom passed by the students and walked towards the other teachers of the Temporary Supervision Committee. As casualties would happen every year during the survival training, the Temporary Supervision Committee, despite being the ones to organize the survival training, were not responsible for any student casualties; however, they were expected to give a reasonable explanation to the student's school as well as to the student's parents. All seven teachers of the Temporary Supervision Committee were expected to report on that incident. Although the report was systematic, it was also very necessary. After all, it was a matter of life. Although the teachers and coaches didn't have to take responsibility for it, they should at the very least clearly explain to the parents how their child had died.

After receiving the news about Zhang Tie in Wild Wolf Castle, Captain Kerlin, Mr. Zerom, and the other five teachers and coaches soon arrived at where Zhang Tie had encountered the attack; they had come to to investigate what had happened.

Mr. Zerom was the best among them at drawing information from trivial clues. Walking along the path between where Zhang Tie had dropped his basket and the jet-black hole twice, he had even lowered his body by the patch of grass, the place where the wild wolves had set ambush, for a short while before returning to the other members of the Temporary Supervision Committee with a strange look on his face.

"How is it, Zerom?" Captain Kerlin's face was slightly dark. He remembered that Zhang Tie was one of the rare students among the undergraduates who were able to impress him. He would never have thought that it would have been Zhang Tie who was attacked by the wolves. This really made him depressed, as what happened to Zhang Tie reminded him of those days when his comrades-in-arms and friends left the mortal world during a battle.

"That is terrifying, really terrifying..." Mr. Zerom looked very solemn.

"Certainly. For someone to encounter such an incident, it is truly terrifying. These kinds of incidents have not occurred in more than a decade within the area 5 km from Wild Wolf Castle. As the guards from the castle always swept the areas near the castle, the wolves had become too afraid to appear at all. Nobody knows why a group of wolves would suddenly appear in an area so close to the castle." At the sight of the two corpses of wolves on the ground, a female teacher slightly shook her head and sighed. "What a pity! Judging from the wounds on the bodies of the wild wolves and what the students who saw the fight had said, this student called Zhang Tie should be quite formidable if he didn't die. From his braveness, his decisiveness, and his intelligence, Zhang Tie should already be among the best of those at his age..."

"I didn't mean this incident is terrifying. I meant that the student called Zhang Tie is terrifying..." Zerom shook his head. Hearing his comments, all the other teachers looked over at Zerom.

"What do you mean by that student is terrifying?" one teacher asked.

Zerom replied with a slight smile. Then, he turned around and talked to Captain Kerlin. "How did this student usually perform at school? Was he one of the recommended students from your school?"

"He was pretty normal at school and had no outstanding performance during the past three years. He was only a bit smart and had a good temperament..." Slightly frowning, although Captain Kerlin did not like the way Zerom spoke, he still answered truthfully and added, "Oh, I almost forgot. This guy was also

good at escaping and bringing benefits to himself. As for the recommended students, everybody at school had a good impression of Glaze and Burwick. Currently, Zhang Tie hasn't yet been qualified to be recommended. Zerom, why are you asking this? What do you mean by Zhang Tie is terrifying?"

"He's not worth your recommendation?" Zerom looked in surprise at Captain Kerlin and smiled. "Such an excellent student, yet you don't have a favorable impression of him? After surveying the route from the patch of grass over there to this black hole, I have done some mental calculations. Do you guys know what I have discovered?"

"What?"

"In order to save his own life, that student had already decided to jump into this black hole the moment he saw the seven wild wolves drilling out of the grass."

"Is that very special?" a teacher dubiously asked. "I didn't see anything out of place over there. If he knows he's weak, isn't it just a human's natural instinct to run away from wild wolves?"

"Of course it's strange..." Zerom solemnly replied. "It's true that it's human instinct to run when confronted with danger; however, what makes it terrifying is knowing how to escape in face of danger. This black hole is about 200 meters away from where he had encountered the wolves, and it is also the only place within the area where he would have a chance to escape from the wolves. In most cases, people would choose to run towards Wild Wolf Castle or to any other populated areas, but this guy escaped towards this black hole, which is the best path of survival for him. That's why I said he was terrifying. The moment he began to escape, he had already calculated the various possibilities of survival in every direction and had even calculated the time he had before he would be caught by the wolves and the distance he could run within that time..."

Seeing as how some of the members of the Temporary Supervision Committee were still confused about what he had said, Zerom drew a point on the ground using a twig. "Let's use this point as the place where Zhang Tie had encountered the wolves..." Surrounding that point, Zerom drew a circle. "This circle represents the farthest he can get before he would be caught by the wolves. It's about 200m..." After he finished drawing the circle, Zerom marked a spot on the edge of the circle. "And this is the position of the black hole, which is also where we currently are. The only place he could escape from those wolves is precisely this point. If it were any other point within the circle, that guy would have been torn apart by the wolves. That's why I said this student called Zhang Tie is terrifying. For him to be able to precisely choose his best route of survival among thousands of choices before the wolves began their chase—that is truly terrifying!"

This time, everybody understood. Looking at the two points on the ground, everybody became slightly shocked. Like Zerom had said, starting from the center point, there were many places where one could run to escape from the pursuing wolves. Thankfully, the route Zhang Tie had chosen was the only one with a little hope.

"What if... it was a coincidence?" a teacher asked in doubt after hesitating. To make such a precise judgement at such a critical moment, let alone students, even teachers couldn't do it.

"Don't forget, the students mentioned that the guy had brought a hoe with him when he was escaping..."

“Is that special? Isn’t it just human instinct to pull out a weapon when chased by wolves?”

“His weapon was a dagger, not a hoe. Using a hoe would slow him down when he’s escaping, so the only reason for the hoe was to look for an opportunity when he jumped into the dark hole. Since the hole was dug by a Gold-Eating Boa, they would not lead straight to the ground. Once he finds a slope that’s not too steep, he would be able to use the hoe to slow down his falling speed...”

“So you’re saying, Zhang Tie might still be alive?” Captain Kerlin curiously opened his mouth and looked at the black hole before turning back to Zerom.

“In my memory, guys like him are hard to kill, and their resilience is usually greater than a cockroach’s!”

“I want to go inside!” Captain Kerlin said.

“I will accompany you when the rope is sent here from the castle...” Rubbing his jaw with one hand, Zerom was filled with curiosity about the guy called Zhang Tie. It was rare to see a student be able to calmly make precise decisions in such dire moments.

Carried by more than twenty students and on-duty teachers, the ropes from Wild Wolf Castle soon arrived. The ropes were all standard reinforced ones purchased from Blackhot City’s military. They were as broad as an adult’s thumb, were resistant to wear and tear, and had a good grip. It was not a problem to use this rope to lift things that were heavier than 2 tons. After tying all the ropes together, it measured to be more than 400 m in length.

“These are the longest ropes that could be bought in Wild Wolf Castle. However, as no one knows how deep these Gold-Eating Boas’ holes are, if we cannot find him even after using all the rope, then we will have to give up!” Zerom looked at Captain Kerlin.

Captain Kerlin nodded. “If it’s as you say, then we can only blame that guy’s bad luck. We will just have to try our best to find him. If we don’t go inside to take a look, it won’t be good for our conscience either.”

After fastening one end of the rope onto a rock that was as tall as a person and more than 20 meters away from the mouth of the hole, Captain Kerlin and Zerom both tied the other end of the rope on themselves and took a green fluorite bar and jumped into the black hole one after the other...

Facing a bottomless hole dug by a Gold-Eating Boa, not even Captain Kerlin and Zerom dared to make a mistake.

Seeing them jumping into the hole one after the other, the onlooking students exclaimed...

By the time they were 20 meters deep, they could only rely on their fluorite bars. Holding onto the advanced fluorite bar, Zerom gazed at the walls on the interior. At the first turn, Zerom became spirited and pointed at the fresh marks on the wall. Marks created by a hoe could be easily seen among the swirl marks left by the Gold-Eating Boas.

“This is where the hoes have touched. Look here, these marks were made from falling over here. That guy called Zhang Tie really used a hoe to escape. He’s really smart...” After approving of his own deduction, Zerom’s eyes became spirited and he became more interested in Zhang Tie.

Captain Kerlin was also extremely excited. He could have never thought that Zhang Tie was not only good at talking, but also really good at escaping.

At the sight of the marks left by Zhang Tie using his hoes, the two continued to slide downwards along the rope. On the way, they had seen the marks left by Zhang Tie many times; some were deep, others were shallow, but they were all as fresh as new road marks. Although there were split paths in the hole, they could still find the right direction by using the fresh marks on the walls...

People at the mouth of the hole could not clearly see what was happening inside. They could only see the rope gradually disappearing like a strand of noodle in the huge black hole, section by section. 20m, 30m, 50m, 80m, 100m, 120m, 150m, 170m...

As the rope fell, the people who stood at the mouth of the hole became increasingly worried for Zhang Tie's life, as he had fallen to such a depth.

Thankfully, the rope finally stopped after falling 190m. After several minutes, as was agreed in advance, Captain Kerlin and Zerom forcefully tugged the rope three consecutive times. Feeling that, the people at the mouth of the hole started to pull the rope together. Compared to the slow descent of the rope, they were pulled up much faster than before, especially because high-level fighters like Captain Kerlin and Zerom were able to easily climb up by stepping on the protrusions on the walls...

Several minutes later, before the other end of the rope was pulled out, a long exclamation drifted from within the hollow, followed by Captain Kerlin and Zerom flying out of the hole like two huge birds. The moment Captain Kerlin reached the ground, everybody shot their eyes on the figure bound on Captain Kerlin's back.

"Zhang Tie is still alive. He's just passed out..."

Hearing Captain Kerlin's thrilled exclamation, the members of the Hit-Plane Brotherhood in the crowd almost jumped, and every onlooker cheered. For everyone present, this really was a miracle. If they hadn't witnessed it first hand, they would never believe that a person who fell into the jet-black hole would still be alive. That guy was truly more resilient than a cockroach...

"Pah!" Zerom tossed the corpse of the wild wolf and Zhang Tie's hoe onto the ground. At the sight of them, the onlookers were really shocked. Not only was that guy more resilient than a cockroach, he seemed to be very strong as well, as he was able to kill three wolves at once ...

At the sight of that dead wolf that was as soft as a kid's toy on the ground, Zerom rubbed his chin, realizing that Zhang Tie was even sharper than he had initially thought. Not only did he think of using the hoe to save himself as he fell down the hole, he also thought of using the dead wolf's body as a cushion to lessen the impact. If it were not for the corpse of the wolf, Zhang Tie would definitely have broken a few bones. Currently, with the exception of a few bruises and wounds on his legs and the other part of his body, there were no other injuries. That was definitely a miracle. It was rare to see such a student...

As everyone was cheering, the faces of two people who stood at the edge of the crowd turned pale as they stealthily left when they heard that Zhang Tie was fine.

As Zhang Tie had still suffered from some bruises and wounds and was unconscious, Captain Kerlin decided to take Zhang Tie back to Wild Wolf Castle.

Everything Captain Kerlin had seen in the hole had given him a favorable impression of Zhang Tie. He realized that if he were the one who jumped into the hole at Zhang Tie's age, then he would definitely have died. Thankfully, that guy even thought of bringing a hoe with him when he escaped. If it wasn't for the hoe, which helped him slow down his falling speed, then at the slope 100m deep, all of his bones would most likely have shattered, leaving no complete bone.

The moment they brought Zhang Tie out of the hole and declared that he was still alive, Zerom had silently observed the people at the edge of the encompassing crowd. Finally, as the other students cheered, he saw two people silently leave the crowd. Narrowing his eyes, Zerom burned the figures of the two individuals into his mind...

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Half an hour later at a place far away from the location of the incident, Glaze's group were settled in their mountain cave. Upon hearing Zuhair and Garner's report, everybody became still like wooden chickens.

"You're saying that Zhang Tie is still alive? How could that be!? Even if those wild wolves didn't kill him, he definitely should have died after jumping into that pitch black hole that is several hundred meters in depth! Is he made of iron? How could he still be alive?" Sharon uttered.

"Everyone saw Captain Kerlin and Zerom bring Zhang Tie back and place him on the ground. They had tied a rope on themselves and lowered themselves about 200m before they were able to find Zhang Tie and pull him out of there..." As he said this, even Zuhair sighed. "That fellow's luck is really too good. How could he have survived from falling in such a deep hole?"

"F*ck!" Thinking of the vast amount of effort he had spent to set the trap and the fact that Zhang Tie was still alive, Glaze became infuriated. "Zuhair, please tell me, what should I do now? Is there any other way to kill him?"

Hearing Glaze's words, Zuhair's face slightly turned pale. "This incident has already gotten the attention of the Temporary Supervision Committee. If what we have done is known by the others, we will all be dealt a severe punishment. Not to mention that I feel like Zerom, the guy who was responsible for investigating the scene, has already noticed something amiss. If we were to continue to set up Zhang Tie again, I'm afraid it would too be too risky..."

"You're saying we should call it an end?" Glaze asked with wide opened eyes. Whenever Glaze thought about how he had been set up by Zhang Tie twice, he would always feel as if that was the greatest shame in his entire life.

"We will have to temporarily call it an end. Right now, there's too much attention on Zhang Tie, not to mention we did this to teach him a lesson. When you reach LV 3 and acquire the recommendation from the school, it still won't be too late. We will think of a way to deal with him when we return to Blackhot City. If we keep trying now, we will be putting ourselves in great danger!"

No matter how unwilling Glaze was, he had no choice but to agree with Zuhair's suggestion. "Okay, let him alive a few more days. When we return to Blackhot City, we will think of another way to deal with him..."

Realizing that Zhang Tie would not be as easily killed as he thought, Glaze began to feel a little fear towards him.

“Thankfully, Zhang Tie could never match my strength,” Glaze comforted himself. “Dad is right. In the secular world, people are always respected by their strength and fist. If I have an overwhelming strength that can beat him to the point of despair, then I can deal with him with whatever means I want in the future.”

Chapter 86: Waking Up

Feeling a slight itch on his shin, Zhang Tie finally woke up. Opening his eyes, the first thing Zhang Tie saw was an aged green stone roof. After thinking for a while, he remembered what had happened to him.

Wolves... black hole... endless rolling inside the hole, and that huge shock that made him lose his consciousness.

“Am I still alive?” Zhang Tie pinched his face and felt pain. He then touched all over his body, from his toes to his head, and had found nothing amiss, even his p*nis was completely fine. With the exception of many bruises and wounds, which were not very severe, he was completely fine.

“Haha...” Sitting on the bed, Zhang Tie burst out into laughter.

Hearing his laughter in the quiet house, the door to the room was pushed open as a man fiercely rushed in. “Bighead, you’re awake! That’s great! Haha!”

The person who rushed in immediately pressed Zhang Tie back onto the bed, causing Zhang Tie to shriek due to feeling a sharp pain on his shin. “Ah! Scumbag, my leg! You’re pressing down on my leg...”

Hearing Zhang Tie’s shriek, Doug hurriedly moved his hand away from Zhang Tie’s leg and stood to the side. Scratching his head like a fool, Doug apologized, “Hey, hey, I’m sorry. I forgot that your shin was injured...”

With just a small amount of effort, Zhang Tie’s forehead was already covered in sweat as his face twitched due to the pain. After taking in two deep breaths, he felt much better. “Where am I? Why am I here?”

“We are in the outer castle of Wild Wolf Castle. That day when you fell into the hole, Captain Kerlin and Mr. Zerom went to get you out of the hole on the same evening. You are really lucky. I heard that 30m deep, there were several long slopes, and there were even some slopes that led people 200m deep in. Only after Captain Kerlin and Zerom went 200m deep were they able to find you. When they found you, you were wounded and in a coma, so they sent you here to receive treatment and to recuperate. Only those who were heavily injured and lost their ability to move could enjoy the treatment you’re receiving right now...” Doug couldn’t help pour out what had happened in the past two days.

Only those heavily injured could enjoy such treatment? Zhang Tie looked around, only to find an extremely large room that had more than 10 beds with clean sheets; it seemed like a ward. There was also the smell of disinfectant in this room. Judging from this, Zhang Tie realized that it truly was a ward, one which was occupied by the wounded people in the outer castle of Wild Wolf Castle.

“How long have I been in a coma for?”

“Including the evening from two days ago and yesterday, you’ve been asleep for two days!”

“I’ve been in a coma for two days?” Zhang Tie was surprised when he heard Doug’s reply. “Oh, who’s that Mr. Zerom guy?”

“Yeah, you’ve been in a coma for two days already. That Zerom fellow is responsible for Second National Male Middle School. You should have an impression of him. He’s skinny, pale, and looks cunning.” As Doug continued to speak, Zhang Tie had already caught sight of a “skinny, pale guy who looks cunning” entering through the door.

Zhang Tie hurriedly signaled Doug with his eyes that someone had entered the room and had even pulled on his clothes in an attempt to signal him; however, as Doug was always stupid in these critical moments, he didn’t understand even a bit of what Zhang Tie was trying to say. Instead, he had even asked:

“Why are you pulling me? I didn’t say anything wrong. I really mean it. That Zerom guy really does look like cunning, and when he smiles, it gives everyone a creepy feeling...”

“If you’re trying to say that I look cunning, then, I can understand that you’re jealous of my handsome face, but if you’re trying to say I’m cunning, then my only understanding is that you’re trying to slander a member of the Temporary Supervision Committee!” As he said this, Zerom entered the room.

Zhang Tie helplessly greeted, “Mr. Zerom!”

Hearing those words, Doug’s face turned pale. After sending Zhang Tie a reprimanding look, he stiffly turned around and staggered, “Mr. Ze... Zerom!”

“You’re Doug, right? Can you tell me... when the Andaman Alliance’s wartime decree is active, how are those who slanders the members of the Wartime Management Committee dealt with?” Zerom showed a very cunning smile.

Hearing Zerom’s question. Doug’s body trembled all over. If he was holding a winnowing fan, he would have already finished screening the wheat bran[1]. His jaw was shaking so much that his teeth would often hit each other. In times when the Andaman Alliance’s wartime decree was active, anyone who slandered a member of the Wartime Management Committee would be punished with at least being sent behind bars, with the worst punishment being the death penalty.

Zhang Tie was also scared to the point where his face turned pale. “Mr Zerom, Doug he...”

As he walked towards them, Zerom stopped by Doug and kicked him on the butt, sending him away. “This is my punishment for you...”

Doug, at this moment, became docile. After being kicked, he immediately ran out the door and turned his head towards Zhang Tie as he grimaced before escaping as fast as he could and soon disappeared.

Zerom was not a bad person; that was Zhang Tie’s first impression of him. In general, those teachers who would kick their student’s butt as a joke were always not a bad person inside.

"Thank you, Mr. Zerom. Doug just told me about what had happened after I fell into a coma. I was just about to go and thank you!" Zhang Tie said as he tried getting off the bed.

"It's fine, you don't need to move. You still need to rest your leg for another two days. Also, there's no need to thank me. If too many students die during the survival training, then we teachers will lose face!" Zerom casually moved his hand towards Zhang Tie to stop him from getting off the bed before taking a seat beside Zhang Tie. "That's right, that day, how did you decide to jump into that hole to survive? In that scenario, the choice most people would choose would be different than yours. Not to mention that hole was deep. In order to jump into that hole, the amount of courage needed would be no less than facing the seven wolves alone. Since the unknown makes people terrified, that bottomless hole would be terrifying even for people who are stronger than you. Even they would not dare to jump in."

Hearing Zerom's question, Zhang Tie felt a little embarrassed and began to scratch his head as he poured out his thought process during the escape. "I also don't know why either, but that day when I saw the wolves drill out from the grass and charged at me, that's what I thought. I knew my only hope of survival was that hole. I knew that my life would be determined in the next 20 seconds. At that time, I knew that if I ran to any other direction, I would have been killed. That's what I thought, and that's why I did that. Is there a problem, Mr. Zerom?"

"No, you did pretty well and nobody else could do better than you at that moment..." Zerom was at a loss of words. With a smile, he then said, "Earlier, I was just wondering how you were able to think of such an amazing and precise move in such a short period of time. Now I understand. It seems to be one of your talents, one which allows you to remain calm and make precise decisions in face of danger..."

"That's also considered talent?" Zhang Tie became a little embarrassed, as he assumed that it was related to the marvelous tree. Miss Daina had once said that people's thoughts also consumed the body's energy, so in that case, he was able to remain calm and didn't have any other distracting thoughts because all the distracting thoughts at that moment were routed to that small tree. Zhang Tie was also curious at this moment, as he did not realize that he had this talent before.

Certainly, Zerom didn't know what Zhang Tie was really thinking at this moment. He simply responded to Zhang Tie's question in a serious matter, "Of course. More than 99% of people in your situation would not be as calm as you. They wouldn't be able to make such a precise and sharp decision in face of danger. Earlier, Kerlin had said that you were good at escaping. It seems that you truly are the best at escaping..."

Facing such weird praise, Zhang Tie could only force a smile. Meanwhile, he remembered that guy who was responsible for collecting mining ores. Did all the guys from Second National Male Middle School learn this weird way of talking from Zerom?

"Oh, have you ignited your Shrine burning point yet?"

"Yea, I have ignited it three days ago!"

Since what he had done to the wolves had surpassed the limit of any Lv 0 fighter, who would not be able to kill three wolves at once, it was no longer a secret. If he continued to tell a lie at this point, he would just be too foolish. Many great guys have already stood out during the survival training, and even

several girls have ignited their Shrine burning point. For Zhang Tie to release the news that he has also ignited his Shrine burning point, it wouldn't catch too much attention.

Sure enough, hearing Zhang Tie's response, Zerom showed an expression that seemed to say it was expected. Without asking too many questions, he only encouraged Zhang Tie to diligently continue to cultivate before moving on to the next subject.

"Wolves are a type of very smart animal. A lone wolf might extend to populated areas to hunt preys or just to wander around, but a pack of wolves would rarely be seen here, as it would be very dangerous for them to do so. It's also possible for a single wolf to be insane, but it's impossible for a pack of wolves to be insane. In the past decade or so, after the exterminating operation from the guards of Wild Wolf Castle, packs of wild wolves were rarely seen. In the incident that you encountered, there was no other evidence found, so the Temporary Supervision Committee concluded that it was just an unexpected incident. However, you should understand what I'm trying to tell you!" Although Zerom didn't explicitly say it and only implied it, Zhang Tie was still able to grasp the meaning behind his words.

"Teacher, are you trying to say someone set me up?" The look on Zhang Tie's face changed again.

"That's not what I said. I only said that this attack was very unnatural, and there might be someone behind it. I like smart students and I have a good impression of you, so I wanted to give you a warning. You should take care of yourself and try not to move alone for the remainder of the survival training!" Zerom straightforwardly put it.

"Are there people who could control packs of wolves?" Zhang Tie showed an amazed look.

At the sight of Zhang Tie's amazed look, Zerom only showed a slight smile. "It's not difficult to control a pack of wolves. If you can meet an beast tamer or one of the wild guards of the Guardian God School, you will find that it is pretty easy for them to control animals. They could even easily control a pack of wolves and could also determine where they will appear, when they will appear, and which people they will attack. Things like this are not uncommon in this world..."

.....

After Zerom left, Zhang Tie began to deeply reflect over their conversation. Although his last words were an implication, Zhang Tie realized that he was obviously telling Zhang Tie to be careful. After thinking for quite a while, with the exception of Glaze's group, he couldn't think of anyone else who would set him up. Were they the culprits?

After Zerom left, Doug stealthily returned again. From Doug's tone, Zhang Tie realized that the three wolves he had killed made him greatly valuable in the eyes of the others...

[1] Winnowing fan was used in processing grains. Specifically, using the winnowing fan, separates the grain from the chaff. More information is available on Wikipedia:
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winnowing>

Chapter 87: The Most Valuable Thing

After dealing with the corpses of the three wolves, while Zhang Tie recuperated in the ward, the Hit-Plane Brotherhood got to experience the pleasures of being rich. Barley exchanged the 100-odd kg of wolf meat for 40 kg of dried rations and 20 kg of dried meat.

Wolf meat, fresh wolf meat especially, was very popular among male students. According to the “market price” in the square of Wild Wolf Castle, 1 kg of fresh wolf meat could be exchanged for 1 kg of dried rations or 3 kg of dried meat from other people. For those who were able to acquire dried rations and other types of food that were not meat, they were very much willing to do business, as such business could benefit both sides. One side could acquire some fresh meat, while the other side could get dried rations, which could be easily preserved.

In addition to food, the three wolf hides could, under the evaluation of Barley, be sold. Although one of the wolf hides was in poor condition, the other two could sell for at least 20 silver coins. With this amount of money, they had half of the total amount needed for Zhang Tie’s circumcision.

60 kg of food and 20 silver coins was the “wealth” that Zhang Tie had accidentally acquired almost at the expense of his life. The other members of the Hit-Plane Brotherhood insisted for Zhang Tie to take it; however, Zhang Tie decided to leave half of the food to be shared among the Hit-Plane Brotherhood. Hearing Zhang Tie’s intention, the guys all shook their heads as fast as possible.

“Bighead, you risked your life to get this food. How could we even be in the mood to eat it...” Barley said.

“Right, if we ate it, it won’t bode well for our conscience!” Leit added.

“Yea, eating it would be like eating your flesh. It would be too miserable!” Doug also replied.

Seeing everybody nod, Zhang Tie decided to not talk about food anymore. Additionally, as he had expected, the fact regarding him already having ignited his Shrine burning point didn’t have too much of an effect.

After learning that Zhang Tie had ignited his Shrine burning point when he visited Zhang Tie at the hospital, Bagdad ferociously patted Zhang Tie’s shoulder before grabbing onto his shoulders and heavily shook him. “This rascal! I never thought that the first person to ignite their Shrine burning point in the Hit-Plane Brotherhood would be you! It should’ve been me who broke that record. You are truly too excessive. Not only did you ignite your Shrine burning point, but you even hid that fact afterwards!”

“I’m afraid the shock would hurt your innocent and fragile souls, making you lose hope to continue living. Look, I did this all for you...” Zhang Tie said in an arrogant and comedic way.

“Qie!” A row of middle fingers was raised in front of Zhang Tie.

“Oh right, how did you ignite your Shrine burning point so fast?” Leit asked.

“Don’t you know that we Chinese can always ignite the Shrine burning point faster than you?” Many Chinese people could truly ignite their Shrine burning point faster than the other human races. Take Zhang Tie’s dead eldest brother, Zhang Yong, and Zhang Tie’s second brother, Zhang Yang, as an example. They had both ignited their Shrine burning point faster than the people from the other human race. Zhang Tie was born a Chinese, which meant that he could ignite his Shrine burning point faster

than the other human races; however, nobody knew that Zhang Tie had ignited his Shrine burning point by depending on Karma Fruit Tree, instead of his talent as a Chinese.

Hearing what Zhang Tie said, everyone understood, as they had heard of a saying which said that the Chinese clan was born with innately higher spiritual energy than the other clans in this age.

During the time he recuperated in the ward, Zhang Tie was able to enjoy his free time. As he lived in the same ward as two other patients, he felt that there was nothing else to do but to chat with them and walk around Wild Wolf Castle by using a crutch made of a tree branch.

At almost the same time as the wolf bit onto Zhang Tie's shin, Zhang Tie had already stabbed the dagger into the wolf, thus the wolf had only left two medium-sized bite marks which were neither deep nor shallow. Although the wound wasn't fatal and medicinal ointment had been applied, it would still take him at least a week to recover to his previous state.

During this period, Zhang Tie could only act like a cripple. Thankfully, he didn't need to worry about eating and clothing, as the other members of the Hit-Plane Brotherhood would send him a container full of fish soup every evening, saying it was good for his recovery. Seeing their actions, the two other guys in the ward began to admire him. They especially admired him because of the trap in the stream used to catch fish, which could catch several fish every day regardless of the weather.

In that case, Zhang Tie felt very relaxed and felt at ease to recuperate in the castle. Zhang Tie pulled over Barley and the other members of the Hit-Plane Brotherhood and inquired about Glaze's group, yet he didn't find any special information. With the exception of Glaze still being forbidden to enter Wild Wolf Castle, Zuhair and the other members would occasionally go to Wild Wolf Castle to show off or exchange their prey for other things.

The attack of the wild wolves was like Zhang Tie's bruises and wounds. Aside from leaving a mark on his heart, this incident was soon forgotten by the public.

During the survival training, there was a lot of news circulating, as there were many events happening in Wild Wolf Valley every day...

After going through this life and death situation, Zhang Tie had become more mature. Although the second Leakless Fruit had already ripened three days ago, Zhang Tie remained calm and didn't eat it. In fact, he didn't even spare a glance at the Castle of Black Iron, as he was currently in Wild Wolf Castle, making it inconvenient for him to move. Before the survival training had even started, he had considered the Castle of Black Iron to be something extremely important to him; however, after experiencing that life and death situation, the importance he attached to the Castle of Black Iron was not as much as he previously attached. He began to realize that there were many other things that were more important than the Castle of Black Iron. Sunshine, for example, was something that he learned the value of after having entered that pitch black hole. Without sunshine, plants would not be able to grow; without plants, animals would not be able to survive; and without animals and plants, human beings would not be able to survive either.

Although sunshine was precious and represented hope and life, it was still free.

Air was very precious, without which people would soon die within a couple minutes, yet air was free.

Water was very precious, without which most living beings would not be able to live on, yet water was also free in the wild.

Family bonds were precious; in fact, it was the most precious thing in the world, yet that was also free, as many people had been born with it.

Friendship was very precious and could spice up your life, making life more substantial, yet friendship was also free.

Love was very precious. As Hista had told him, love was the most beautiful thing in the world. The moment of ecstasy as a man and a woman seduced each other in order to make love was truly beautiful. As Zhang Tie had never done such a thing, he could only temporarily trust Hista.

Life was also the most precious thing in the world, and yet it was something given to him by his parents for free.

Zhang Tie realized that many things that could be bought were not too precious, while things that were truly precious could never be bought with money. Many people had ignored the precious things in their lives and were instead pursuing the things that could be bought with money. Once they found what was truly precious in their daily lives, they could truly be considered “rich”. Understanding this, Zhang Tie’s view of the world instantly expanded.

Every morning, after waking up, he would wash his face and brush his teeth. Afterwards, he could climb atop a small hill with the help of his crutch. Standing atop that small hill, he would inhale the fresh air as he did some simple exercises, pleasantly waiting for the first rays of sunshine to shine upon him. The feeling of being bathed in the first rays of sunshine brought people an euphoric sensation.

After welcoming the arrival of the first rays of sunshine, Zhang Tie returned using the crutch. He would casually bring some food and pick up some common rocks on the road before using them to occupy a small booth outside the gate of Wild Wolf Castle. Sitting in front of the booth, he would watch the beauties enter and leave the castle. Zhang Tie had discovered that there was a benefit of watching the beauties; it would speed up the circulation of his blood, which was beneficial to his recovery.

This was good for my recovery—Zhang Tie found himself a shameless excuse. Using this shameless excuse, every time he watched the beauties, he would end up using his “Right Hand Shame Covering Technique” as he put his right hand into his trouser pocket and pushed down on his restless p*nis while awkwardly escaping.

After watching the beauties, Zhang Tie would casually eat some lunch before having a luxurious nap. Upon waking up through the help of his biological clock, he would wander about the square filled with vitality and would look for Pandora in order to exchange for some wild fruits, which would be his snacks. With wild fruits in his mouth, he would visit the iron smelting workshop in Wild Wolf Castle to learn about craftsmanship and smelting iron and would watch the fellows there complete assembling a set of steam engines in the simple workshop.

For using charcoals to melt iron, the biggest problem was that the temperature of the burning charcoal was not high enough to melt iron ores in the crucible, and without sufficient heat, it would not be possible to obtain steel. Block iron smelting was commonly used. After mixing the iron ores and the charcoal together in the iron melting kiln, they would repetitively temper the iron blocks and push out

the impurities from within. Due to the low amount of carbon content, wrought iron was soft and could not be directly used to be processed into tools without being carburized[1], which would allow them to obtain low-carbon steel. Although Zhang Tie had learned this knowledge at school, he still needed some time to proficiently put them into practice. These days, he had already been familiar with the group of craftsmen in the iron melting workshop. Sometimes, he even went there to help them wave the bar, which would blow air and thus making the fire more ferocious, or brought them some fruits in exchange for learning something. After a few days of learning, Zhang Tie found that he was now able to proficiently smelt iron and knew how to completely carburize wrought iron. This could be considered an accidental achievement!

For the past few days, as he was recuperating, Zhang Tie didn't know that his survival from the attack of the wolves had left a good impression on Captain Kerlin, who was planning to give a truly good reward!

[1] Adding carbon to iron or steel to toughen the material

Chapter 88: Iron-Blood Fist

The medicine applied to Zhang Tie's legs was brought by Captain Kerlin. Every two days, Captain Kerlin would visit Zhang Tie and would drop off a small packet of medicinal powder, which was to be applied to his wounds. Unknown whether it was the effect of the powder or the small tree in the Castle of Black Iron, Zhang Tie discovered that the recovery of the wounds on his legs was truly fast. By the second time he applied the medicinal powder to his wounds, Zhang Tie already did not need to use a crutch to walk. Six days later, when he applied the medicinal powder for the third time, Zhang Tie was already able to run.

During Captain Kerlin's third visit of bringing the medicinal powder, at the sight of the one-eyed man nodding as he squatted down to inspect the wounds on his legs, Zhang Tie knew that the number of days left in his vacation in Wild Wolf Castle was few. These past few days, Zhang Tie realized that the one-eyed man had been kinder to him. Sometimes, he would even casually chat with Zhang Tie, causing Zhang Tie to feel extremely flattered.

"After you apply the medicine on your wounds this time, you should be fine and can leave Wild Wolf Castle tomorrow. Don't even think about pretending to be sick to stay here. You're rather resilient, so if you pay a bit of attention and protect the wounds, then they will only scar!"

"Hmm, I know..." Zhang Tie sincerely looked at Captain Kerlin. "Captain Kerlin, I really have to thank you for taking care of me during this time. There's an old Chinese saying—if you are given a drop of water, then you will repay with a spring. You have saved my life this time. This is something that I will definitely never forget!"

Hearing Zhang Tie's words, Captain Kerlin slightly became stunned before showing a smile. "Boy, how do you think you could help me in your present condition? A LV 1 fighter like you is barely qualified to join the lowest level cannon fodder camps!"

"Although I am not able to help now, but that doesn't mean I can't in the future. Humans strive to keep improving themselves, step by step!" Zhang Tie calmly explained.

“Good, you have ambition!” Captain Kerlin encouraged him, “The ‘escape’ theory you explained in class gave me a good impression of you, but never would I have thought that you were this good at escaping. However, you can’t always just escape. There will be many situations where you would have no choice but to fight. When faced with such a situation, you need real force and real combat capabilities to be able to survive. Suppose the pikemen matrix you’re in was faced with a LV 4 pikemen matrix. At the order of your commander, you would have to charge forward at that matrix, as you have to follow military regulation and the fighting supervision squad was behind you. With your current capabilities, your only option would be to charge forward as cannon fodder, buying time for your commander to think of his plans and deployment. In such a scenario, do you think you could escape?”

Zhang Tie kept silent for a while before dejectedly answering, “No, I don’t!”

“So, even if you were able to escape a hundred times, as long as you encounter this scenario, you will definitely die. As a man, as a fighter, you should not be using your abilities to avoid the enemy—instead, you should have your abilities to destroy them! If you want to become useful in the future, your current strength is not enough. You will have to further cultivate...” As Captain Kerlin said this, he pulled a book out from his clothes and casually threw it into Zhang Tie’s hand. “I obtained this book from a battlefield before. Although it’s not very precious, it’s not ordinary either. At the very least, it’s better than the fighting skills you have learned at school and the ones you would learn in the alliance’s military. This will be my present to you. It will be up to you whether or not you can master it!”

Zhang Tie looked in amazement at the name of the book—. It seemed to be a very great skill.

Zhang Tie forcefully swallowed his saliva. At the same time, thinking of the other guys in the Hit-Plane Brotherhood, he asked, “Captain Kerlin, can I share this...this book with others?”

“Yes, you can. However, you’d better not let too many people know about it!”

“Why? Does this book contain secret knowledge?”

“Strictly speaking, this book contains top secret knowledge, but as many people have practiced it, it has become rather common. However, due to some reasons, even though this fighting skill has been learned by many people, you should still not spread it everywhere!”

“Why is it like this?”

“This Iron-Blood Fist is a fighting skill that the first emperor of the Norman Empire had learned from the Oriental Continent when he had traveled to the East to learn at a young age. In the past, only the monarchs of the Norman Empire was qualified to learn it. That is, until the eve of the Second Holy War between humans and magical beasts. At that time, the Iron-Blood Fist made its military debut and became a skill that could be practiced by every fighter of the Norman Empire. After several hundred years, it was no longer exclusive to the Norman Empire. Even in the Blackson Human Corridor, many people practice this skill...” Saying this, Captain Kerlin looked at Zhang Tie. “This is a very strange fist skill. Some people can master it well, while others will gain nothing from it. Almost every high-level fighter from the Norman Empire Military and the monarchs excelled at using the Iron-Blood Fist; however, with the exception of the monarchs of the Norman Empire, very few people in the Blackson Human Corridor are able to master it. Many people were only able to strengthen their body or slightly

improve their fist skills by practicing this skill. They were not even able to reach the minimum threshold required for this Iron-Blood Fist technique!”

“How come? Did they practice a different version of Iron-Blood Fist?”

“Of course the books are the same; however, there were also many differences. Different people would have different outcomes...” The one-eyed man forced a smile of bitterness and dejection. “Have you heard about Battle Qi?”

“Yes, I heard it’s a symbol of high-level fighters above LV 6!”

“Then, do you know where Battle Qi comes from?” the one-eyed man continued to ask Zhang Tie.

Zhang Tie shook his head.

“You will definitely know of these kinds of things in the future, but it’s fine for me to tell you now. As you know, the human body is very mysterious. It contains seven forces—the force of one’s Qi, the force of one’s blood, the force of one’s meridians, the force of one’s channels, the force of one’s bones, the force of one’s marrow, and the force of one’s spiritual energy. When one reaches LV 4, besides the Shrine burning point, he or she would have already ignited three other burning points on the vertebrae. At this time, the force of Qi, the force of blood, and the force of bones would have been activated. After practicing, the above three forces will combine and form a new Hidden Force. In the eyes of many experts, this is when a person could be considered to have a real fighting force. When one reaches LV 5, they will trigger the force of Qi, the force of blood, and the force of bones. After practicing, he or she would be able to combine the six forces together and improve the Hidden Force into a True Force, which is a mark of someone who has become a true fighter. That’s why, a LV 5 soldier could be improved to be a fighter...”

Although what Captain Kerlin had told him was normal in the eyes of many others, it was still a miraculous topic to Zhang Tie, who was learning this for the first time. Only now did Zhang Tie realize that the cultivation system was based on many rigid standards. “Are you saying that Battle Qi is a product of a fighter combining his force of spiritual energy into his True Force?”

“Yes, if you want to form Battle Qi, you will have to combine the seven forces in your body. This is the foundation. Aside from the combination of the seven forces, you will also need a sufficient amount of strong Qi, which would be combined with the seven forces before you are able to form Battle Qi. When it accumulates to a certain degree, such force will appear on your body and this is called Battle Qi appearance. This is also the reason why many people have difficulties in training the Iron-Blood Fist. Most people who practice the Iron-Blood Fist can’t form the Iron-Blood Battle Qi when they reach LV 6. If it wasn’t triggered by the Iron-Blood Battle Qi, then the Iron-Blood Fist would not pose a threat to any of the high-level fighters at all. That’s why many people will give up practicing it after they reach LV 6...”

“What about Hidden Force and True Force? Is it difficult to form them?”

“Of course!” Captain Kerlin nodded. “Iron-Blood Hidden Force and Iron-Blood True Force are two barriers you have to break through. Besides the monarchy of the Norman Empire, only one in a hundred people who practice the Iron-Blood Fist skill would be able to form Iron-Blood Hidden Force, and only one in ten of which would be able to form the Iron-Blood True Force. From that one tenth, at most one

in twenty or thirty of the people who had formed the Iron-Blood True Force would be able to form Iron-Blood Battle Qi...”

Zhang Tie stood still for a while before dejectedly asking, “So you’re saying that at most 1 out of every 20,000 or 30,000 people who practice the Iron-Blood Fist Skill is able to form their Iron-Blood Battle Qi and become a true high-level fighter?”

With wide opened eyes, Captain Kerlin responded, “Of course. If it wasn’t that difficult, then everyone in the world would become a high-level fighter. If it was that easily mastered, then even if 1/100 of the fighters in the Norman Empire Military could form their Iron-Blood Battle Qi, then the Norman Empire would already be able to sweep through the whole Blackson Human Corridor. Don’t think that this secret fighting skill from the monarchy of the Norman Empire could be that easily mastered. The Iron-Blood Fist is this mighty because of its Hidden Force, True Force, and Battle Qi are much more advanced than any other forms of Hidden Force, True Force, and Battle Qi. Any cultivator who has mastered the Iron-Blood Fist skill would become a top existence within their level. If we were to take two people with different forms of Hidden Force, the person with the Iron-Blood Hidden Force would be at least five times stronger the other person who has a common Hidden Force...”

“That powerful!?” Zhang Tie slightly gaped before a question flashed in his mind. “Captain Kerlin, how far have you practiced it? Have you formed Iron-Blood Battle Qi?”

After asking, Zhang Tie felt a bit of regret. As he knew Captain Kerlin had never displayed this fist skill in public, then he must not have formed it.

Certainly, hearing Zhang Tie’s question, Captain Kerlin’s face turned slightly red. Glaring at Zhang Tie, he furiously replied, “No crap, I’m practicing the Mad Lion Battle Qi. Previously, I almost formed Iron-Blood Hidden Force. If I had mastered the Iron-Blood Fist Skill and had formed Iron-Blood Battle Qi, then the Andaman Alliance would have long invited me over. Currently, I am just a junior captain. If I had mastered the Iron-Blood Fist skill, I would have long been promoted to colonel. Even if it’s not within the Andaman Alliance, I would still have a great chance in the Norman Empire. Because this fist skill is known as the ‘Fist of the Battle God’ within the Norman Empire military and is revered by them. As long as you could form Iron-Blood Hidden Force, then you would be promoted to second lieutenant at the very least. For others who want to be promoted to second lieutenant, they would have to be at least LV 6, while people who have formed Iron-Blood Hidden Force could already be able to promoted to second lieutenant at LV 4. That is how people who have formed Iron-Blood Fist skill are treated in Norman Empire Military. If you don’t want to practice it, just give it back to me. I will give it to someone else. Even though Iron-Blood Battle Qi probably won’t be formed, this fist skill is still useful to a certain degree...” Captain Kerlin pretended to take it back.

“Don’t do that...” Hearing Captain Kerlin’s words, Zhang Tie hurriedly hid the book in his clothes. With a brilliant smile on his face, Zhang Tie immediately started to flatter him, “Captain Kerlin, you must have gained this book too late, missing the best time to cultivate, which caused you to fail to form the Iron-Blood Battle Qi. In contrast, the people in the Norman Empire must have been lucky because they had already started to practice it since they were very young. If Captain Kerlin had started to practice it at a young age as well, then you would definitely have made it.”

Hearing Zhang Tie's flattery, Captain Kerlin became a bit delighted. After exchanging a few more words with Zhang Tie, Captain Kerlin left the ward where Zhang Tie was recuperating.

After Captain Kerlin left, Zhang Tie started to read the first page of under the lights from the lamps in the room. However, the aggressive sentence printed in Chinese at the beginning completely shocked Zhang Tie—Fist Skill namely power. When one exerts their utmost effort, one will obtain the essence of the skill!

Chapter 89: Secret Knowledge and Angel

Holding onto the mysterious book, Zhang Tie skimmed through the book of about 200 pages, unable to sleep. The paper was both water resistant and fire resistant and was coated in silver. Zhang Tie knew that silver coated paper was extremely expensive. Only a few very important classical or sacred books would be recorded on silver coated paper. However, as silver coated papers could not be printed, people had to use a special pen and ink in order to leave marks on the paper, thus all books or texts made using silver coated paper, including the book containing the skill, would have to be copied by hand. Even the patterns inside the book were painted by hand. Obviously, the book was copied and written by the hand of a highly skilled man, as the words and pattern inside the book would make people feel happy and looked more appealing than even printed books.

Originating from an imperial sacred book from the Norman Empire, although its contents had been spread for a long time, the Oriental fist skill contained within has contents which were incomparable to other ordinary sacred books. With the first page alone, Zhang Tie had already been deeply captivated.

Lots of secret knowledge was recorded in this book. After one night of reading, within his mind, Zhang Tie had basically formed a framework of cultivating the Iron-Blood Fist Skill.

The cultivation system of the Iron Blood Fist Skill was composed of three parts:

The first part of the book was stake work cultivation[1]. According to the book, stake work was the basis for cultivating and enhancing the power of the Iron-Blood Fist. There were three types of stake works introduced in the book: Lying Tiger Stake, Coiling Dragon Stake, and Cross Stake. For the Lying Tiger Stake, the cultivator was to lower his body and sprawl on the ground like tiger, keeping still for a period longer than half an hour before moving on to the next stage. For the Coiling Dragon Stake, the cultivator was to cross their legs until their knees touched, much like a coiling snake. They were to keep their spine perfectly straight and raise their head as they squared their shoulders[2]. The cultivator was to also constantly shake themselves by repeating movements like keeping their back straight while squatting up and down, much like a coiled up snake that was about to bite. For the Cross Stake, it was a mixture and a variant of the Lying Tiger Stake and the Coiling Dragon Stake and could only be cultivated after the other two stakes were well-practiced. The Cross Stake required the cultivator's lower body to act like a coiling snake, while the cultivator's upper body should act like a tiger who was holding a spear in each hand, using the spears to form a cross...

The second part of the book was about the combination and derivation of the 36 free hand movements and the 5 basic walking forms of the Iron-Blood Fist Skill...

The third part of the book detailed an oral formula for the Iron Blood Qi Combination skill, which could not be cultivated until one has become proficient at the Lying Tiger Stake. Using breathing skills to ignite their burning points along with the help of the stakes and the fist skills, a cultivator would be able to combine the six forces within the human body and form the Hidden Force and the True Force. Compared to the previous two parts, this part was a bit hard for Zhang Tie to master, as the most crucial part of the book that made Zhang Tie muddleheaded pertained to the cultivation of Iron Blood Battle Qi. This section contained the least amount of words and was only a single line of Chinese characters—“After one’s True Force forms and the six forces have been integrated, use the fire of god to purify the intention of your fist. Iron Blood Battle Qi will sprout after nine deaths and will come into being after a hundred deaths!”

What was the intention of fist? What did “using the fire of god to purify the intention of your fist” mean? What did it mean by nine deaths? One hundred deaths? Reading through the characters, Zhang Tie was truly puzzled for quite a while. Thankfully, he was forced by his parent to recite a big Chinese dictionary when he was young, thus learning many characters in the process. Due to this, he was able to figure out the original meaning of the final line of guidance written in Chinese. After translating it into English, Zhang Tie realized why 99 out of 100 people who had formed Iron-Blood True Force could not pass the final hurdle. Motherf*ckers! Foreign people wouldn’t be able to understand its original meaning at all. In the entire Blackson Human Clan Corridor, presumably only the monarchs of the Norman Empire would know the meaning of this line of guidance.

After spending almost the entire night reading over the skill, Zhang Tie’s eyes turned red. At 3am or 4am when he had almost skimmed over the entire book, Zhang Tie, in his heart, saluted all the female monarchs of the Norman Empire and closed the book. Afterwards, he fell asleep. As the current period of time was meant for him to recuperate, there was nothing important to do the next day, thus Zhang Tie didn’t care about when he went to bed.

On the second day, as expected, Zhang Tie woke up at noon. After getting up, he washed his face and rinsed his mouth before preparing his belongings and leaving.

In reality, Zhang Tie didn’t have many belongings here. Using the pioneer bag made from calfskin[3], which Barley had used to bring him food, Zhang Tie placed some food, seeds, and the book containing the into the bag before leaving the ward he had been living for the past week.

Before leaving the ward, Zhang Tie went to the office of the Temporary Supervision Committee to deal with the relevant departure procedures. He then went to bid farewell to Captain Kerlin and Zerom. Unfortunately, the two had already gone out for a routine inspection early in the morning, thus he had no choice but to leave.

During the survival training, teachers and coaches both had their own responsibilities. For teachers of the Temporary Supervision Committee, they were responsible for sweeping magical beasts and mutated living beings that could endanger the lives of the students in Wild Wolf Valley. Therefore, it became their daily job to make routine inspections over Wild Wolf Valley. For many of the teachers, with such an easy job, it was as if they were out for vacation.

After being told that Captain Kerlin and Mr. Zerom had left, Zhang Tie bid farewell to the guys in the iron smelting workshop whom he had gotten familiar with in the past few days. Afterwards, Zhang Tie walked out of Wild Wolf Castle.

The square of Wild Wolf Castle was already teeming with people at noon. Coincidentally, Zhang Tie saw Pandora once again among the crowd. Pandora had always set her booth in a corner that was not particularly eye-catching. Sitting in a corner, that thin and small girl would hide in the corner as she hugged her knees.

It was only when Zhang Tie had arrived before Pandora's booth did the girl with a thin and small frame raise her head and look at Zhang Tie. "I'm really sorry. I wasn't able to pick any fruits today..."

In front of Pandora was a small pile of ordinary, wild vegetables. Looking at Pandora, Zhang Tie realized that her clothes were soaked from the morning dew and realized that she must have gone foraging for wild vegetables and fruits early in the morning. However, during the survival training, many people would choose to forage for wild vegetables and fruits, thus making them harder to find due to lower quantity. Since this was the case, objectively speaking, the girls were forced to team up with boys to finish the survival training. After all, humans lived in groups. As an individual, unless they were exceptionally powerful, it would be difficult to survive in the wild.

The pitiful look of that petite girl slightly shocked Zhang Tie...

"Ah, my wounds are not that serious anymore and I can now freely move. I will be leaving today, so before leaving, I came to say goodbye! Zhang Tie felt bashful as he scratched his head.

"Oh, I hope you recover soon!" Pandora smiled. This was the first time Zhang Tie had seen her smile. With her pair of beautiful blue eyes, she looked pretty nice when she smiled. As he gave Pandora a second look, Zhang Tie mumbled inside, "Hmm, with the exception of her thin and petite figure and the freckles on her face, Pandora is still very beautiful."

"Are you free tonight?" Zhang Tie suddenly asked.

"What for?" Hearing his words, Pandora suddenly became alert as she hid her chest behind her knees.

"I... wanted to invite you to dinner at our tree base. I realized that you always forage for food by yourself, so if you haven't joined any team yet, then I wish to sincerely invite you to join us. We have seven male students, all of which are nice guys!"

"Are you inviting me to be your partner during the survival training?" Pandora's eyes started to shine; however, they soon became depressed once again. "No... I can't agree!"

"Why?" Zhang Tie was startled.

"They said that anyone who's with me will suffer misfortune. I don't want to bring you troubles. Last time, right after you bought my wild fruits, you were forced to jump into a hole by wolves," Pandora dejectedly said.

"Nonsense. How could I blame you for that!? Look at me, aren't I perfectly fine?" As he said this, Zhang Tie flexed his muscle in a manner akin to bodybuilders in order to show off the muscles on his arms, causing Pandora to bashfully chuckle.

“You really don’t care?”

“Of course not. Don’t listen to what they’re saying. I even see you as my lucky angel. If it weren’t for you, I might have already starved to death...” Zhang Tie loudly shouted.

“Then... okay!” Pandora finally agreed after thinking for a while.

Receiving Pandora’s consent, Zhang Tie heaved a sigh of relief inside. Since this was the first time he had invited a girl, if he were to have been refused, then he would really feel like he had lost face. In regards to the attack from the wild wolves, Mr. Zerom had already implied that Zhang Tie might have been set up by someone, so how could he blame Pandora for that incident?. Besides, when Zhang Tie was very young, his mom had told him never to blame others for your own bad luck. A man should be committed. Zhang Tie had always kept that sincere guidance deep in his mind.

“Then, it’s a set! In the afternoon, I will come here to pick you up. Our tree house is very interesting, and we all live inside tree hollows. We will also have fish soup to drink tonight...”

“Living in tree hollows?” Pandora slightly raised her face, which contained an expression of longing. At the sight of Pandora’s curious expression, Zhang Tie immediately affirmed that fish soup and tree houses were both attractive to girls.

“Oh, right...” Zhang Tie took out of several pieces of dried rations and dried meat from his bag and put away all the wild vegetables that had been wrapped with clean tree leaves by Pandora. “I want all the wild vegetables!”

The dried rations and dried meat given by Zhang Tie to Pandora was excessively greater than the value of the wild vegetables, causing Pandora to get up hurriedly. “It’s too much, I don’t need that much...”

“Haha, it’s ok. The extra can be considered your free lunch...” Zhang Tie smiled and waved his hands towards Pandora before he strode out of the square...

Looking at Zhang Tie’s shadow, the girl slightly narrowed her eyes as she mumbled, “Could I really be someone’s lucky angel?”

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TL/ED Notes:

[1] Think of it as like a wooden stake. This is building the foundation of what’s to come.

[2] To pull back one’s shoulder.

[3] Leather made from cows.

Chapter 90: Sharing Good Things

Ever since Zhang Tie was attacked by the wolves, the other horny students had voluntarily began to sweep the region 5km away from Wild Wolf Castle for wild wolves many times, resulting in the path between Wild Wolf Castle and the tree house to be much safer and not even a single strand of wolf fur could be found. What happened to Zhang Tie reminded everybody of the potential dangers. After all,

such an incident could also happen to others. None of the horny students wanted to encounter a pack of wolves alone when they were accompanying girls back to Wild Wolf Castle, thus they all exerted their utmost efforts to clear out the wild wolves. During this process, they had truly encountered several lone wolves; however, they were unable to find the other four wolves who had attacked Zhang Tie that day.

On the way back to the tree base, especially when he passed by that grassland, Zhang Tie couldn't help but recall the incident that had happened to him that day and the furious gazes of the wolves that were fixed on him. The eternal hatred in their eyes made Zhang Tie feel that he might encounter the four wild wolves once again.

Currently, it was noon, and only Bagdad was left on-duty at the tree base. Returning to the tree base, Zhang Tie saw Bagdad and his bare arms. In his hands was a spear, which he used to practice a thrusting movement. The moment Zhang Tie came close to the tree base, he had already been noticed by Bagdad.

"Who?" Covered in sweat, Bagdad turned around with the spear in hand.

"Working hard, youth! I wonder if you were stimulated by me, who has already ignited my Shrine burning point!?" Zhang Tie walked over with a smile.

Seeing Zhang Tie's face, Bagdad, who was surprised at Zhang Tie's return, instantly froze. As his face twitched, Bagdad cursed, "B*stard!" At the same time, dropping his spear, he walked towards Zhang Tie and fiercely embraced him. "Don't get arrogant. I will surpass you sooner or later!"

"Bagdad, did you know? I have always had a big secret, but I do not have the heart to tell you!" Zhang Tie said with a serious expression.

Hearing Zhang Tie's words, as expected, Bagdad asked, "What secret?"

"The secret is... in fact, I am actually a genius among geniuses..." When Zhang Tie replied, his solemn look turned into an obscene smile, one which made Bagdad really want to beat him. "In the past, I just wanted to experience the life of you mortals, so in order to not make you feel bad, I have controlled my brilliance and have only shown 5% of my power. After this incident, I have decided to exert my utmost efforts to cultivate, which means that it would be next to impossible for you to surpass me from now on. I suggest you to choose a different target, as it is truly unfortunate for you, a mortal, to treat me as your target!"

"Argh, you b*stard..." Realizing that he had been played by Zhang Tie, Bagdad wrapped his arm around Zhang Tie's neck, almost causing him to suffocate...

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As expected, returning to the tree base, when Barley and the other members of the Hit-Plane Brotherhood caught sight of Zhang Tie, they became extremely excited. Although they were not able to achieve too much today and were unable to catch any large preys using the big pits they had dug, using the small traps taught by Zhang Tie, which were made of stones and twigs, they were able to catch two pheasants. Additionally, they got more than ten palm-sized fish from the trap near the stream. Together with the wild vegetables that Zhang Tie had brought, they would be able to enjoy a filling supper tonight.

As dusk fell, Zhang Tie told them that he would invite a girl for supper. Under the whistles of the horny students, Zhang Tie went to pick up Pandora and brought her back to their tree base. As this was the first time she had been invited for supper by male students, Pandora looked somewhat stiff; however, after seeing the horny students laugh and joke around, she gradually became relaxed.

After supper, Zhang Tie invited Pandora to take a look at their tree base. Afterwards, Zhang Tie, Bagdad, and Sharwin went together to send Pandora back to Wild Wolf Castle. At the sight of the corner of Pandora's mouth having been raised, Zhang Tie knew that both his invitation and the supper was a success. It seemed that inviting girls wasn't particularly hard.

When they returned to the tree base, a bonfire had been lit under the Dragon-Claw Tree. Barley and the other members of the Hit-Plane Brotherhood were bragging as they sat under the tree and were talking about Pandora.

"Although her breasts and frame aren't fully developed, she still has a nice face. Bighead really has a strange taste in women!" Leit said.

"Maybe this kind of girl can easily arouse Bighead's desire to sleep with her. I have heard that there are many impotent men in their thirties who like this kind of girl since they are easily convinced. Hahaha..."

"Haven't you noticed that Pandora has a pair of watery eyes? According to my observations, all women with beautiful eyes are good at pleasing men..." Hista obscenely said.

"Even Bighead has a girlfriend. We have to work hard too. I remember that there were many beautiful girls among the group of girls that we invited last time. We can have a try tomorrow..."

When it came to girls, the horny students all became thrilled. Seeing Zhang Tie and the other two members return, they moved aside and let them in before continuing with the topic. Under their persistence, Zhang Tie honestly poured out how he had gotten to know Pandora. Although Zhang Tie had claimed repetitively that he didn't have any evil thoughts about Pandora and had only invited her as a friend to join their team to pass through the survival training, nobody believed him. They simply responded with jeers and doubtful eyes.

"You don't have any evil intentions about her because you're not circumcised. Not to mention that you're forbidden to stay alone with girls. Heh heh... If it weren't for these two obstacles, you would have already shown your evil nature!"

"I know you're planning to sleep with her when you return to Blackhot City. That's truly a good idea. You have really thought this through. Since that small girl isn't that attractive and is cautious, you will first get acquainted with her. Once you get acquainted with her, you won't have to worry about her being snatched by others!"

"Two months later, Pandora will develop a bit more, right?"

"She should be sexier by then. Girls nowadays develop faster and mature earlier than before!"

"Right now, her breasts are truly on the smaller side, so you plan to get acquainted with her first. Later, you won't have to worry about not having a chance to sleep with her..."

"Heh... heh..."

"These animals!" Zhang Tie cursed inside. In order to protect his ears and his innocent soul from being polluted by those dirty words, Zhang Tie decided to change the topic. At this time, he pulled out his ultimate weapon.

Remaining silent, Zhang Tie took out of the book from his clothes and started to read it beside the bonfire while the other members were obscenely laughing out loud.

"Bighead, what are you reading?" Sharwin, who liked reading, was the first to ask.

"Nothing special. It's just a mysterious book about the from the monarchs of the Norman Empire!" Zhang Tie nonchalantly explained, describing it as if it was an old knight novel that was purchased at a low price from the waste paper collection station.

"Oh!" Like normal, Sharwin responded normally; however, a second later, his eyes widened and his mouth gaped as his gaze was fixed on the book in Zhang Tie's hand.

Zhang Tie continued to nonchalantly read it. Gradually, with the exception of the "gulugulu" sounds made when the other members swallowed their saliva, all the noise disappeared. All of them looked at the book in Zhang Tie's hand with widely opened eyes as they sat beside the bonfire.

After a long while, only an occasional "shasha" sound could be heard when Zhang Tie turned the page. Nobody was talking anymore. At this moment, Zhang Tie surprisingly raised his head and glanced at the other guys with a "strange look". "Hey, how come you guys aren't talking? Feel free to continue!"

"Hohoho..." With a forced smile, Bagdad's gaze remained fixed on the book in Zhang Tie's hands. "You... what kind of mysterious martial arts are you reading?"

"Oh, you want to know about this..." Zhang Tie turned the book and showed them the cover, revealing the four words "Iron-Blood Fist Skill". Suddenly, all their eyes turned red. "It's nothing special. It's just the . Although it was secret knowledge among the monarchs of the Norman Empire before, it has long been spread to the military of the Norman Empire since before the Second Holy War between humans and magical clan. It's not that great since many people have been able to use it. It's simply a common book, with the exception that its pages are coated in silver and the words within were hand written..."

Zhang Tie continued to feign innocence; however, with the in his hand, his words were reliable.

"Where did you get this secret knowledge?" Even Leit had wide opened eyes as he continued to look at Zhang Tie with a look of amazement. No matter how common it was, it was still secret knowledge. Anything related to "secrets" could be considered luxurious for commoners. Among the undergraduates from Seventh National Male Middle School in Blackhot City of the Andaman Alliance, it would be really difficult to find anyone else more common in the Blackson Human Clan Corridor than the members of the Hit-Plane Brotherhood.

"I have a good character. I just can't help it..." Zhang Tie spread his palms. "Captain Kerlin had forced me to accept it. He said that he had obtained this in a battlefield and had even said that I had a brave character. He considered me to be pretty resilient and as someone who would probably be able to popularize this fist skill, so he simply forced me to accept it"

To tell the truth, Zhang Tie really hit the mark on Captain Kerlin's intentions.

Zhang Tie was then surrounded by the envious eyes and the sound of swallowing saliva.

“Has... Captain Kerlin said...” Hesitantly, Fatty Barley began to ask, causing the heart of everyone else to pound.

“He said I’m entitled to own this book. As long as I like, I can lend it to anyone else on the premise that it was not spread everywhere. No matter what, is a secret knowledge among the monarchs of Norman Empire. Owners of it had to remain low-key! Look at me, aren’t I remaining low-key? I haven’t casually shown it in front of others at all...”

That was low-key? That was “haven’t casually shown it in front of others”? Although they found ridicule in his words, they all hurriedly nodded. “That’s right... That’s right...”

Doug, who was sitting beside Zhang Tie, suddenly rolled his eyes and immediately shoved Hista away using his butt. Wrapping his arm around Zhang Tie’s neck, Doug moved his face closer to Zhang Tie’s with a fawning smile. “Bighead, when you were recuperating a few days ago, I had always stayed beside your bed. I did that because I was worried about you. During that time, I have kept my eyes open and had killed hundreds of mosquitoes every night, all for you. Look! You can still see all the mosquito bites on my arm...” As he said this, Doug rolled up his sleeve and showed the red spots on his arm to Zhang Tie. However, who really know whether or not he had truly been bitten by mosquitoes...

After glancing at Doug, Zhang Tie smiled. Under Doug’s incredulous eyes, he dropped the into Doug’s hands. “Well, thank you for accompanying me. You have one hour to read this secret knowledge!”

“Really?” Doug was so surprised that he even shouted out loudly.

“It starts from now on!” Zhang Tie warned him.

Hearing Zhang Tie’s words, Doug hurriedly skimmed it. Beside him were Hista and Bagdad, whose necks were stretched so far out that they looked like giraffes. However, they felt as if they were losing face when they were indiscreetly drawing near Doug. As it was a big taboo to peer at others’ secret knowledge without permission, they could only admire Doug from afar.

“Ah, what does the line of words on the first page mean?” Doug scratched his head.

“It’s written in Chinese and is the outline of the Iron-Blood Fist Skill. It reads ‘Fighting force is power. When the power reaches its maximum, it’ll touch the supreme universal laws!’” Zhang Tie translated the general meaning of that line. Hearing his interpretation, Barley and the other members were shocked by this book’s high level and began to long for reading it.

Soon after Doug, the second person to respond was Leit, “Bighead, the fish you ate while you were recuperating were caught by me, do you remember? I have even sent you fish soup twice!”

“Well, you can read it for one hour right after Doug!”

Hearing Zhang Tie’s reply, Leit burst out into laughter.

Barley instantly jumped up from the ground and looked at Zhang Tie with watery eyes. “Do you still remember? Miss Anna...”

“Well, Barley will read for one hour after Leit!”

Hearing Zhang Tie's consent, Barley also burst out into laughter.

Bagdad, Sharwin, and Hista were hurriedly scratching their heads as they tried to come up with a reason to win an hour of reading.

"I lent you my notebook on what miss Daina had taught us in class!" Sharwin came up with a reason.

"Well, Sharwin can also read it for one hour after Barley!"

"Bro, you can just come here to ask me if you have any questions about women. No matter who you like, I will help you get her!" Hista showed his nature as a lecher as he patted Zhang Tie's shoulder and spoke.

"Well, you can read one hour after Sharwin!"

Realizing that all the other members had found their reasons, Bagdad thought for quite a while and abandoned the thought of pretending to be a kungfu "master". Forcing a smile, he drew closer and flattered, "This... Bighead, as you've not been fully recovered these days, it will be my great honor to serve in your place when you have night duty!"

"Hmm, that is not good. If someone else knew that, they will gossip. As we are brothers, if others mistook me as bullying you, then that would not be good" Zhang Tie pretended to dejectedly think about it.

"Anyone who dares to be gossipy is destroying the bond between us brothers, and I will definitely not let him live well!" Bagdad became tense as he waved his fist. "As long as I hear anyone say that, I swear to beat the sh*t out of him!" After saying this, he viciously swept his gaze at the other fellows and asked in a threatening tone, "Since Bighead hasn't fully recovered yet, will you guys gossip if I help him keep watch at night?"

The other people hurriedly shook their heads.

"Well, Bagdad will have the book for one hour after Leit!"

After heaving a long sigh, Bagdad grinned.

Everybody then gazed at Doug. Under the jumping flames, Doug seemed to be obsessed with the Iron-Blood Fist Skill. His face was truly rich with expression; his facial expressions constantly changed from a relaxed look to forming a frown. Over time, he would occasionally raise one hand into the air, causing the others to be more curious about the contents of the book.

At this moment, Zhang Tie burst out into laughter inside. He had long prepared to share the book with the other brothers of Hit-Plane Brotherhood. However, he knew that these people would never treasure what they could obtain easily and would instead always treasure what they had worked hard for. This was something that Donder had taught him. From now on, Zhang Tie planned to motivate these guys and let them spend great efforts to be able to read for one hour. He realized that if did it this way, it would definitely be much more effective than just throwing them the book.

Thinking that he could "order" them in the future, Zhang Tie became pleased...

From now on, he would finally have a great amount of time to consider how to improve his fighting force. As Zhang Tie had not entered Castle of Black Iron for one week, the second Leakless Fruit must have become completely ripe!

It was the right time to enter Castle of Black Iron once again. He was curious about what else surprise the small tree could bring him...

While Zhang Tie was pleasantly thinking about it, the images of Glaze and his lackeys appeared in his mind followed by an image of Captain Kerlin. Zhang Tie didn't know why, but when he recalled Captain Kerlin's face these days, he could sense a hint of depression... Could it be his imagination? Or... was there something the one-eyed man was worried about?

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