

Dawn of a New Era

#Chapter 11: Meeting an Old Friend - Read Dawn of a New Era Chapter 11: Meeting an Old Friend

Chapter 11: Chapter 11: Meeting an Old Friend

In the subsequent class, the beautiful instructor broke down the movements, from the muscles in the soles of the feet to the calves and thighs, demonstrating every detail meticulously and patiently.

For students who struggled to grasp the essentials, she would offer earnest guidance.

Compared to the Martial Arts teachers at school, her instruction was noticeably more attentive.

Unfortunately, even so, by the end of the class, only two or three out of ten students could execute five to six parts of the movement decently similar, and it should be noted they already had a decent foundation, at least they were already beginners in Swordsmanship.

After the class ended and the students gradually bid farewell and left,

the beautiful teacher approached, bringing along a waft of fragrant breeze.

Her skin was fair, and her features were gentle; although beautiful, she did not evoke a sense of aggression, giving off a feeling of gentle elegance and tranquility.

Her body had the graceful and alluring curves of a mature woman, making Chen Shouyi's heart race and face flush.

Compared to the naïve girls at school, this kind of mature and beautiful charm made his heart pound even more.

He hurriedly stood up respectfully and said, "Hello, teacher!"

"My last name is Wang, just call me Teacher Wang. I would like to know, how is your foundation in Swordsmanship?" She didn't mind the young man's awkwardness, just smiled gently and said.

"I've only learned the forward stab with a bow step!"

The beautiful teacher handed over the wooden sword in her hand. "Can you practice a bit? I want to see your progress to better arrange your class placement."

"Oh, sure, sure!" Chen Shouyi said nervously.

Yesterday he could still face his classmates confidently, but now in front of this beautiful teacher, he seemed to have reverted to being timid.

Chen Shouyi took the sword, took a deep breath, and quickly executed a thrust.

Just as he thrust, he regretted not performing perfectly in front of the beautiful teacher.

If he could relax a bit and not be so nervous, preparing a bit longer, he was sure he could have done better.

"Very standard, just lacking a bit of force, and your footwork is a bit awkward, not smooth enough. How long have you been practicing?" The beautiful teacher was slightly surprised.

"Ha!" Chen Shouyi didn't expect his poor performance would actually receive praise. He subconsciously replied humbly, "Actually, I'm still not very skilled, I've only practiced for a few... few months?"

He originally wanted to say a few days, but in the end, he said a few months, as a few days would be too exaggerated, clearly unrealistic.

"You have a talent for Swordsmanship. Since you have a good foundation, let's do this. There's a new advanced Swordsmanship class starting at 1 PM tomorrow, you should come along." The beautiful teacher, without suspicion, thought for a moment and said.

"Thank you, Teacher Wang. By the way, how much is the fee?" Chen Shouyi remembered to ask.

"The fee here might be a bit high, about 8000 for a session of twenty classes, once a week."

Fortunately, the money is enough, Chen Shouyi thought to himself.

He grew up under the high pressure from Mrs. Chen without developing much bad habits. His monthly living expenses, aside from the necessities, always had a significant surplus. Combined with the 7000 Mrs. Chen sent this morning, he had over 9000 yuan, enough for the tuition.

After paying, Chen Shouyi left the Martial Arts Training Center, checking the time, it was only ten o'clock.

Or should I just go home?

A thought occurred to him, just as he was about to head to the parking lot to get his bicycle, he heard someone calling him.

"Chen Shouyi!?"

He turned around to see, and it was a slightly familiar figure. She had neat short hair, looking fresh and charming under the mild morning sun.

Beside her stood an unfamiliar, handsome young man, seemingly her boyfriend.

He looked at the girl, hesitantly asked, "Are you... Guo Qianqian?"

"Yes, I didn't expect to see you here. You haven't changed at all, still the same honest appearance." Guo Qianqian said with some excitement upon seeing Chen Shouyi.

Chen Shouyi was also a bit excited.

They were classmates in elementary school, even desk mates once, one of the few friends Chen Shouyi had back then, but unfortunately, they parted ways after entering junior high school as she went to study elsewhere. He felt sad for a long time at that time, and never thought she came back.

"By the way, let me introduce, this is my boyfriend Lin Feng!" Guo Qianqian said with a smile.

Suppressing his complicated feelings, Chen Shouyi looked at the young man and greeted him politely.

Her boyfriend, tall and lean, dressed and looked ordinary, not paying attention to the plain-looking, tall and lean Chen Shouyi, only nodded indifferently and then started scrolling through his phone.

"It's been such a long time. Are you also attending classes at the Martial Arts Training Center?"

"No, I just registered today."

"What a coincidence! My boyfriend is as well. He just registered for an advanced Swordsmanship class. Are you planning to apply for the Martial Arts Academy too?" Guo Qianqian asked enthusiastically.

Chen Shouyi gradually calmed down, no longer as excited as before, smiling lightly and saying, "That's unlikely. My physical conditioning isn't there yet. I'm just taking things step by step."

Just then, her boyfriend seemed to grow a bit impatient, put his phone into his pocket, and pretentiously checked his watch, "It's getting late, let's not chat anymore. We agreed to go have pizza just now!"

"Alright, then. Chen Shouyi, why don't you join us? Lin Feng has some discount coupons." Guo Qianqian said, with a courteous politeness, seemingly quite concerned about her boyfriend.

"No need, I need to hurry home!" Noticing the boyfriend's somewhat unpleasant expression, Chen Shouyi smiled and said.

Watching Guo Qianqian leave with her boyfriend, Chen Shouyi felt a bit empty inside, neither sad nor upset, just indifferent as if having never gained anything, it didn't matter losing it.

He quickly gathered himself and, finding his bicycle in the bike shed, headed home swiftly.

Upon returning home, he found his sister was long gone, unsurprised. She was always active and, compared to the unnoticed Chen Shouyi, was a star at school and among friends, barely seen at home during weekends.

"Did you finish registering? If you're hungry, go eat outside." Mrs. Chen placed a dish of rice in front of a guest, wiped her hands, and said.

It was the weekend and not even ten thirty yet, but their family restaurant already had plenty of guests, busying everyone off their feet.

"I finished registering. Class starts at 1 PM tomorrow." Chen Shouyi didn't want to mention the extra thousand to avoid his mother nagging. "Then I'll go eat outside."

"Go, go, seeing you standing here just annoys me." Mrs. Chen said with a look of disdain.

"By the way, do you have enough money?"

As he was nearly at the door, Mrs. Chen spoke again.

"I have enough!"

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After a quick lunch at a small shop outside, Chen Shouyi hurried back to his bedroom, locked the door, lay down on the bed, and entered the Gray Mist Space.

Today's Memory Leaves had already sprouted buds. After staring at it for a while, his mind immediately delved into it.

Within the fast-forwarding memory, it quickly reached the scene in the training room of the Youth Martial Arts Training Center in the morning.

"Today I am going to teach the 'Slash' in Swordsmanship. When subdivided further, it can be divided into Static Slash, Small Step Slash, and Big Step Slash..."

In the training room, the beautiful teacher was explaining.

Chen Shouyi's heart was moved, and his mind immediately approached this beautiful instructor who previously made his heart race and palms sweat, boldly and meticulously observing her from head to toe, missing no detail.

In this world, he was like an all-powerful deity, with no restraint on his actions.

Gradually, he realized, there wasn't much to it.

Just two eyes, a nose, a mouth, nothing different from the other girls in class. If there was anything different, it was her maturity, with a captivating charm.

Chen Shouyi observed for a long time until he felt he could face her normally next time, then he stopped.

By then, the beautiful instructor's demonstration had already ended, but to him, it was just replaying the memory again.

Once Chen Shouyi replayed the memory from the beginning, this time, he didn't waste time and quickly inhabited her body.

He had to note that being in a woman's body always felt a bit uncomfortable. Not only was the chest heavily weighed down with two lumps of flesh, but below felt as if something was missing, leaving an empty sensation.

Fortunately, Chen Shouyi had plenty of experience, and he quickly regained his focus.

The 'Slash' was more complex than the stab, involving more muscles, and the range of motion was larger. Not only did the waist need to twist at a considerable angle, but both feet and the body had intense shifts in balance.

This was only for Static Slash; the Small Step Slash and Big Step Slash were even more complicated, especially the Big Step Slash. The fundamental step alone, akin to shortening vast distances, involved innumerable complex muscle movements.

Fortunately, his forward stab with a bow step was already quite practiced, and he had entered the beginner stage of Swordsmanship. He had his own understanding of muscle control. Just like how going from zero to one is the hardest, reaching two or even three was relatively easier.

He spent the entire afternoon, sometimes jumping off the bed to practice with a wooden sword for half an hour, other times delving into the memory space to experience various muscle power exertion experiences first-hand. When practicing Big Step Slash, the bedroom was too small, so he moved to the living room.

His feet slid through the air like skating, gliding from east to west. By evening, he finally managed to barely grasp the Swordsmanship skill of 'Slash'.

PS: Next Chapter at three o'clock, new week, please recommend.

Chapter 12: Chapter 12: Rapid Growth

Early the next morning, he discovered that his physique and strength had each increased by 0.1. His strength reached 10.6, and his physique was 10.5. Seeing such an astonishing rate of improvement, he felt increasingly confident.

Perhaps, it wouldn't be long before he could truly pass... the Martial Artist Apprentice assessment.

In the morning, he practiced Swordsmanship for a while, as usual.

After lunch, as soon as it hit twelve, he quickly rode his bicycle and rushed to the Youth Martial Arts Training Center.

He had thought he'd be the first to arrive, but to his surprise, there were quite a few students already waiting on the benches outside.

"Chen Shouyi, you signed up for this class too?" Before he even got close, he saw Guo Qianqian standing up and waving to him. Her boyfriend Lin Feng was sitting beside her, clearly here to accompany her.

"What a coincidence. I found out about this class online. I heard the tutor here is really good, so I came attracted by fame," Chen Shouyi said with a smile, able to face Guo Qianqian calmly now.

Lin Feng raised his head with some surprise to look at him. After all, this was a high-level tutoring class, quite expensive, and those who signed up usually had hopes of passing the Martial Artist Apprentice assessment. He felt he might have underestimated him but didn't think too much of it, since Chen Shouyi didn't pose much of a threat.

As the time approached one o'clock, students began arriving one after another.

Including Chen Shouyi, there were a total of eleven students, four girls and seven boys, all seeming to be high school students.

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The tutoring teacher stepped lightly and quickly into the classroom, clapped his hands:

"Unless otherwise notified, all classes will be held at one o'clock every Sunday afternoon. It's best not to be late.

If you're here for tutoring, I assume you are preparing to pass the Martial Arts Apprentice assessment.

Whether Swordsmanship is easy to pass or not, whether you can defeat the assessment robot in a battle, is both simple and complex. It depends on whether your Swordsmanship is fluid and instinctive and whether your basic footwork is proficient.

Many have a misconception, believing that mastering as many basic Swordsmanship moves as possible is better, but that's not the case. Real combat often ends within a few moves, and except for sparring, there aren't many stalemates.

Mastery of one is better than surface-level knowledge of many!

Even if you only master the simple forward lunge, if you perfect it, you can easily pass the assessment.

Generally speaking, as a Martial Arts Apprentice, if your movements aren't instinctive, don't exceed three moves; otherwise, your focus will be divided, resulting in mediocrity in everything."

Chen Shouyi listened in a dream-like state, waking from the joy of learning new Swordsmanship yesterday. Similar words had been said by the teacher of his Martial Arts Class, but never as incisively and to the point as today.

"Any standard Sword Form, slightly modified, becomes a formidable Swordsmanship. In the first class, I will still teach thrusting, you've learned the forward lunge, now I'll teach you upper and lower thrusts and the application of basic steps in combat."

...

Without realizing it, almost a month had passed since the start of the term, and the first monthly exam of senior year was approaching.

It's said that after this exam, there will be a parent-teacher meeting. Sun Xin was finally feeling an omnipresent anxiety, vaguely sensing his imminent dreadful outcome.

"How's your preparation going?"

"What preparation?" Chen Shouyi asked in confusion, turning around from his practice papers.

"Monday's exam next week?" Sun Xin was a bit annoyed by Chen Shouyi's nonchalance.

"I've prepared what I should. It depends on whether the test papers are hard or not," Chen Shouyi said.

He hadn't relaxed his studies this month. Whether his grades improved or not was unknown, but the data on that row of Knowledge attributes generally increased by one, with some particularly prominent ones improving by two.

"Sigh, I wish I had studied hard too," Sun Xin sighed. This month he was busy playing, barely touching his books.

"You're at a late stage of laziness! Still hoping for a cure?" Wang Daguo said gloatingly from behind, "Wouldn't you rather hire a 'parent' for some money?"

Sun Xin's eyes lit up but then darkened miserably, "I want to, but it's impossible. The class teacher already visited my home. If the truth comes out, it might lead to a tragedy."

His father had a military background, and when he hit, he did not hold back.

"Then there's no way. Brother Yi has the right mentality! If you ask me, why study so hard? You should have passed the Martial Artist assessment by now," Wang Daguo, true to his name, tall and burly, spoke with a naturally loud voice, causing several classmates to look over, seemingly interested in whether Chen Shouyi could pass the assessment.

Raising his head, Chen Shouyi could now bear the gazes of others calmly. After considering, he said, "Still a long way to go. The main issue is physical fitness. Today's Martial Arts Academy's spring enrollment depends on luck."

In the past ten days, with the optimized and persistent practice of Body Refining Thirty-Six Styles, all his main attributes, except agility, had reached 11 points, with even agility at 10.9.

Specifically, his bench press now reached 150 kilograms, still far from the 200-kilogram standard for male Martial Artist Apprentice assessments.

However, at the previous month's amazing pace, it would take just over a month, at most two months, to meet the standard.

Yet, as his body neared its limits, the improvement speed of the Body Refining Thirty-Six Styles was noticeably slowing down.

"That's already impressive. You can always retake the test next year. If I were you, I would have dropped out already," Wang Daguo said with envy. His physical fitness was decent, but his Swordsmanship progress was stagnant, and no amount of practice helped.

Martial Arts Academy admissions aren't limited to high school graduates. Anyone under 24 who passes the Martial Arts Apprentice assessment can enter specialized academies for further study.

"Our neighboring class's Shao Dawei, after attending a few days of school, took a year off to focus on the Martial Artist assessment. His physical strength, as I recall, was around 160 kilograms, with Swordsmanship not nearly as good as yours," the black-skinned boy in the front row said, turning around.

In truth, Chen Shouyi was a bit helpless too; he hadn't expected his progress to be so spectacular, to see the hope of being a Martial Arts Apprentice in under a month.

He now didn't know how to tell his parents and make them believe that their seemingly ordinary son was, in fact, a Martial Arts prodigy like his sister. It wouldn't be long before he passed the Martial Artist assessment.

Although he continued to attend classes diligently, it was merely habitual, for what else was there to do?

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The school bell finally rang, and Chen Shouyi grabbed his backpack from the desk and walked out.

"Wait for me!" Sun Xin quickened his pace to catch up with Chen Shouyi.

"Have you been watching that show 'The War of the Divine System' recently?"

"Nope!" Chen Shouyi had been as busy as a dog these days, with no time to watch TV.

"I heard it's adapted from the real-world history of the Divine System's development, super captivating," Sun Xin recommended. Seeing Chen Shouyi unmoved, he clicked his tongue in disinterest.

Since entering senior year, Chen Shouyi had drifted from the group.

The previous trio had turned into a duo now, and for some reason, Zhao Yifeng no longer played with them, keeping his distance. Once, Sun Xin even went to find him, only to be coldly ignored by Zhao Yifeng, who walked away alone.

Maybe Chen Shouyi could vaguely understand Zhao Yifeng's feelings, as he used to be like him, insecure and sensitive, living cautiously in a damp and dark world like snails, afraid of getting hurt or receiving strange looks. Only their kind could communicate tacitly.

But now, Chen Shouyi had jumped out of this mire, and to Zhao Yifeng, he was no longer one of the same kind.

At this moment, a fighter jet zoomed past at low altitude, quickly flying into the distance.

Gazing at the fighter jet, Chen Shouyi felt a heaviness in his heart, suspecting trouble somewhere again. This month's news had reported over half a dozen alien invasions.

The most serious incident involved five stowaway Barbarians who brutally massacred several remote mountain villages, with over a thousand men, women, and children decapitated, their bodies formed into an altar, seemingly for a blood sacrifice.

The news showed an extremely bloody and eerie image, with a sense of religious ritual, even masked, it made him shudder.

PS: Seeking recommendations!!!

Chapter 13: Chapter 13: Apprentice Assessment

In the evening, in the bedroom!

Chen Shouyi moved like a spring, his muscles tensed as one, his steps light as if treading on air, darting forward and backward, left and right. He thrust his sword to the left, then to the right; each strike was fluid and graceful, exuding a unique charm with a peculiar sense of beauty.

His hand was precise and steady, the sword thrusting out like a bullet from a barrel, with his muscles rippling like waves at every strike.

The sword tip pierced through the air, producing a dense sizzling sound.

This was the result of his learning at the tutoring class this month. With increasing proficiency in various forms of sword thrusts, coupled with his gradually refined footwork, his swordsmanship had begun to show its prowess.

This was apparent as his swordsmanship advanced from beginner (proficient 3), which could already be seen to some extent.

At this moment, he suddenly halted from his rapid movements.

He listened intently for a moment, quickly put the wooden sword aside, then promptly sat at the desk, pretending to study a reference book seriously.

Soon, he heard the increasingly clear sound of his parents' footsteps on the stairs.

Then Chen Shouyi heard the door of his sister's room across the hall open.

"Mom, I'm going to the Martial Arts Assessment Center for a test tomorrow!"

Chen Shouyi's ears immediately perked up!

"Why didn't you mention such an important thing earlier? We'll go with you tomorrow," Chen Dawei said excitedly.

"Dad, you don't have to. You guys stick to your plans; my classmate will go with me, and you going would just make me nervous."

"Boy or girl?" Mrs. Chen asked with a hint of caution.

"Mum! Of course it's a girl," Chen Xingyue said coquettishly.

"That won't do, either. You kids wouldn't know how to handle it if something happened. Let your brother go with you, for safety's sake," Mrs. Chen suggested.

Over the past month, Chen Shouyi had changed a lot, becoming increasingly mature and composed, leaving Mrs. Chen more or less reassured.

She then knocked on Chen Shouyi's bedroom door: "Shouyi, come out for a moment."

"Mom, what's up?" Chen Shouyi feigned a puzzled expression.

"Your sister is going for a martial arts assessment tomorrow, accompany her," Mrs. Chen said without suspecting anything. "I'll transfer you five hundred yuan later; you can eat out."

Chen Shouyi glanced at Chen Xingyue, who wore a vaguely disdainful look on her otherwise expressionless face, clearly unwilling to go with him, which stung him slightly, though he didn't show it. "Alright, Mom, I got it," he agreed.

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The next morning, after finishing his morning exercises in the bedroom, he took a refreshing shower in the bathroom.

As soon as he returned and got dressed, his sister Chen Xingyue burst in in a hurry.

"I knew it," Chen Xingyue said, arms crossed, looking unsurprised: "Are you really going out dressed like that?"

Chen Shouyi glanced at his large shorts and sandals, then at his T-shirt, puzzled, "These were new from Mom just a week ago; I've only worn them once."

This past month, Chen Shouyi grew rapidly stronger, and his old clothes became tight. So last week, Mrs. Chen bought him several sets of clothes from a nearby shop.

"Bro, I'm telling you, with such a sense of style, you'll never find a girlfriend," Chen Xingyue said disdainfully.

Chen Shouyi immediately caught on, "In this heat, you want me to wear a shirt and pants for the sake of appearance? Besides, Mom bought these clothes. Be careful, or I'll tell her."

Chen Xingyue was exasperated, "This outfit is fine for home or a casual outing, but we're going to the Martial Arts Assessment Center. Are you seriously going to dress so casually for such a formal occasion?"

I have close friends coming along. When I introduce you as my brother, you might not care, but it's embarrassing for me."

Chen Shouyi's face reddened slightly, but he maintained his composure in front of his sister, "Fine, fine, you choose for me. I'm not fussed."

Chen Xingyue breathed a sigh of relief, finally persuading her stubborn brother.

She immediately opened the wardrobe and soon picked out a pair of sky-blue cropped jeans, along with some faded sneakers. "Put these on."

Being siblings, Chen Shouyi felt no bashfulness with his sister around. He just turned his back, swapped the large shorts for jeans, and put on the sneakers.

Chen Xingyue scrutinized him from head to toe for a good ten seconds before sighing softly, "Your hair... Forget it, there's no time. This will have to do; I didn't have high hopes anyway."

Chen Shouyi felt disgruntled, glancing in the bathroom mirror as his sister pointed it out, noticing his hair had indeed grown a bit long.

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After breakfast, they took a taxi and arrived at the Martial Arts Assessment Center's entrance within ten minutes.

"Xingyue, over here, over here!"

As soon as Chen Shouyi stepped out, two waiting girls cheerfully called out.

"Didn't I say 8 AM? Why are you here so early?"

"We just arrived shortly!" said a fair-skinned girl in a pink-gray floral dress, smiling softly: "We were having breakfast nearby and decided to drop by."

"Xingyue, you're amazing. If you pass this time, you'll be the first in our class. Can't wait to see Xia Feifei's face; she'll be so unhappy," chirped the other girl, her energy vibrant in a short-sleeve top and shorts.

By then, Chen Shouyi had paid the fare and joined them. Chen Xingyue's face showed a hint of embarrassment, quickly whispering, "Stop it; I'm with my brother!"

"This is my brother, Chen Shouyi," Chen Xingyue introduced as he approached, "These are my close friends, Lu Shuyuan and Zhang Qianru."

"Hello, Brother Shouyi!" cried Lu Shuyuan, the girl in the pink-gray dress, in a crisp voice.

Zhang Qianru covered her mouth to stifle a laugh, echoing the greeting moments later.

The greetings made Chen Shouyi's hair stand on end.

Seeing him momentarily lost, Chen Xingyue silently cursed, pinching him quickly.

"Oh, hi, junior sisters!" Chen Shouyi snapped back to reality, quickly waving in greeting as the pain from his waist awoke him.

Zhang Qianru and Lu Shuyuan exchanged knowing glances, stifling a laugh.

Watching her brother flustered in front of her friends made Chen Xingyue slightly embarrassed. She wiped her smooth forehead, pretending nonchalance, and changed the subject, "It's getting hot outside; let's go in."

The Martial Arts Assessment Center was a five-story building, and the quartet eagerly entered the hall.

Since the Martial Arts Apprentice assessment occurred only once a month, despite the test being half an hour away, inside already stretched a long line.

There were those accompanied by parents, others with friends, and, of course, some alone.

Chen Shouyi's eyesight had improved considerably, allowing him to roughly distinguish the assessors from the companions.

He noticed the examiners were mostly older, many over thirty, while youngsters like him were less than a quarter. For children his sister's age, there were barely two or three, quite rare.

"I'll queue up; you take a rest, don't affect your state," Chen Shouyi said.

In front of Chen Shouyi, the girls appeared well-behaved, but as soon as he left, they began chatting animatedly.

"Xingyue, your brother is so nice, I envy having a brother like that."

"Actually, he's okay!" Chen Xingyue forced a laugh, "He just nags a lot, which sometimes annoys me."

This prompted more admiration from her companions.

Inside, she grumbled to herself: If only you had a brother, you wouldn't think that way.

In childhood, he often bullied her due to being older, something she remembered clearly.

"Does your brother also go to high school?" Lu Shuyuan asked curiously, eyes wide.

"Yes, he's in the third year."

"Which high school?"

"What, you've taken a fancy to my brother?" Chen Xingyue teased, unwilling to answer, feeling awkward about his school.

In Dongning City, there are eight high schools. The first is a provincial key, the fourth and third are somewhat lesser but adequate. The rest, including the fifth where Chen Shouyi attends, are pretty much trash schools.

Lu Shuyuan's fair cheeks flushed, "I just wanted to know him a bit, but since you're so awesome, your brother must be impressive too, right?"

"Yes, yes!" Zhang Qianru, full of spirit, chimed in, "We're all best friends, so your brother's our brother too."

Chen Xingyue wanted to earn some face for her brother, but thought it best not to, as it could easily be exposed:

"His grades... aren't that great. He attends the fifth school. But he works really hard, studying late into the night."

ps: Please give a recommendation.

Chapter 14: Chapter 14: Complex Thoughts

Zhang Qianru immediately lost interest, thinking that working hard without good results surely means being stupid!

Who knew Lu Shuyuan would curiously ask, "Your brother is so skilled in Martial Arts, why does he still study so hard?"

"My brother is good at Martial Arts?" Chen Xingyue widened her eyes, full of doubt.

"Haven't you noticed? He walks with a natural rhythm, very similar to our Martial Arts Teacher."

"How is that possible!" Before Chen Xingyue could react, Zhang Qianru already blurted out her thoughts.

Their class's Martial Arts Teacher is a true Martial Artist, although left with incurable dark ailments by magic during explorations in another world, forcing him to remain at the school as an ordinary Martial Arts Teacher, yet his strength is still incomparable to Martial Arts Apprentices.

For the first time, Chen Xingyue seriously scrutinized Chen Shouyi, who was lining up ahead.

His hands were on his waist as he pondered something, standing there loosely with no semblance of posture.

In the past, seeing him like this would always make her secretly frown, lamenting her brother's lack of steel, but now, for some reason, maybe it was an illusion, this seemingly shapeless stance made her feel like he was a crouched leopard, ready to pounce at any moment.

Suddenly, she recalled the scene not long ago where a wooden chopstick was half-embedded into the wall. At the time, she thought it was a coincidence, but now...

"Brother!" Her heart stirred, and she called out.

Immediately, she stared at his movements without blinking. In Martial Arts, humans forcibly overturn their habitual methods of exertion to harness more muscle power, leveraging the various points of the human body to enlarge and trigger force.

Anyone who's learned the exertion techniques of Martial Arts would leave traces on their body, whether it's walking or...

Chen Shouyi turned confusedly, "What's up?"

Chen Xingyue was lost for a moment, but quickly recovered and said, "Nothing, just calling you."

"What a weirdo." Chen Shouyi thought to himself.

"Did you notice?" Lu Shuyuan blushed and spoke softly, "Normally, when ordinary people look at something within fifteen degrees to their sides, they just turn their heads because it's the most effortless and convenient. But it's different for seasoned Martial Arts Apprentices or Martial Artists; they engage their entire spine, including hips, knee joints, and even a series of muscles for overall synergy.

Through extensive power practice, it becomes a habit ingrained in them."

"That doesn't necessarily demonstrate his skill. It might just be a coincidence." Chen Xingyue said, still somewhat reluctant to accept, her thoughts extremely complex.

"Then you haven't noticed his walking. If you've seen it, you wouldn't say that. Every step he takes is subtly performing the standard 'basic step,' each movement is like he's gently floating in the air.

Either he has long been a Martial Arts Apprentice, or his quiet refinement has nearly infused every muscle of his body.

"Seems that's indeed the case, Xing Yue. You don't seem to understand your brother much." Zhang Qianru remarked, somewhat puzzled.

Chen Xingyue opened her mouth but ultimately said nothing, her mind tangled up.

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At eight-thirty, the registration for the Martial Arts examination began.

The Martial Arts examination includes numerous items, just the physical tests alone have the hundred-meter sprint, bench press, lift, squat, followed by archery and the most challenging cold weapon combat.

"Number 102, Chen Xingyue, hundred-meter sprint, 10 seconds 11, passed!"

"Number 102, Chen Xingyue, bench press 155 kilograms, passed!"

"Number 102, Chen Xingyue, squat 265 kilograms, passed!"

...

The physical tests for female Martial Arts Apprentices are considerably lower than those for males. Chen Shouyi suddenly found solace realizing that if he took the female exam, he could definitely pass.

"Brother Shouyi, do you want some water?" Lu Shuyuan shyly handed over a bottle of water.

"Oh, thanks." Chen Shouyi took a sip after receiving it and casually asked, "Are you Xing Yue's classmates?"

"Yes, we are all in the Martial Arts class. I'm her desk mate." Lu Shuyuan said in a gentle manner.

"We are all good friends with Xing Yue!" Zhang Qianru leaned over energetically from the side, seemingly intentionally or unintentionally brushing against Chen Shouyi's arm.

The soft touch of a young girl made Chen Shouyi tense up.

Fortunately, Chen Xingyue returned at that moment, allowing Chen Shouyi to breathe a sigh of relief: "Ah, Xing Yue has passed all the physical tests!"

Chen Xingyue returned expressionless, seemingly not too excited, with a complex and gloomy look directed at Chen Shouyi.

He was puzzled but didn't dwell on it, "Why not take a rest for a while before the archery exam?"

Chen Xingyue nodded, said nothing, took a sip of Lu Shuyuan's water before sitting nearby to meditate.

After about ten minutes, Chen Xingyue stood up, headed to the archery exam area, and started the archery test.

Archery exam consists of two items, fixed target and moving target, both have strict time requirements.

Shooting ten arrows in ten seconds means one arrow must be shot every second.

The bow used is a modern recurve bow, powerful and accurate.

Chen Xingyue easily passed this session too, be it fixed or moving target, every arrow hit close to ten rings with heavy impact.

Upon passing the test, Chen Xingyue's mood didn't relax but grew more tense, her expression tightened with a hint of chill.

"Xing Yue, your Swordsmanship has always been the best, you'll definitely do well," Zhang Qianru cheered her on.

"Even the teacher, who is a true Martial Artist, said you can do it, so you definitely can!"

Chen Shouyi reassured her, "It's really not that important. If you fail this time, there's always a next time."

Regarding her brother's jinx, Chen Xingyue rolled her eyes at him in frustration, not wanting to talk but felt somewhat relieved actually.

The group accompanied Chen Xingyue for half an hour before heading to the cold weapon combat arena.

Cold weapon combat exam involves battling not a human but a testing robot; it looks nothing human-like and is fixed on the platform with two mechanical arms, one holding a wooden sword, the other a three-meter long spear.

The passing criteria are simple: using a weapon to deliver sufficient attacks on its alloy body.

Currently, someone is about to take the test on the platform.

It's a middle-aged man in his thirties, looking serious, pacing step by step onto the platform.

The platform has a sensing zone; once stepped into, the robot identifies the examinee and initiates the combat exam.

The middle-aged man paused before the sensing zone, hesitating.

Chen Shouyi noticed cold sweat starting to seep from his forehead, he took several deep breaths, deliberated for a few seconds before stepping into the platform resolutely.

"Examination begins!"

With the mechanical voice sounding from the robot, the two arms swiftly started moving.

He shouted excitedly, stepping on the basic step, crossing over two meters, instantly entering the robot's attack range, at which point the robot's right mechanical arm with the spear responded abruptly, moving with astonishing speed.

Mid-air, the spear wielding right mechanical arm slightly bent at the joint, then darted forward like a bolt of lightning.

The middle-aged man's basic skills were sharp, with a twitch of his arm, he parried the spear with his wooden sword, and carried the momentum to advance several steps, closing in to two meters from the robot.

Yet, that's where it came to a stop; the left mechanical arm holding the wooden sword all along seems to have waited patiently, suddenly shooting out like a poisonous snake, swiftly aiming for the middle-aged man's head.

Chen Shouyi almost exclaimed in shock.

Luckily, the robot didn't make an error, preventing a tragedy, the wooden sword abruptly stopped less than an inch from the middle-aged man's forehead.

"Examination failed."

Whether startled by the near-dangerous situation or unable to handle the blow of the failure, the middle-aged man remained in place, pale, taking several seconds to regain composure, staggering off the platform.

The second examinee, failed again

The third, likewise.

A string of failures left Chen Xingyue increasingly tense.

Chen Shouyi noticed her hand gripping so tightly, her knuckles had whitened.

PS: Seeking recommendations, the competition in the new book list is too intense.

Chapter 15: Chapter 15: Talent

Chen Shouyi couldn't help but put himself in the place of the assessors. He wasn't sure if he could pass, but he realized he could actually perform even better. His body was more agile than those being assessed, and his basic steps were becoming increasingly at his command.

The robot's reactions always had slight pauses, making it not completely flawless.

As long as one kept their body in constant high-speed motion and didn't linger too long at any moment, approaching the robot was entirely feasible.

"Next, No. 102, Chen Xingyue, for the assessment."

Chen Xingyue immediately stood up.

"Don't be nervous, you got this," Chen Shouyi reassured her.

"Go for it!" Lu Shuyuan and Zhang Qianru also encouraged.

"Mm!" Chen Xingyue nodded heavily and walked to the ring.

Without hesitation, she took a deep breath and stepped into the sensing area.

"Assessment begins."

Chen Xingyue picked up a wooden sword and moved slowly along the edge of the opponent's attack zone. As she kept moving, the two mechanical arms also moved slowly along with her.

Chen Shouyi watched his sister intently; it was his first time seeing her fight, and he couldn't help but feel a little nervous for her.

Then Chen Xingyue made a move; her steps were light as she advanced a step into the robot's attack range.

The next moment, the mechanical arm instantly moved, and the long spear thrust rapidly toward her, piercing the air with a hissing sound.

Fortunately, she seemed to be prepared. She slightly tilted her body, easily dodging the spear, then suddenly accelerated, following the direction of the spear, her body crouched low, and started sprinting rapidly.

Her petite figure, leaning close to the ground as she ran, was like a swift, agile cat in a sprint.

The spear was retracting, and Chen Xingyue was advancing!

At this moment, another wooden sword of the robot quickly lunged forward.

Chen Xingyue, in high-speed motion, seemed to have a sixth sense, rolling her body to the left and narrowly dodged the wooden sword.

Chen Shouyi broke out in a cold sweat watching, but soon realized her movements were all completely planned and even simulated countless times in her mind. This

direction was heading toward the mechanical arm holding the spear, and as the spear retracted preparing for the next attack, it was precisely this robot's blind spot.

With just a clean and efficient roll, her body transitioned from movement to stillness, standing up again, while simultaneously thrusting the wooden sword out like lightning.

"Pa!" A sound rang out.

The wooden sword shattered, and the robot instantly stopped moving.

"Assessment passed!"

"Yay!" Hearing the result, the two girls immediately jumped up with excitement.

Chen Xingyue exhaled a breath, dropped the wooden sword, and turned to walk off the ring.

As she passed Chen Shouyi, she still wore a calm face, trying hard to act as if nothing had happened.

However, she was, after all, just a fifteen-year-old girl, and faced with her classmates, she couldn't hold her joy any longer. Her smile grew wider, and then she and her classmates hugged, bouncing and jumping, releasing the excitement in her heart.

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After sharing the good news with her parents, a group of them quickly found a relatively upscale restaurant to celebrate.

"Brother Shouyi, what's your WeChat number? Let me add you," Zhang Qianru, sitting next to him, asked during the wait for the food.

"Add me too, then we can chat together," Lu Shuyuan said, her face slightly reddening.

"I don't use WeChat," Chen Shouyi said.

He found his sister's two friends too enthusiastic, which made him, someone not used to interacting with girls, a bit uncomfortable.

The two seemed incredulous; in this day and age, there are still people who don't use WeChat.

"My brother uses an old phone that doesn't support the new version of WeChat," Chen Xingyue explained on the side, "My mom is very strict."

"Then why is your phone new?" Zhang Qianru asked, a bit puzzled.

Chen Xingyue's face paused slightly, thinking: This is my reward for being specially recruited by the first school, my brother didn't perform well before, so of course, he didn't get one, but this fact can't be mentioned outright, she needed to come up with another excuse.

Before she could figure out what to say, Chen Shouyi smiled and said,

"I don't have much need for it, I'm usually focused on studying. For me, being able to make a call is enough."

Chen Xingyue gave him a complex glance, perhaps she had grown too used to her brother's ordinariness and hadn't noticed his changes over this period. He seemed to become more confident, no longer blushing easily when faced with other girls, making things awkward for her!

After lunch, everyone went back home.

After the cab arrived at their doorstep, Chen Shouyi was about to get out when Chen Xingyue called out to him.

"Brother, wait, I have something to ask you."

"What is it?" Chen Shouyi turned back, somewhat surprised to find Chen Xingyue seemed hesitant to speak.

This was unlike her usual self.

"Brother, have you... have you already become a Martial Artist Apprentice?"

At his sister's question, Chen Shouyi felt it was somewhat inexplicable and said, "You're talking in your sleep, how could I possibly be a Martial Artist Apprentice?"

"Then have you completed the total refinement of your muscles in your meditative cultivation?"

Chen Shouyi was taken aback for a moment, then immediately asked in confusion, "How did you know?"

He indeed had completed the refinement of all his muscles, but it was only a makeshift version, far short of achieving true refinement. However, even so, it benefited him greatly, making practicing swordsmanship easier, and mastering basic steps simpler. At times, he didn't even need to think; the movements came naturally.

At the same time, it also allowed him to increase his awareness by 0.5 points, reaching 10.8.

Then, Chen Shouyi listened to Chen Xingyue's explanation.

Realizing the actual reason, he realized that it wasn't the effect of his meditative cultivation, or rather, his improvised version didn't have such a significant effect.

The real reason was the aftereffect of frequently entering the mind of his remedial teacher; over time, his muscles subconsciously mimicked the gestures and movements.

But naturally, this wasn't something he could explain to his sister, so Chen Shouyi hesitated for a moment, looking around, and whispered, "It's a bit different from what you're thinking. This isn't the place to talk, let's discuss it at home."

After returning home, they found their parents were busy and, after asking a few excited questions, gave them some privacy.

Quickly, the two were in the living room.

"There's a secret I've been wanting to tell you for a while, just could never find the chance," Chen Shouyi began, organizing his thoughts silently.

He certainly wouldn't reveal anything about the Book of Knowledge to Chen Xingyue; after all, such a thing was extraordinary, and the fewer people knew, the better.

"What secret?" Chen Xingyue's curiosity was piqued by her brother's mysterious demeanor, and she quickly leaned closer.

"I discovered a trick to the meditative cultivation of refining oneself. It's because of this trick that I can easily refine all my muscles."

As soon as he finished speaking, Chen Xingyue's eyes widened in disbelief.

Chen Shouyi was taken aback; he had never seen his sister with such an expression before.

But he quickly gathered his thoughts and described the optimized version of the meditative cultivation method.

If it were the optimized 36 Forms of Body Refinement, he would never dare to bring it out, given the drastic changes that had been made. It wasn't something that could be dismissed as a hidden ancient manual found in some corner.

The 36 Forms of Body Refinement were backed by the Martial Arts Bureau, and were the result of the combined wisdom of hundreds of related labs, even thousands globally, with tens of thousands of related researchers.

No matter how wise an individual, even if they spent their entire life, they couldn't create a more optimized version, let alone someone like him.

However, meditative cultivation was entirely different; in terms of specific actions, the optimized version was virtually unchanged. It still began with meditation, followed by muscle refinement. What changed was the subconscious thought during meditation and refinement, concepts that were more metaphysical.

"Is it that simple!" Chen Xingyue said, her mouth agape after hearing it.

"Simple? No, it's not simple!" Chen Shouyi quickly denied, having looked up plenty of relevant information about meditative self-cultivation and had read up on some brain subconsciousness concepts online. Even a fool would understand how significantly the Book of Knowledge had changed meditative cultivation for him.

Its optimization was by no means as simple as it appeared.

"First, your meditation must be very deep, and you must control your subconscious, knowing what you're going to refine next."

"It's like learning swordsmanship..." Chen Shouyi suddenly didn't know how to describe it.

"Changing a person's natural habits!" Chen Xingyue thought for a moment and said.

"Yes, exactly that. Normally, sensing the body, one feels it as a whole subconsciously. This method, however, forcibly overturns the natural instincts of sensing, making it perceive outlines instead," Chen Shouyi realized.

Chen Xingyue was astonished, realizing this was much harder than changing one's physical habits. After all, the former is intuitive and, while difficult, can be mastered with effort. But the latter is exceedingly abstract, utterly elusive.

Soon, a huge doubt floated to the surface of her mind, and she asked directly, "Then, brother, how did you learn it?"

Listening to her question made Chen Shouyi's face flush slightly, but he immediately composed himself and said, "It might be my talent. I'm naturally able to control the subconscious."

Watching his skeptical sister leave, Chen Shouyi breathed a sigh of relief.

Facing the scrutiny of a smart sister is truly an immense pressure.

If only she were a bit dimmer, it would be better.