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Chapter 26: Maybe all handsome people look similar

Core City of Truth, Combat Power Test Zone.

Mike walked into the hall and looked around. The usually crowded hall was exceptionally empty today.

"That makes sense, with the buffs, everyone is busy challenging the Tower of Truth. The Combat Power Test can be done anytime."

Mike noticed that even the staff were not an exception. Many service windows were lit with red lights, displaying [Service Suspended]. The staff had taken leave to go to the Tower of Truth, trying to advance further.

"Please check in at the self-service machine and collect a number to queue."

Following the voice prompt, Mike found a machine. The information required was simple: [Level, Class, Tower of Truth floors], etc. Even combined, these details couldn't pinpoint Mike personally.

Clearly, to keep Thor's identity hidden, the Defense Headquarters had made comprehensive arrangements. Moreover, here in the Core City of Truth, with IDs hidden, no one could trace it back to Mike!

"Have you participated in the Combat Power Test before?"

"No."

"Your test will start from [Battle Soldiers Tier One], serial number 338, please go to window 3 to queue."

A piece of paper with the serial number printed on it was dispensed from the machine, which Mike took.

"Window 3... huh, why are there so many people?"

In the entire hall, only 3 windows were operational, and naturally, all those participating in the Combat Power Test gathered together. Mike hadn't expected to see dozens of people ahead of him, forming a long line.

Looking at the situation, even if it took 5 minutes per person, it would still be hours of waiting!

Mike frowned slightly,

"Strange, why aren't they at the Tower of Truth leveling up, instead of here at the Combat Power Test?"

Among these dozens of people, Mike spotted a familiar face-James!

Above James's head floated a note:

[Drowned by a lava eruption, as for who's to blame, well, cough cough...]

Ah, this...

Mike couldn't help but cringe.

Drowning in lava was indeed a frustrating way to go.

As Mike spotted James, James also noticed him.

"Mike, what are you doing here?" James looked over, slightly puzzled. "Did you go to Thunder Valley too?"

"Uh... yeah, I went to Thunder Valley," Mike replied earnestly.

James clearly misunderstood; he thought Mike had also been killed by lava or monsters.

"Ah, tough luck for you too. If you had died a bit later, you wouldn't have had a weakening period!"

The rules of the Tower of Truth are strict. After Thor's SSSS-level clearance, all human players received various powerful buffs. However, those who died before this still suffered the weakening penalty!

"I see..." Mike nodded, understanding why James and the others were here. They had died in Thunder Valley and were stuck in a lengthy period of weakness.

Originally, James and his group were hanging out in the Trade Zone, looking for opportunities to snag a deal. But after everyone received the buffs, they all left!

That left them, the unlucky ones, with nothing to do in the Core City of Truth. Finally, someone suggested they come to the [Combat Power Test Zone] and try the Battle

Soldiers test. They were just there to see the sights, not really expecting to pass the Battle Soldiers test!

The difficulty of the Battle Soldiers test was so high that many Level 30 seniors couldn't pass it. Only those of higher levels could hope to become a Tier One Battle Soldier. Even geniuses with A or S level talents typically needed to be Level 20 to pass.

"If anyone can pass the Battle Soldiers test now, they'd be comparable to the legendary Thor!"

As they chatted in line, James just greeted Mike and didn't continue the conversation. After waiting a few minutes and seeing the line wasn't moving, Mike said, "I'm going to check the front."

He had a VIP card from [Mystic Market] with Battle General level privileges. If he could use it, it might save him a lot of time in line.

James glanced at Mike's retreating figure and didn't say much.

Today, it seemed Jessica was somewhat involved with that guy, but James wasn't worried. He didn't see Mike as a threat to himself, especially with his A-level talent.

A Thief named [Hawkeye] suddenly spoke up, "James, what class is your classmate?" "Mike? I'm not sure," James replied casually. "I wasn't really close to him before."

With so many people at school, probably only Cain had a good relationship with Mike. "I'll check the database. Mike... Mage... Watcher's Eye. Why are you interested in this?" The group of geniuses was curious. Hawkeye's talent was in identification, and perhaps he could discern something extraordinary about Mike.

"He's a Mage... not a Warrior," Hawkeye muttered. "Never mind, I thought I saw something else. I thought he was..."

Previously, Hawkeye had used his talent to scout deep into Thunder Valley. In a fleeting glimpse, he saw a Warrior awakening a boss alone, attempting to solo the boss.

That glance had cost Hawkeye his life. But it was all too rushed, and his attention was mainly on the Minotaur Battle General, so he didn't pay much attention to this Warrior. The appearance was somewhat blurry.

When Hawkeye saw Mike, he felt a resemblance and consoled himself, "Maybe all handsome people look similar."

Under everyone's gaze, Mike walked straight to the front to a working robot, showed a card, and was allowed through immediately!

"Why does he get to skip the line?"

"I don't know, skipping the line... you need at least Battle General level privileges for that,

right?"

"I think I saw him pull out a card, a Mystic Market VIP card?!"

".....

The conversation made James's face darken. A Mystic Market VIP card with Battle General level privileges. With Mike's abilities and background, how could he possibly have something

like that!

It must be from Jessica! Damn it!

James said disdainfully, "No matter, let him go in for the test. The Tier One Battle Soldiers

test-I bet Mike won't last even 10 seconds!"

The people around nodded frequently. Although James's words were harsh, they made sense. A Mage with D-level talent lasting 10 seconds would be incredibly difficult!

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Chapter 27: Lone Wolf

Inside the Combat Power Test room, Mike was warming up.

"I didn't expect the Mystic Market VIP card to actually work."

Several red lights flickered, and an emotionless mechanical voice echoed in the sealed space. "Tier One Battle Soldiers test, first challenge [Neural Response Test], are you ready?"

"Hold on."

Just as the test was about to start, Mike suddenly thought of a critical issue. If the video of him taking the test was stolen by others, it could easily let enemies deduce that he is Thor. So, for safety, he should skip this test.

Just as he was about to give up, a note suddenly appeared in his line of sight.

[Please proceed with the test, your information will not be disclosed.]

Mike's talent gave him this prompt at that moment. Although he didn't understand the specific logic behind it, he chose to trust the Eye of Truth.

The emotionless mechanical voice sounded again in the sealed space.

"Tier One Battle Soldiers test, first challenge [Neural Response Test], are you ready?"

"Ready."

"Countdown, 5, 4, 3..."

"Neural Response Test, begin!"

The countdown ended, and a gunshot sounded.

A bullet with a diameter of 0.24 inches whizzed out at high speed, and Mike, with a slight sidestep, easily dodged it.

Bang-

The bullet hit the wall, creating a small crater and sparking.

"It's really a live-fire test!"

Mike focused his attention forward.

Since he was in the Core City of Truth, part of the Tower of Truth, death carried no substantial penalties.

The Battle Soldiers test was as real as it gets.

Bullets, fireballs, lightning, throwing knives...

The Neural Response Test required dodging these attacks as much as possible. Surviving meant passing the test!

In other words, there were two ways to break through:

1. Increase your Agility attribute as much as possible, learn more displacement skills to enhance mobility. This is the essence of the Neural Response Test.
2. Increase your shields, health, and other defenses!

If you can't dodge, don't dodge; withstand all damage and break through with force!

As long as you survive, you pass the test.

The Battle Soldiers test is designed to select those capable of fighting in the Abyssal Plane; it doesn't require absolute versatility!

Based on past experiences, achieving an Agility attribute of 200 or being able to withstand a total damage of over 4000 would suffice to pass the first challenge. Many people get stuck at this stage, constantly complaining.

However, for Mike, this was no challenge at all!

The [Eye of Truth] could predict the trajectory of all incoming attacks, providing brief foresight. It also mapped out the best dodging strategy for Mike!

All Mike had to do was choose a plan and execute it. Methodically, he easily dodged all attacks!

Amidst a barrage of bullets, Mike strolled as if he were walking in a garden. Bullets often missed him by just 0.1 inches, yet his expression remained unchanged, completely unfazed.

Even to avoid standing out too much, Mike would deliberately take a hit or two, pretending he couldn't dodge in time.

He was like an Oscar-winning actor.

10 seconds, 20 seconds, 30 seconds...

As time ticked by, the frequency of attacks increased, leaving Mike with fewer and fewer options, and the difficulty of achieving a perfect dodge escalated!

Mike's health remained at a very healthy level, although the intense firepower was somewhat exaggerated.

"Strange, is the Tier One Battle Soldiers test supposed to be this hard?!" Mike muttered as he dodged.

"My Agility attribute is 224, even without the Eye of Truth, I should be able to pass this challenge based on Agility alone! But... this difficulty, it's too exaggerated, even if my Agility was 400, it wouldn't be possible!"

Mike felt his situation becoming extremely perilous, a slight misstep could be fatal, leading to failure in the challenge.

He gritted his teeth, following the Eye of Truth's guidance, trying his best to execute each movement and dodge the incoming attacks.

"Countdown!"

"10, 9, 8..."

Sweat beaded on Mike's forehead, and his left shoulder had been grazed by a fireball, emitting a burnt smell. Just the fireball grazing him caused over 300 damage.

"There's definitely something wrong, this isn't a Tier One Battle Soldiers test!"

Mike was certain, but at this point, trapped in the test room, he could only grit his teeth and keep going, waiting for the countdown to end.

"...3, 2, 1!"

"Congratulations, you have completed the Tier One Battle Soldiers [Neural Response Test]. Please proceed to the next level."

As the attacks ceased, Mike stood in the corner, taking deep breaths of fresh air to recover his strength. He focused his attention on the motion capture device in front of him.

[It's just a motion capture device, what are you trying to see? Here's a keyboard, why don't you write something?]

[Look again, it's still just a motion capture device.]

[Congratulations, you have just passed the Tier Three Battle Soldiers Neural Response Test!]

"It was Tier Three... what a rip-off." Mike rolled his eyes, feeling somewhat speechless. Somewhere along the line, there had been a mix-up; what was supposed to be a Tier One Battle Soldiers test had been set to Tier Three.

"That means my current abilities are comparable to the neural response speed of a Tier Three Battle Soldier!"

From another perspective, this realization clarified Mike's understanding of his own strength.

"Let's go, next level!"

Physical tests, damage tests, defense tests...

Contrary to Mike's expectations, the subsequent tests went smoothly without any surprises.

The Tier One Battle Soldiers tests posed no challenge to him.

In fact, to avoid standing out too much, he even held back to varying degrees.

"Tier One Battle Soldiers test complete, generating results..."

On a large screen, numerous data scrolled by, generating a report card for Mike.

"Neural Response Test, 98% evasion rate, SS grade!"

"Physical Test, 86% completion, A grade!"

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"Combining all results, your Tier One Battle Soldiers test rating is: A+!"

"Congratulations, you have passed the Tier One Battle Soldiers test. Please choose your

affiliation."

Three options appeared before Mike:

[Defense Headquarters], [Mercenary Corps], [Lone Wolf]

Battle Soldiers, as the name implies, exist for combat. After passing the Battle Soldiers test,

Mike could choose to apply to any of the major corps under the Planetary Defense Council.

Once accepted, he would be required to travel to a designated plane and integrate into the corps. This is the most common choice.

Corps with official backing offer the best in terms of strength and benefits. However, the trade-off is low freedom, as one must obey higher commands and has little room for

independent action.

This path, clearly, was not suitable for Mike at the moment. With many secrets to keep and still needing time to grow, he wasn't considering joining a corps just yet. [Mercenary Corps) is a loosely organized group with mercenary characteristics. They form

temporary teams, accept orders from various powers, complete missions, and then collect their pay.

Relying on information from the Eye of Truth, Mike analyzed, "Mercenary Corps sounds good and suits me, but... Mercenary Corps requires real-name registration!

My school records show a D-level talent, and just two days into the Tower of Truth, I passed

the Tier One Battle Soldiers test-it's too conspicuous!"

Mike's gaze shifted to the last option: Lone Wolf!

You can anonymously receive the Battle Soldiers badge, and collect monthly stipends and

benefits in the Core City of Truth, ensuring to the greatest extent that the identity of [Lone Wolf] will not be traced!

Of course, the officials have special methods to prevent people from claiming benefits multiple times or exploiting loopholes.

This path is the loneliest and most unsupported.

No organization, no teammates, no backing.

The Lone Wolf path, everything depends solely on oneself!

Mike took a deep breath, his gaze firm, and his finger moved slightly downward.

"I choose Lone Wolf!"

The Lone Wolf path is indeed reserved for the fierce and bold!

Sheep flock together, but fierce beasts walk alone!

When the three paths of Battle Soldiers were established, the supreme being once said:

"Every genius is a Lone Wolf on their own path forward!"

After Mike made his choice, the large screen went dark.

A badge descended from above, hovering in front of Mike.

It was engraved with a howling wolf's head, lifelike, with fangs gleaming coldly, particularly

chilling.

The Lone Wolf badge!

"Not bad, I like it."

Mike grabbed the Lone Wolf badge in his palm.

From today, the rise of Lone Wolf Mike officially begins!

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Chapter 28: His record in bed is 3.1415926 seconds

After anonymously registering as [Lone Wolf], a document appeared on the large screen detailing the benefits Mike was entitled to enjoy.

"Monthly stipend of \$30,000, equivalent to 30 gold coins, to be collected every second Thursday of the month at [Combat Power Test Zone]..."

For the average person, 30 gold coins is no small sum.

However, compared to the speed at which Mike acquires resources, 30 gold coins seem trivial.

Starting from yesterday, after completing the novice instance, he was rewarded with 100,000 gold coins, spent 80,000 on [Force of Nature], leaving a balance of 20,000.

Reporting Jacob earned him a bounty of 30,000 gold coins, and he spent 7,000 on [Windstride Slash].

Mike now has 43,000 gold coins left, equivalent to \$43 million.

"The official stipend for a Tier One Battle Soldier is \$15,000, along with other benefits.

Due to the anonymity of Lone Wolf, other benefits are inaccessible, so it's reasonable that the monthly stipend is an additional \$15,000."

Earning an easy \$30,000 a month, Mike could collect \$360,000 in federal subsidies a year without doing anything else—such is the privilege of becoming a Battle Soldier!

"Battle Soldiers tests must be retaken every five years, and if there are upgrades within those five years, the review period is recalculated."

Mike scanned the document's clauses; there wasn't much that needed his attention.

Naturally, the constraints on [Lone Wolf] are the weakest, so there aren't many rules to bind Mike.

"Lone Wolf can accept missions at the Combat Power Test Zone and receive corresponding rewards upon completion."

"Once activated, the Lone Wolf badge can transform into a Lone Wolf mask, concealing one's true face. Any attempt to peer behind the Lone Wolf mask is considered a provocation..."

At this point, Mike looked down at his Lone Wolf badge.

[Can block the prying eyes of creatures below level 200]

Level 200 is the dividing line of Battle General strength.

As a Tier One Battle Soldier, as long as he doesn't draw too much attention, it's unlikely to catch the eye of a Battle General.

"This will suffice for now."

Mike pocketed the Lone Wolf badge, memorized the document's content, and left the room. As he stepped out, he ran into James and others who seemed to have just completed their tests.

James's face was ashen, looking particularly grim, like a pair of moldy underwear.

[Neural Response Test couldn't last 3 seconds, huh, a 3-second man!]

James didn't notice Mike as a group of people were furiously looking for the staff to settle

scores.

"What's going on, did they mess up the difficulty of the Combat Power Test?"

A Thief shouted, "Exactly! I only lasted a minute before I got eliminated, how is that possible?"

Hearing this, Mike gave him a surprised look.

A minute?

A minute for a third-tier Battle Soldier? That's incredible!

Unfortunately, Mike was disappointed.

A note appeared above the Thief's head:

[He only lasted 6 seconds!]

"Impressive, impressive, turning 6 seconds into a minute, he really knows how to talk tough. Just wonder how he performs in bed."

[His record in bed is 3.1415926 seconds!]

Mike nodded, reflecting inwardly.

High emotional intelligence: Time always flies when you're with someone you like.

Low emotional intelligence: Just not my day today.

Clearly, there was a problem with everyone's Combat Power Test.

It was supposed to be a test for first-tier Battle Soldiers, but the difficulty was cranked up to third-tier!

Mike was okay, he gritted his teeth and got through it, even dodging 98% of the attacks and scoring highly.

James and the others couldn't handle it.

These so-called geniuses, even if they couldn't pass the first level, thought they could at least do it with some dignity.

But they only lasted a very short time and looked utterly disheveled!

The huge disparity was too much for them to accept, and they clamored for an explanation.

Soon, a balding, slightly overweight middle-aged man rushed over from the main hall, his forehead sweaty and his expression anxious.

"Sorry, everyone, so sorry!"

He saw James and his group, knowing today was going to be a big trouble!

Among them, there were quite a few descendants of Battle Chiefs!

"Most people took a leave today for the Tower of Truth, and you see what happened here. A new employee accidentally set it to a third-tier Battle Soldiers test, I'm really sorry..."

The balding manager explained a few words, and the faces of James and his group softened.

They really just wanted an explanation; with their status, they had no need to bother with such trivialities.

"Messed up? How can such a serious mistake happen with the Battle Soldiers test!" An archer deliberately scowled and reprimanded.

"Right, right, you are right," the balding manager nodded and bowed, endlessly flattering.

James and his crew cooled off, seeing his slick demeanor, realizing that punching him wouldn't make any sense.

"Alright, let's just pretend nothing happened here. I won't report this mishap," the leader of the young group said, his tone rebellious and carefree.

"But this video..."

The balding manager quickly caught on. These geniuses, who had come all excited to participate in the Battle Soldiers test, ended up with dismal results. If the video got out, their reputations would be ruined, a stain on their lives!

James and his friends were causing a scene because their goal was to delete the video, to destroy the embarrassing evidence!

The balding manager quickly caught on and went along with it, "I'm really sorry, we were short-staffed today, got too busy, and forgot to turn on the cameras over here!"

Saying this, the balding manager pulled out a tablet, tapped a few times, and deleted the Battle Soldiers test footage completely.

"Heh, smart move," James and his group finally backed off, willing to leave.

Mike, who had witnessed this whole drama, didn't say much, but he understood the hints given by the Eye of Truth before the test began. Mike didn't like the arrogance of these so-called geniuses, nor did he look down on the manager's slick ways.

The geniuses' arrogance stemmed from their belief that they had the right to be arrogant- heritage, talent, connections... they all had more than their peers, making it hard not to be

haughty.

And the manager's slickness was more about the hardships and difficulties of life. Resolving a work mishap like this was a decent save.

All this had nothing to do with Mike, and nobody paid him any attention. He was like an invisible man, walking out of the testing room and heading to the Lone Wolf mission dispatch area to see if there were any tasks worth taking on.

After James and his group left, the balding manager heaved a sigh of relief and wiped the

sweat from his forehead.

"These little punks, they scared the hell out of me."

As mentioned before, if there were issues with the Battle Soldiers test, it would be a major

work blunder!

At best, a fine; at worst, sent to the Abyssal Plane to mine stones!

"Thankfully, it was just a false alarm."

The balding manager picked up the tablet and glanced at the previous test data.

"Total tested 126 people, 125 failed, 1 succeeded, rating: SS..."

"They all failed."

The manager put down the tablet, then suddenly froze, as if struck by lightning.

Did he miss something?

He quickly lifted the tablet again, eyes wide in disbelief, even rubbing his eyes repeatedly.

"Am I seeing this right?"

"A tier three Battle Soldiers' Neural Response Test, and someone actually passed!"

"And with an SS rating!"

"Who is this powerhouse? Quick, check the video!"

The balding manager stood frozen, struck by a bolt from the blue.

The video... he had just... deleted it...

....

Mike appeared in the Combat Power Test Zone, in a corner unnoticed, pulling out his Lone Wolf badge which transformed into a mask and secured it on his face.

The lower left corner of the mask bore the character [1], indicating Mike's strength: tier one

Battle Soldiers.

Once the mask was on, Mike's attire also changed dramatically into a loose-fitting combat suit. This disguise made it difficult for even acquaintances to recognize him.

As Mike headed towards the mission dispatch area, many eyes turned towards him.

"Look, it's a Lone Wolf!"

"He seems pretty young, must have recently passed the Battle Soldiers test, right?"

"Daring to take the Lone Wolf path, that's gutsy! I wanna be a Lone Wolf too someday!"

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".....

The onlookers whispered among themselves, careful not to be overheard by Mike. Lone Wolves were among the most formidable of all Battle Soldiers!

Due to the minimal external constraints, Lone Wolves often employed more intense, even

brutal methods in their actions.

No one wanted to offend a Lone Wolf, even if he was just a tier one Battle Soldiers!

"This must be the place, the Wolf's Den?"

Mike looked at the name of the mission dispatch area and smiled slightly, "Interesting."

Stepping into the Wolf's Den, the interior was starkly different from the outside world. The Wolf's Den resembled a business-slumping bar, with European classical decor, dim lighting, soft music, and tables and chairs haphazardly arranged. Guests formed small groups, each huddled in their own circles.

The bar was in the center of the Wolf's Den, with four large screens hanging above, cycling through the available missions.

As Mike entered, someone in a corner suddenly shouted, "Newcomer alert."

Instantly, Mike became the focal point of everyone in the Den, a handsome man lifting his bottle, "This round's on me!"

"This round's expenses are covered by Mr. Jhon!"

Soon, a robotic bartender delivered a small bottle of beer to everyone, Mike included.

Lifting his bottle, Mike nodded slightly to Jhon, then tilted his head back and drank it down in

one go.

The ice-cold beer flowed down his throat to the depths of his soul, eliciting a refreshing moan.

"Quite the generous gesture!"

"Kid, I like you. Come drink with me in Washington D.C. sometime!"

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Chapter 29: No one could answer this question; only time would tell

After a few lively exchanges, the bar returned to its previous calm.

Wolf's Den, this is the haven where Lone Wolves gather, forming their own tight-knit circles. Those who choose the Lone Wolf path often hold a deeper recognition for their peers.

Among the three paths available to Battle Soldiers, the Lone Wolf path consistently has the highest casualty rate. After all, both the Defense Corps and the Mercenary Corps have official backing, providing ample medical support and a higher safety margin.

However, with the highest casualty rate, Lone Wolves also boast the most formidable success rate in terms of development. Those who choose the Lone Wolf path often advance much faster in strength compared to their peers. This is one of the allures of being a Lone Wolf!

Placing his empty bottle on the table, Mike looked up at the large screen displaying numerous missions.

The top, pinned mission read:

[Capture the Fourth Demon Cult Leader!]

"Provide valuable clues, reward: 1 million to 10 million gold coins!"

"Capture the Fourth Demon Cult Leader alive, reward: one piece of SSS-grade weaponry, 10 Battle Lords merits!"

"Provide the corpse of the Fourth Demon Cult Leader and confirm death, reward: one piece of SSS-grade equipment, 2 Battle Lords merits!"

Besides the Fourth Demon Cult Leader, there were also wanted missions for deputy leaders and core members. However, most of these missions were far beyond Mike's current capabilities.

The weakest were at the Battle Chiefs level! If Mike encountered any of them on the battlefield, a mere flick of their finger could end his life!

"Let's see what missions are suitable for me."

Mike's gaze shifted downward, searching among the missions available to tier one Battle Soldiers.

...

In the hallway outside the Director's office at the Combat Power Test Hall, a bald manager paced back and forth, his expression one of internal struggle.

"To speak, or not to speak... that is the question..."

If he kept silent, pretending nothing had happened, and if the situation were to be exposed later, having missed a mysterious genius right under his watch could lead to severe consequences that the bald manager couldn't bear.

Reporting the matter upwards, the bald manager indeed had made a mistake initially, but there was still room for remedy. Considering he was willing to come clean voluntarily, he might be treated more leniently.

Finally, mustering his courage, the bald manager raised his trembling hand and knocked on the Director's office door.

"Come in."

Creaking open the door, the bald manager entered like a schoolboy who had just been caught in a misdeed, his head hung low as he stuttered through the explanation of everything that had happened.

From the new employee setting the wrong difficulty mode, which led to the infuriated geniuses causing a ruckus, to his own decision to delete the video footage in an attempt to cover up the incident.

He didn't dare hide a single detail in front of the Director.

The Director, a retired Battle Chief with deep connections to various corps, was a figure of both formidable strength and extensive networks, someone the manager could only look up to. Playing tricks in front of the Director was akin to courting death!

After listening to the bald manager's report, the Director, contrary to expectations, did not explode in anger. Instead, he pointed to the sofa and said, "Why are you standing? Sit down and talk."

"Yes.. yes!" The bald manager quickly nodded, perching nervously on the edge of the sofa, his back straight and his belly, grown plump over the years, pressing against his legs, making him look comically like a round ball.

The Director picked up his cup and sipped his coffee leisurely before speaking, "At least you had the sense to come to me. If you had tried to hide this, you really should be sent to the Abyssal Plane to mine rocks."

"It was a moment of foolishness when I deleted the video. I deserve to die!" the bald manager lamented. "Director, let's go to the tech department now to recover the video. There might still be time!"

"Recover the video? Who said anything about recovering the video?" The Director's remark left the bald manager completely baffled.

Without the video, how could they identify the mysterious genius? A person with the qualifications of a tier one Battle Soldier, yet able to pass a tier three Battle Soldiers' Neural Response Test-wasn't that the definition of a genius?

Sitting dumbfounded on the sofa, the bald manager looked utterly lost, feeling like a complete fool.

"Sam, you're only seeing the first layer and missing the third," the Director put down his coffee cup. "It's good that you deleted the video. Not just the test video needs to be deleted. From the moment they entered the testing hall, keep a backup of the footage to report to the higher-ups, and delete everything else!"

"Ah?" Sam was utterly confused, feeling as if his intelligence was insufficient.

"Why is that?" he asked, unable to contain his curiosity any longer. "Don't keep me in suspense, just tell me!"

"These videos must be deleted!" The Director stood up, flicked a cigarette from the pack, and tossed it in front of Sam.

Sam caught the cigarette and was about to light it when he was reminded, "No smoking in my office."

Sam quickly put away the cigarette.

The Director lit a cigarette for himself, blew a smoke ring, and said confidently, "Sam, let me ask you, do we humans lack a tier three Battle Soldier?"

"No, we don't!"

"Exactly. Whether this mysterious genius is a tier three Battle Soldier or a tier three Battle General, or even a tier nine Battle Chief, what difference does it make? Turning the tide of battle isn't something one or two Battle Chiefs can achieve. We need higher-tier powerhouses!"

At this point, the Director's expression grew somber. At his peak, he too had the strength of a Battle Chief, fighting and killing enemies on the battlefield. But after a severe injury, he was no longer the warrior of old and had to step back to a secondary role, overseeing logistical

operations.

It was precisely because he had once stood so high that the Director had a broader perspective and a clearer way of looking at problems-sharp and incisive.

The Director continued, "This mysterious genius is still very weak; he has a long way to go. Paying too much attention to him too soon would be like trying to help the shoots grow by pulling them up, which is more harmful than beneficial.

All we need to know is that he is a human genius. That's enough. How far he can go should be

up to him."

"But, but..." Sam instinctively argued, "If we could find him and provide him with more resources, wouldn't that help him grow faster?"

"Normally, yes, but you're overlooking a very important point." The Director's face broke into a cunning smile, his words laden with meaning, "Think back to those difficult young people you mentioned earlier, the ones with impressive backgrounds who caused all the trouble. Wasn't it their rioting that forced you to delete the footage?"

"Yes, yes!"

"Because the footage was deleted, and the genius chose the [Lone Wolf] faction, you couldn't

find any information about him, right?"

"That's exactly right!"

Sam kept nodding, as if he had just realized something.

"Is it all just a coincidence? Have you ever considered that this mysterious genius might be

hiding among these young people?"

Sam gasped, could it really be so?!

Under the Director's reasoning, the truth was perfectly restored. It was all a grand strategy!

Sam couldn't help but exclaim, "What a meticulously minded, thoroughly calculating genius! Hidden in plain sight, like a tree in the forest, a stone in the mountain!"

"That means this genius doesn't want to expose his real strength and identity at all!" the Director confidently stated. "He must come from a family of Battle Chiefs, or even Battle Lords, with enough resources to satisfy his growth needs! Moreover, if he showed too much talent and strength, it would actually put him in greater danger."

Sam was completely convinced. The Director's analysis was flawless, with no loopholes to be

found.

"Since he doesn't want to reveal his identity, he must have his reasons." Finally, the Director concluded decisively, "We'll back up the other videos on a hard drive and delete them from the cloud. The hard drive, along with the report on this matter, will be handed over. The rest should be handled by the higher-ups."

"Director, that's a wise decision!" Sam nodded in agreement, but then asked curiously, "Which department usually handles this kind of thing?"

"Don't ask questions you shouldn't," the Director replied, standing by the window and snuffing out his cigarette. His thin lips moved slightly, but he ultimately didn't say the name. The human Battle Soldiers, having chosen the [Lone Wolf] faction, grow in solitude in the shadows. But how could they be completely left to fend for themselves?

Even the loneliest wolf has a shadow.

Just thinking of the word "shadow" made the Director's heart flutter.

The secret organization [Shadow], created by a supreme being, silently watches over the [Lone Wolf], guarding them until a new Wolf King, a new supreme being, emerges.

"Thor, could he be the new Wolf King, the new supreme being?"

No one could answer this question; only time would tell.

Just call me Thor #Chapter 30: Fortune favors the bold - Read Just call me Thor Chapter 30: Fortune favors the bold

Chapter 30: Fortune favors the bold

Mike paused in front of a large screen. He rubbed his eyes; the number of tasks for tier-one Battle Soldiers was overwhelming, and Mike was almost dizzy from the choices.

Eventually, he had to narrow down the scope of the tasks.

"Tier-one Battle Soldiers, Florida, today!"

After setting the filters, dozens of tasks appeared before Mike.

"Assist the city defense department in routine patrols, half a day, reward \$3,000!"

"Assist the city defense department's emergency support team, one day, reward \$5,000, additional payment for emergency tasks depending on difficulty!"

"Accompany Mrs. Linda, who lost her husband, male required, physically strong, one hour, reward \$6,000, \$2,500 per additional 20 minutes!"

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".....

Mike eliminated the tasks that took too long; after all, with his capabilities, if he went to Mrs. Linda's bed, he wouldn't 'go soft' for less than six hours!

In the end, only three tasks remained for Mike to choose from:

1. Cooperate with the city defense department to encircle the fourth demon cult followers, who have three tier-one Battle Soldiers, duration uncertain, reward \$15,000, an additional \$50,000 for each Battle Soldier killed!
2. Investigate the disappearance of the fourth demon cult followers [Arthas Bloodscribe], reward \$20,000 for clues, \$50,000 for a corpse, \$100,000 for capture alive!
3. Cooperate with the city defense department to chase the fourth demon cult followers, responsible for defending a certain area, duration undecided, reward \$30,000, \$200,000 reward for killing the opponent.

These three tasks all offered combat opportunities and were perfect for testing Mike's recent progress.

After some thought, Mike immediately ruled out the first task. Their operations were likely during the day, and Mike would still be in school. Also, working with the city defense department meant Mike had to reveal his identity, which wasn't good news!

Mike's gaze landed on the name [Arthas Bloodscribe], and the Eye of Truth quickly provided a hint.

[This is a big fish, he's not hiding anymore, he's revealed himself, he's the son of the fourth demon cult Leader!]

"The Leader's son? Too hot to handle, I'm out!" Mike was ready to skip this choice.

[He once received the baptism of the demon god, now severely injured, suffering from magic backlash, paralyzed from the waist down, only has the strength of a tier-two Battle Soldier, no guards around]

Mike's eyes narrowed slightly, intrigued. As a tier-two Battle Soldier, Mike indeed had a fighting chance, and the opponent was the Leader's son, which made his identity very special! The fourth demon cult's Leader, severely injured, was now fleeing everywhere. The fourth demon cult had suffered heavy losses, even the Leader's son had no strong guards around.

While Mike was still hesitating, a new hint popped up.

[Arthas Bloodscribe has clues about the Leader]

Fourth demon cult Leader!

Mike's eyes lit up; he had seen the wanted poster before, just providing clues could earn a minimum reward of \$100,000!

Fortune favors the bold. Moreover, with the enemy in the open and Mike in the dark, he could always choose to run if things went south!

Absolutely low risk, high reward.

Mike walked straight to the bar counter, looking at the masked female bartender. "Hello, I'd like to take on the task ASXDASFZ12312312."

"Okay, please wait, scanning your Lone Wolf badge."

"Task successfully taken, complete within 7 days to receive the corresponding reward, failure

to complete on time will be recorded in your file."

The female bartender's voice was sweet as she bowed slightly to Mike. "Wishing you a triumphant return from your mission."

After taking the task, Mike lingered in Wolf's Den until today's Tower of Truth closed before deciding to log out.

Back at his own home, Mike looked at the slightly brightening sky outside the window, starting to calculate his gains from this trip.

"The original targets were achieved, and the tier-one Battle Soldiers test was also passed."

In Mike's palm, the Lone Wolf badge lay quietly, like a beast lurking in the shadows, ready to pounce.

"The biggest gain, however, is the [Inhibition Orb], it's just a pity the lineage restrictions are too harsh."

Thinking of this, Mike took out the Trade Secret Realm pass and actively contacted Foreskin. The response was almost instantaneous, "Yasuo, you want to remove the lineage restrictions on special items, this is a bit tricky, usually, we recommend handing them over to [Defense Headquarters] in exchange for corresponding rewards."

Fearing misunderstanding, Foreskin quickly explained, "Like you said, this situation is very common with war spoils from the Abyssal Plane!The Abyssal Plane demons aren't stupid; they add a lineage restriction to the special items used in battle, so even if we capture these items, they are still heavily restricted when in our possession."

Listening to Foreskin's explanation, Mike nodded in agreement. Indeed, the Inhibition Orb was exactly such a case.

Foreskin continued, "Of course, after battling them for three hundred years, we've developed ways to break these restrictions. We can have high-tier fighters intervene to break the item restrictions, and I'll send you the corresponding price list."

Soon, Mike received a price list.

"Below grade A, a single unlocking costs 100,000 gold coins?!"

"SS-grade special items, a single unlocking requires 1.2 million gold coins?!"

The prices were so high, it seemed more lucrative than robbing a bank!

1.2 million gold coins completely discouraged Mike from removing the restrictions. Even if he sold his current self, he couldn't gather 1.2 million!

"The price is a bit exaggerated, but it's already an internal discount." Foreskin anticipated Mike's reaction and continued, "If you have acquaintances in Lone Wolf, you could post a task in Wolf's Den, where the prices might be a bit lower."

Wolf's Den, huh? Mike calculated; the Mystic Market needed 1.2 million gold coins, and he only had 50,000 on hand, the gap was just too large.

Even if members of Wolf's Den were willing to offer a discount, it wouldn't be less than 1 million gold coins! Where could Mike possibly get 1 million at this stage? Was he really supposed to hand over the Inhibition Orb to Defense Headquarters?

Mike knew well that Defense Headquarters was always fair in its dealings; the reward for handing over the Inhibition Orb wouldn't be less than 1 million gold coins!

However, the effects of the Inhibition Orb were worth far more than that! If there was any feasible way, Mike would not choose to hand it over.

Foreskin sent another message, "There's another method, but it comes with some risks and side effects. You could use a special potion to temporarily transform and possess a demonic lineage, which would allow you to use the special items.

However, these potions are regulated, their use is strictly controlled, and even the Mystic Market requires real-name registration to purchase! Moreover, you must undergo lineage cleansing as soon as possible after use to prevent your human lineage from being contaminated, ultimately leading to full demonization."

Mike frowned; the side effects were too severe. To use the Inhibition Orb, forcibly transform

into a minotaur?

Mike was a handsome man; he didn't want to become a minotaur at all!

Mike decisively refused this last option. Moreover, real-name purchase was something he

absolutely wouldn't do.

"What a pity, good things I can see but can't use...."

No choice, Mike had to pack up and head to school. The Inhibition Orb issue was always on his

mind.

1 million gold coins... that was a very large sum. Could [Arthas Bloodscribe], the son of the fourth Leader, bring him 1 million?

Thinking this, Mike wrote down [Arthas Bloodscribe]'s name on paper. When he looked at the paper, perhaps he could glean some information about the opponent through the name.

[The target is still in Florida, and he still has no guards around him.] Mike planned to sneak near [Arthas Bloodscribe]'s hiding place after school in the afternoon

to observe up close. If there was a chance, Mike would not hesitate to act.

If the target was tough, after collecting enough information, Mike would make an anonymous report, letting higher-level fighters handle this matter.

"This operation is still a bit risky; I need to prepare more thoroughly." Mike was clear-headed; planning thoroughly before acting was the only way to ensure a smooth plan and as

much personal safety as possible.

Thinking this, Mike sent a list through the Trade Secret Realm pass to Foreskin. "Healing potions, healing scrolls, several combat potions, defense scrolls...."

The list of items, all for preserving life, were not very expensive due to Mike's low level, only

10th level, and all together cost just 300 gold coins.

"Such a bargain." While feeling relieved, Mike sent 300 gold coins through the Trade Secret Realm pass to Foreskin. Soon, Foreskin had everything ready and mailed them back to Mike.

With this, Mike felt more confident about this afternoon's operation. However, the restriction on the Inhibition Orb still had no effective solution.

Arthas Bloodscribe, as the son of the demon cult Leader, even without guards, surely had

plenty of special items and scrolls at hand!

If a battle occurred, having the Inhibition Orb for protection would greatly increase Mike's safety factor! Remember, this is the real world, not the Tower of Truth! If you die here, you're truly dead, with no possibility of resurrection!

Mike couldn't afford any mistakes.