

## Dawn of a New Era

### Chapter 16: Chapter 16: Sparring Practice

Evening, Dongning Grand Hotel.

This is considered the highest consumption place in Dongning City. To celebrate her sister passing the Martial Artist Apprentice assessment, the usually frugal Mrs. Chen really splurged this time.

Uncle Chen Dalong's entire family came, except for the cousin who is currently in college. The atmosphere was quite lively.

Chen Shouyi's family has fewer relatives. He has never met his grandparents since he was born. His father's generation only has one uncle, while his mother's side has a few siblings. However, due to some taboo matters, they almost no longer keep in touch.

"Finally, our Chen family has produced a renowned Martial Artist Apprentice, really impressive." Uncle Chen Dalong said while handing over a rather high-end-looking wooden box,

"Thank you, Uncle!" Chen Xingyue gracefully received the wooden box and upon opening it exclaimed with surprise: "Ah, this is an Alloy Sword from the Artifact Workshop."

Chen Shouyi looked somewhat envious, the price of cold weapons varies greatly. The cheaper ones are around one or two thousand, the expensive ones can go up to hundreds of thousands or even millions. The Artifact Workshop is a mid-to-high-end brand of cold weapon manufacturing company.

Even the cheapest sword costs over ten thousand.

The weapon control in Great Xia Country is strict, weapons like swords are mostly for collection, but this does not apply to Martial Artist Apprentices. As soon as one registers as a Martial Artist Apprentice, they possess the privilege to carry weapons freely.

"This is way too much!" Chen Dawei quickly said.

"How can it be called too much? Xing Yue passing the Martial Artist Apprentice assessment is not just your family's business." Aunt, who wore light makeup, affectionately embraced Chen Xingyue and said, then turned her words toward Chen Shouyi: "Shou Yi, you need to work hard, you'll be taking the college entrance examination this year, right?"

Chen Shouyi found himself inadvertently implicated, chuckled dryly: "I'm working hard."

...

This time as well, Chen Shouyi watched his sister become the center of attention at the banquet, dazzling brightly while he was neglected. However, this time he felt no jealousy, genuinely happy for his sister.

He felt truly mature and more confident.

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Sunday, Youth Martial Arts Training Center's training room.

Simple stakes were set up in a row, and all the students practiced the "basic steps" around the stakes in an S-shape one after another.

"Next, Lin Feng!"

"Next, Chen Shouyi!"

When saying Chen Shouyi's name, the female teacher paused and couldn't help but glance at him.

Chen Shouyi waited for a while, seeing Lin Feng ahead stumbling and almost reaching the finish line, he then proceeded forward, his movements ghost-like, his body undulating, swaying left and right.

There was no deliberate intention, nor any pause, the entire process was natural and smooth, as if drawing a sleek curve.

Upon returning, Chen Shouyi was surrounded by a group of students:

"Brother Chen is amazing, I feel he's on par with the teacher." A boy with a face full of pimples admired.

"Yes, it's just like watching a teaching video."

"Still far from it!" Chen Shouyi smiled and shook his head.

This was not modesty, it really was far from it. Others might not notice, but as someone who daily commits mind and soul to the female teacher's body, he could distinctly sense the difference.

His body still lacks refinement, lacking a bit of finesse, during movement his muscle coordination feels slightly rusted, this requires repeated practice and adaptation.

Off to the side, Lin Feng watched Chen Shouyi from afar, secretly clenching his fist.

Throughout this month, his girlfriend Guo Qianqian showed increasing enthusiasm towards Chen Shouyi. Previously, he hadn't felt much about it, his girlfriend could chat openly with anyone, and most importantly, he is more handsome and cooler than him.

Even Guo Qianqian was the one who pursued him.

But gradually he felt the pressure, no matter how hostile, he had to admit, the terrifying martial arts talent of the other party.

Many times, both make the same new moves, both stumble during practice, but by the next class, the other party already mastered it, the moves feel as if practiced countless times.

Such a person really makes one feel powerless inside.

"Clap clap clap!"

The substitute teacher clapped hands and said: "You all practiced well, meaning the basics are almost mastered, now let's try sparring practice."

The students became excited, their faces lit up with anticipation.

Chen Shouyi felt the same, practicing swordsmanship is meant for combat, finally time for some action today.

"Alright, everyone, collect your Protective Suits and Safety Swords first!"

The suit includes a face mask, short jacket, chest armor, arm guards, pants, and gloves, not only thick but quite cumbersome to put on.

But it's necessary, real combat is very dangerous, even without being Martial Artist Apprentice, anyone who practiced some swordsmanship can unleash unimaginable power.

The precise force-exertion system makes the human body fragile like tofu; no need for real swords, a chopstick, wooden stick, even a tree branch can easily kill an ordinary person.

After much effort, Chen Shouyi finally wore the Protective Suit, then picked up a Safety Sword, a lightweight plastic sword, its blade thin and quite soft, even if it hit exposed skin, it hardly causes injury.

On the other side, the female teacher also changed into a Protective Suit, seemed ready to fight: "Now I'll assign groups, Guo Wenlong against Chen Hailiang."

"Wen Ya against Cao Yunyun."

"Lin Feng against Xie Xiangqing."

...

"As for Chen Shouyi, you'll practice with me."

"Yes, teacher!" Chen Shouyi immediately replied, his heart pounding, not that he had any thoughts about the female teacher.

He had seen enough in Memory Space, regarding her body's familiarity, he wasn't much different than her.

He just felt excited, an excitement for real combat, making his blood boil.

"Please guide me!" He mimicked the lines from TV, saying.

Soon, through the teacher's mask, he seemed to see her smiling meaningfully, before he could react, he saw a blur before his eyes, she swiftly skated close, the long sword darting like lightning repeatedly.

"Clap clap clap!"

His heart, abdomen and face mask, seemed exploded by firecrackers, slightly jolted, involuntarily stepping back.

"You talk too much, if this were real combat, you'd be dead just now." She said calmly, barely smirking.

Sometimes, such highly talented students are not likable, they make the teaching feel worthless, even doubting oneself.

A student group with consistent levels is better.

Facing beauty teacher's disdain, Chen Shouyi was completely oblivious, quickly correcting his attitude: "Yes, teacher!"

This time he concentrated his spirit, eyes focused energetically, unfortunately it was still useless, whether trying to attack or evade, the beauty teacher's offense was like a shadow, as if it could predict.

Chen Shouyi was pummeled for more than a minute, body turned numb, nearly suspecting if he offended the beauty teacher somewhere.

She finally paused, exhaling a long breath.

"Do you know why I can hit you?"

"Because you, teacher, are a Martial Artist Apprentice, react faster, stronger." Chen Shouyi subtly flattered.

"That's just part of it, you know who at the card table is most popular?"

"Rich spenders!" Chen Shouyi thought, suddenly an idea emerged, perhaps teacher likes to play cards.

"Uh, it's novices." Beauty teacher promptly said: "Such people often portray their emotions during gambling, get good cards they're elated, get bad cards they're crestfallen, easy to read, lose every time."

Chen Shouyi realized: "You mean, I expose my intentions before attacking."

"Your gaze too fixated on your intended target, any slightly experienced person can effortlessly see through your plans, your path, evade or counterattack in advance."

"I see," Chen Shouyi felt inspired as if enlightened.

"Then how should I do it correctly?"

"For you, simplest is to keep your gaze level, observe with your peripheral vision, disguise your intent, never easily reveal it."

"Now, again!"

## **Chapter 17: Chapter 17: Barbarian**

Chen Shouyi awoke as if from a dream, his spirits lifted immediately. This time, he looked directly into the opponent's eyes, and instinctively took a probing step forward while thrusting the long sword swiftly.

The beautiful teacher lightly parried the sword, deflecting it aside, and then counter-thrust her own sword back.

Her speed was deliberately slowed, giving Chen Shouyi ample time to react.

Chen Shouyi swayed slightly like a willow, easily deflecting this thrusting move, his feet kept moving, then with a slide, his body slipped unexpectedly to the right side of the beautiful teacher like a swimming fish.

Unfortunately, this small maneuver was of no use to her, as she had already taken a step back, her long sword darting toward his waist like a venomous snake.

Chen Shouyi sidestepped to evade the attack.

The two exchanged moves back and forth, and only the whizzing sound of the sword piercing through the air could be heard.

With the beautiful teacher intentionally feeding moves, he was making visible and rapid progress; his swordsmanship and basic steps gradually merged into one, no longer was swordsmanship just swordsmanship, or the basic steps just basic steps, but a deliberate integration of both.

By the end of the course, he still felt unsatisfied.

...

After class, he greeted Guo Qianqian and, under Lin Feng's vigilant watch, quickly left the Youth Martial Arts Training Center without saying much more.

Today, he planned to make a trip to the bookstore to buy several books related to otherworldly realms.

On the one hand, he was always interested in everything about other worlds, and on the other, since his sister passed the Martial Artist exam, he also made a decision in his heart.

He planned to give up the college entrance exam and focus solely on preparing for the Martial Arts Apprentice exam.

The bookstore was about six to seven kilometers from the Youth Martial Arts Center, and it took about ten minutes for Chen Shouyi to reach the destination.

Sunday was the peak business day for the bookstore, and it was crowded with people everywhere.

Chen Shouyi followed the signs and quickly found his target.

"Chen Shouyi, you're here too?"

"Class monitor, what a coincidence, are you also interested in books about other worlds?"

Chen Shouyi turned his head and noticed it was Zhang Xiaoyue, their class monitor.

She was slender, with a soft and delicate appearance, her eyes were not large but had an innocent appeal, wearing a white T-shirt and a short skirt, with slender legs, a slim waist, and a well-rounded chest.

Speaking of it, Chen Shouyi had secretly peeked at her several times, though this was in the Memory Space.

"Yes, I've heard there are mysterious creatures there, besides Barbarians, there are also giants as big as mountains. Haven't you watched 'The War of the Divine System'?"

This was the second time Chen Shouyi heard someone mention this TV series, it seemed to be really popular.

"No, I've been busy studying recently. Unlike you, class monitor, who can easily get the first or second rank, I can only get ahead by working hard." Chen Shouyi said.

If it were before, facing Zhang Xiaoyue, he would have been nervous, blushing, or his heart would race. But perhaps because he had seen her often in the Memory Space, he remained surprisingly calm and natural.

Zhang Xiaoyue covered her mouth and giggled, her moist, beautiful eyes softly gazing at Chen Shouyi:

"I found you have changed a lot, I never used to hear you speak before."

"Perhaps I'm just more low-key."

...

While they were talking, a commotion suddenly erupted from the crowd. Chen Shouyi turned back to see a disheveled, unkempt man holding a bag that looked like a sheet wrapped around it, frantically stuffing books from the shelves into it, with people around him avoiding him at all costs.

He seemed very wary and appeared anxious.

He constantly looked around, and whenever someone approached, he would bare his teeth nervously.

The first thought that came to Chen Shouyi's mind was that the man was committing a robbery.

Because regardless of the man's behavior or mental state, he utterly did not seem like a normal person buying books.

But soon, he felt something was off, for any sane person wouldn't resort to robbing a bookstore.

If they had that kind of nerve, they might as well rob the cash register in the bookstore.

Moreover, the man's T-shirt was actually clean, only worn inside out, with the label clearly visible at the chest.

Besides, Chen Shouyi discovered unexpectedly that the man was extremely handsome, and even the dirt on his face couldn't conceal it.

Especially those pitch-black eyes that emitted a captivating allure.

From TV to the internet, Chen Shouyi had seen countless pretty boys, but none of them had features as perfect as this man.

So perfect as though he stepped out of a painting.

It gave an illusion.

How could such a person exist in reality?

The crowd of onlookers was growing larger, and many seemed to notice his astonishing looks and were secretly taking pictures with their phones.

However, this behavior made the man increasingly anxious.

A low, beast-like growl emitted from his throat, as if warning them.

At this point, the security finally arrived:

"Sir, please do not damage the books, stop what you're doing, and come with me to the security room."

The mysterious man's hand hesitated, and the books fell to the ground with a clatter.

Perhaps intimidated by the man's uniform, the mysterious man began to tremble slightly with fear.

But, for some reason, Chen Shouyi felt a chill in his heart, as if he had fallen into an icy cave, with an unsettling feeling as if facing a fierce beast.

"Something's wrong with this person, let's go quickly!" Chen Shouyi sensed the danger, cold sweat gradually forming on his forehead, and quickly pulled Zhang Xiaoyue as he spoke.

Zhang Xiaoyue was somewhat dazed, but still decided to follow Chen Shouyi.

They had only taken a few steps when something unexpected happened.

A muffled "bang" sounded, accompanied by the eerie sound of sugarcane snapping. Suddenly, he felt as if rain was falling overhead.

Chen Shouyi touched his face and was horrified to find it covered in blood, he couldn't help but glance back.

He saw the previous security guard hanging limp on the bookshelf, motionless.

Bright red blood flowed endlessly down his pant legs, pooling on the ground.

The crowd fell silent for a moment before erupting into screams and began to scatter in all directions.

A chill went through him, his hair stood on end. He pulled the bewildered Zhang Xiaoyue, and followed the chaotic flow of people, running wildly.

A beast-like roar sounded behind them, the volume as loud as thunder, even Chen Shouyi who was over ten meters away heard his ears buzzing.

Then the man's tone became agitated and angry, seemingly using some mysterious language to curse loudly.

"Barbarian, it's a Barbarian!" somebody in the crowd shouted in terror.

However, this word only instilled further panic, as people were pushed and trampled upon, unable to rise again.

Fortunately, Chen Shouyi was strong and robust; tightly holding Zhang Xiaoyue, they remained standing amidst the crowd's turmoil.

Another "bang" followed behind them, sounding terrifyingly loud.

Wooden shards and book fragments filled the air, mixed with splashes of blood and flesh.

The Barbarian seemed to have gone berserk, roaring as he attacked the crowd madly.

As a being from a world with three times the gravity of Earth, his power was terrifying. Each attack sounded like an explosion.

The fragile human body, under such attack, was blasted into gore.

Chen Shouyi even saw a piece of intestine hanging on the head of the person in front, but they seemed oblivious, terrified as they desperately squeezed forward.

Thankfully, they were on the first floor of the bookstore, and the entrance was just a few dozen meters away. After half a minute of chaos, he and Zhang Xiaoyue managed to squeeze out the door with the surging crowd.

"Why is there a Barbarian in the bookstore?" Zhang Xiaoyue asked, her face pale, looking scared.

Chen Shouyi relaxed a bit, saying, "Don't worry about that, let's just get out of here first."

This Barbarian looked quite different from humans, not only with a more rugged appearance but also perhaps because of gravity, generally shorter and sturdier, while this mysterious Barbarian had obviously used supernatural means to change his appearance.

Undoubtedly, he came with a specific purpose, maybe to spy on Earth's knowledge or to gather intelligence.

But regardless of the reason, he was definitely not an ordinary Barbarian.

No sooner had he finished speaking when a loud "bang!" sounded, and cracks spread across the bookstore's wall.

The next moment, with a "boom," the entire wall exploded into a large hole, dust flying, and debris scattering everywhere.

Amidst the swirling dust, a figure dashed out of the bookstore.

PS: New book seeking recommendations

## **Chapter 18: Chapter 18: The Unpredictability of Life and Death**

A pedestrian blocking his path was tossed aside by him with one hand, flying six or seven meters away before falling heavily to the ground.

Luckily, the cars on the street noticed something was wrong and immediately braked, preventing a tragedy.

"He's a Barbarian, take him down, don't let him escape." A middle-aged man who also fled from the bookstore shouted, grabbed a broom from a nearby shop, and wielded it like a sword for confrontation.

His stance clearly showed he had learned Swordsmanship, possibly even a Martial Artist Apprentice, otherwise no one would have the courage to confront a Barbarian in such a situation.

Chen Shouyi, who was preparing to escape, couldn't help but slow down his steps.

As a young man, his heart wasn't cold yet, and his blood still hot, as he looked left and right trying to find a weapon at hand.

Yet before he could find a weapon, the Barbarian rushed towards the middle-aged man instantaneously, Chen Shouyi couldn't describe his speed, even his naked eyes could barely capture it, covering ten plus meters in an instant.

The middle-aged man's sword hadn't even thrust before a fist hit his skull heavily.

His body flew into the air, soon rolling to the ground like a broken sack.

The skull smashed to bits, like a watermelon crushed into pieces.

The scariest part was, throughout the whole time, the Barbarian held a large bag made from bed sheets, filled with books, weighing at least a hundred pounds.

Chen Shouyi only glanced at the tragic corpse, and his hot blood quickly dissipated, a chill spread through his body, and the initial eager anticipation vanished, leaving only the fear deep in his heart.

Fortunately, the Barbarian did not continue senseless slaughter, and after intimidation, he looked vigilantly to both sides before quickly fleeing forward, his steps heavy and vast, spanning five to six meters with each stride.

Within mere seconds, the Barbarian had disappeared into the street.

The incident happened so fast, by the time the heavily armed special police arrived, three minutes had already passed.

By that time, Chen Shouyi had already left the scene.

Both were pushing bicycles, and pedestrians on the road, upon seeing the bloodstains on both, avoided them with frightened expressions.

Yet in their disturbed minds, neither seemed aware.

Zhang Xiaoyue was exceptionally quiet, her body trembling slightly.

Chen Shouyi could feel her fear, actually, not just her, he himself was no different.

People living in peace always find it hard to imagine the brutality of death, even when such news is often broadcasted, as they feel too distant to truly experience, appearing less real.

Dongning City had always been a quiet and peaceful small city, even the war against another world invasion from twenty years ago was only a small-scale high-intensity conflict happening in distant borderlands.

In terms of scale, it couldn't compare to the world wars, and barely affected everyday life.

Perhaps Chen Shouyi would read online with great interest about how much advanced equipment was used in that war, yet never truly felt the cruelty of it.

In this small city, the only event that could be called a different world invasion was from two years ago.

Two smuggling Barbarians were killed in the outskirts of Dongning.

Not long after, a hidden wormhole near Dongning City was discovered, then the military stationed there.

The police were efficient, as they walked down the street, the square's ad screens were broadcasting the wanted notice for the Barbarian, attracting many to stop and watch, with panic written on their faces.

Chen Shouyi escorted Zhang Xiaoyue to the gate of her residential complex, saying, "Class monitor, I'm leaving now."

After a pause, he added comforting words, "The Barbarian shouldn't be able to escape, there are cameras everywhere on the street, perhaps by tonight, the news will report on it."

"Thank you, Chen Shouyi, if it weren't for you dragging me along, I might have..."

"You're our class monitor, how could I leave you behind? Don't overthink this, I'm off now." Chen Shouyi forced a smile, pretending to be relaxed.

Saying so, he cycled away quickly.

Along the way, he received a phone call.

"Why are you still outside? Hurry back!" The voice on the phone was Mrs. Chen's, filled with anxiety.

"Mom, I'm coming back now." Chen Shouyi didn't ask why.

He hung up and sped home.

It was closing time, and the rolling door was half shut, he placed his bicycle through the back door, only to be pulled inside by Mrs. Chen, who quickly locked the rolling door.

"Thank the Bodhisattva, you finally came back, you don't know what happened earlier, it was terrifying." Mrs. Chen said tensely.

Suddenly her expression froze, her face turning pale.

"Why is there blood on you?"

Chen Shouyi touched it, the blood was already dried, on his palm only leaving scabs, possibly with some flesh fragments. Remembering these things were splattered from a corpse, he felt uncomfortable.

Seeing it couldn't be concealed, Chen Shouyi could only confess honestly.

"You... why go to a bad place, must go to the bookstore, you almost scared me to death." Mrs. Chen felt both relieved and afraid, finally couldn't hold back and hit him twice heavily: "Quick, take off your clothes, I'll burn it later. Then pray to cleansing Bodhisattva."

As a business operator who opens doors for business, superstition is most common, his family had been offering to Guanyin and the God of Wealth for years, but neither he nor his sister frequently prayed.

"Alright, mom. By the way, where is Xing Yue?" While taking off his coat, he asked.

"She came back long ago, watching the news upstairs with your dad."

Under Mrs. Chen's watch, after Chen Shouyi prayed to Bodhisattva, he went upstairs and was interrogated by Chen Dawei.

The TV was broadcasting the news from earlier, he saw censored corpses being carried out from the bookstore, some were even just a pile of rotten flesh fitted into bags.

"As of now, the number of deaths from this attack has reached 135, with 43 severely injured, currently undergoing urgent rescue..."

Chen Shouyi took a glance but watched no more, the scene was crueler than reported, he got up and went to the bathroom, taking a shower to wash away all the remaining blood scent off his body.

In the evening, after a simple dinner, the family gathered before the TV, watching the latest news.

On the street outside, police sirens could be heard occasionally, apparently all police forces had been mobilized.

The atmosphere in the living room was a bit oppressive, few spoke.

Such a terrifying otherworldly terrorist roamed the city, no one could eat or sleep well, as if everything were normal.

At seven in the evening.

A news suddenly interrupted.

The host glanced at the script, showing a hint of joy, but quickly turned solemn: "Now broadcasting a report. Under the city blockade, at 6:40 PM, Dongning City's special police force and several honorary special police from the Martial Arts Association finally found the Barbarian's hiding place in Yanghu Park. After intense fighting, the Barbarian was finally killed.

In this battle, including Dongning City's Martial Arts Association Vice President Zhou Shaofeng, four special police officers unfortunately died in the line of duty...

Zhou Shaofeng died!

Chen Shouyi paused for a moment, the first time he heard Zhou Shaofeng's name was from his school's Martial Arts Teacher.

Two years ago, those two Barbarians in Dongning's outskirts were defeated by his single-handed, miraculous stabbing.

However, such a powerful figure, a senior Martial Artist, unexpectedly died, in the battle against the Barbarian.

He felt a sense of dread, yet somewhat relieved.

If he had acted impulsively at the time, charged forward, perhaps...

PS: Seeking recommendations

## **Chapter 19: Chapter 19: Mighty Barbarian**

When Chen Shouyi opened the attribute panel in the evening, he found that this experience was not without its benefits. He noticed his will had increased by 0.2 points again, now reaching 11.2.

However, compared to willpower, he wished more for physical strength.

He absolutely didn't want to flee like a headless chicken when encountering Barbarians again, betting his life on elusive luck and the enemy's whims.

That night, he worked harder and more desperately than ever before.

Swordsmanship, the 36 Physical Exercises, and meditation to refine himself, he completed them all, almost draining every ounce of his physical and mental strength.

Yet, once his spirit slightly recovered, he lay on the bed and entered the Gray Mist Space.

Over the past month, his body here had become increasingly solid.

Though still feeling illusory, there was now a hint of texture, and the small tree had grown a few inches taller, with the space seemingly more stable.

But these were mere details. These changes didn't bring any tangible help to his strength.

He looked at today's Memory Leaves, and soon his consciousness was immersed within.

He chose the memory of encountering the Barbarian. When his mind inhabited the Barbarian's body, an indescribable sensation arose.

Powerful! Incredibly powerful!

The body was filled with an explosive strength, and he felt as if his feet might float off the ground.

But that wasn't all.

Like the sweltering heat after a thunderstorm, everything before his eyes seemed to come alive. His ears were filled with various sounds of all sizes, his nose could sense more subtle odors, his vision became brighter, and his skin felt exceedingly sensitive.

After just feeling it for a few seconds, the massive influx of information made Chen Shouyi dizzy, his mind spinning, forcing his spirit to withdraw from the body.

This experience left him feeling both novel and shocked; is this a Barbarian?

Obviously, the Barbarian who could easily kill Zhou Shaofeng while under police firepower siege wasn't an ordinary one.

...

Time in the Memory Space flowed gently until the moment the middle-aged man stepped forward to face off against the Barbarian.

Feeling his dizziness had subsided, Chen Shouyi hesitated whether to re-enter the Barbarian's body.

He wanted to feel how the muscles engaged when a Barbarian fought.

However, it was essentially killing, a cruel and bloody kind of killing.

The middle-aged man's head would be shattered, brain matter scattering everywhere.

If this were a movie, he could eat popcorn with no emotional stir, eyes glued to the screen.

But this was a memory, and just that afternoon, this middle-aged man had tragically died in front of him.

And now he was about to inhabit the Barbarian's body, personally experiencing how "he" would kill him, smashing his head with his fist.

He struggled inside for a moment, seeing the memory of the battle about to pass.

He finally made a decision.

The next moment, his spirit entered... the body of the middle-aged man.

His body was stronger than Chen Shouyi's, at least meeting the Martial Artist Apprentice's standard. But having experienced the Barbarian's body, this one felt particularly "weak."

Before the tragedy occurred, he gripped the broom tightly, muscles connecting throughout his body as if ready to strike like a "sword."

However, the Barbarian's speed was too fast, beyond his capacity to react. In an instant, a gale barreled toward him, then a fist flew from afar and struck heavily on his head.

Chen Shouyi felt a thunderous explosion, his vision went black, and his consciousness was ejected.

If he could feel his heart, it would probably be pounding wildly.

The experience of death was not pleasant, even though it was a weaker version, far from real death, but it still sent a chilling sensation from the depths of his heart.

He rewound the memory and returned to the previous moment.

This time, he chose to inhabit the Barbarian because having "died" once, his guilt was minimal, with little psychological barrier left.

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Looking at the corpse on the ground, Chen Shouyi exited the Barbarian's body, sorting through his mixed feelings, feeling a bit disappointed.

The Barbarian's use of force was quite crude, still in its initial stages. Compared to ordinary people, he might be experienced and meticulous, but it couldn't compare to human Martial Arts.

It made sense, considering one derived from primitive tribal eras, honing skills through generations of hunting experiences, while the other came from the collective wisdom of the Information Age.

The key point is, the other world's supernatural ability is apparent, whereas on Earth, it is not; the different environments made their pursuit of technique far less emphasized than on Earth.

Nevertheless, that terrifying physical prowess made up for everything. The saying "an ounce of power can subdue ten times the skill" — Chen Shouyi had heard it before but never deeply understood it until now when he personally experienced the terror of strength.

It truly can crush everything.

...

The next day, Dongning City was calm and quiet, and his family's restaurant was back in business.

He also welcomed his first monthly exam since starting senior high school.

Now his mindset was calm. When the Chinese exam paper was distributed, he answered questions smoothly, the tip of his pen scratching the paper, producing a rustling sound. Except for a few blank questions on poetry and verse completion, he filled the entire paper.

Whether he did well or not was unknown, but at least Chen Shouyi was quite satisfied.

The second subject, math, was much harder for Chen Shouyi. He first completed what he could, then tackled the tough problems, still having no clue about two major questions by the end of the exam.

The following day's English and comprehensive science also made his head spin.

After finishing the exams, Chen Shouyi felt utterly exhausted.

"How did you do, Chen Shouyi?" Zhang Xiaoyue suddenly quickened her pace to catch up with Chen Shouyi after they walked out of the classroom.

Looking at the charming and radiant Zhang Xiaoyue beside him, Chen Shouyi couldn't help but recall the soft hand he held a few days ago, his heart beating a few quickened pulses.

However, his face showed no sign of it. A month's "training" had allowed him to face women with at least an outer calm.

"I'm not hoping much for my scores."

He missed too many classes, and a month of effort wasn't enough to make up for it.

"But you'll probably take the exam for Martial Arts Academy, right?" Zhang Xiaoyue gazed at Chen Shouyi with a smile, her eyes seemingly holding some inexplicable meaning.

"Yes, unless something unexpected happens."

"What about you?"

"I don't know yet, but I'll apply to a university in Zhonghai."

Their tacit exchange left Sun Xin, beside them, dumbfounded. Unfortunately, neither of them paid him any attention.

Ahead, in the small woods, people gathered, seemingly involved in a fight.

Chen Shouyi paid no mind. In an ordinary high school like Dongning No. 5, where management was lax, fighting was too common, no longer a surprise.

A group of hormone-charged teenagers could spark fights with the slightest friction.

"It looks like Zhao Yifeng is the one getting beaten." Sun Xin said quietly.

Chen Shouyi immediately halted his steps.

Upon hearing it was a classmate, Zhang Xiaoyue hurriedly shouted, "Stop it, don't fight! What class are you in? I'll report this to the teacher!"

"Oh wow, a beauty, gonna tell the teacher? I'm so scared!" The three stopped. One, seemingly the tall leader, shook his flowing hair and said with a cheeky face.

Chen Shouyi saw Zhang Xiaoyue's face full of shame and anger, shaking his head internally. Reasoning with such people is useless; the weaker you are, the more you'll be bullied. Only a stronger fist can convince them.

He knew this before but didn't have a stronger fist. Now he did.

He immediately rushed up.

His speed was astonishing, stepping quickly into the crowd.

The tall one stood there without reacting much, only for Chen Shouyi to lightly flick his hand, causing him to stumble and fall to the ground.

The other two youths responded, lunging forward together, aiming to subdue Chen Shouyi.

Sadly, against a near Martial Arts Apprentice, such resistance was as meaningless as a child resisting an adult.

He grabbed both by the arms, pulling along with their force, and they smoothly and swiftly fell face-first, eating dirt.

"Just you wait."

"If you have the guts, don't leave!"

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"Thank you!" Zhao Yifeng stood up, his face bruised and swollen. He glanced at Chen Shouyi, then at the pretty Zhang Xiaoyue, speaking reluctantly.

"Aren't we friends?" Chen Shouyi said.

"Zhao Yifeng, why were they beating you?" Zhang Xiaoyue asked.

"It's... nothing!" He mumbled, turning red, admitting nothing.

...

In the end, Zhao Yifeng didn't explain why and soon limped away.

Chen Shouyi watched his retreating figure silently, as if seeing his past self.

## Chapter 20: Chapter 20: Spatial Passage

Leaving the school gates, after Sun Xin left, Chen Shouyi took the opportunity to suggest going for ice cream.

Zhang Xiaoyue blushed but did not refuse.

She was very beautiful. If women were compared to water, some women looked like muddy water, while others looked like a clear spring.

Undoubtedly, Zhang Xiaoyue was the latter.

However, Chen Shouyi found that even though he was delighted, he was not as excited and thrilled as he imagined; this month's bizarre experiences had rapidly matured him from an inexperienced youth.

Because the ice cream shop was on another street, it wasn't on the way,

On the way home, Chen Shouyi chose another route. When passing by an unfinished building on the roadside, the Book of Knowledge in his mind suddenly flashed.

At first, Chen Shouyi didn't pay attention, but after finishing today's lessons, when he lay down to sleep at night, for some reason, he couldn't help but think of this phenomenon again.

Since it was integrated into his body, the Book of Knowledge had always been silent, as if it were a dead object, never responding unless called upon.

But today an unexpected situation occurred.

Thinking about this strange matter, he tossed and turned, unable to sleep. Finally, unable to resist, he got dressed, opened the door, and quietly left the house without disturbing anyone.

He looked at the time; it was already half-past twelve.

Dongning City, being a small town, lacked a vibrant nightlife.

At this point in time, there were few people around, the streets mostly empty, with only the occasional car speeding by.

The abandoned building was not far from here. After crossing a few streets, Chen Shouyi quickly arrived.

Even he didn't know why he came here, as if some mysterious force was compelling him forward.

Looking at the building ahead, he gritted his teeth and walked over.

If it were such a dark corner before, he would never have gone in.

But his strength was his confidence; as long as it wasn't a powerful Martial Artist Apprentice, even a group of ordinary people would be no match for him. If he unleashed his full force, it would basically be a deadly single strike.

There were no street lights here, and it was pitch black.

He picked up a discarded wooden stick from the ground, which made him much braver.

This unfinished building was large, initially intended as a commercial plaza.

Three years ago, when this building started construction, it was quite a sensation in the nearby area.

Unfortunately, it was left a mess in the end, with the boss running away.

Chen Shouyi walked slowly, one deep step followed by a shallow one; the Book of Knowledge reacted more intensely, flashing frequently like it was hit by a virus, and, perhaps it was just his imagination, he felt increasingly warm.

It was as if a hot spring gushed with warm water, spreading throughout his body.

The fatigue lingering after evening exercises seemed to lessen considerably, and his steps became lighter.

Following the mysterious guidance, he headed straight for the underground parking lot.

It was utterly dark here, without a hint of light. He took out his phone, turned on the light, and cautiously groped forward.

After walking for only a few seconds, the phone suddenly flickered a few times, and the light went out.

Chen Shouyi quickly pressed it a few times, finding it completely unresponsive.

At this moment, he noticed from the corner of his eye that there seemed to be a faint glow ahead.

"What is that?"

He was startled, his heart pounding as he tried hard to see clearly, but the light was so faint, so vague, that he couldn't make out what it was.

He gripped the wooden stick tightly in his hand and continued to walk forward.

He walked another twenty or thirty meters, and suddenly his body stiffened, his steps halted. The stick slipped from his hand, clattering against the ground, resonating in the silent midnight parking lot.

Yet Chen Shouyi remained motionless, seemingly unaware.

He widened his eyes, looking tens of meters ahead.

A small patch of green grass, like a mirage, emerged on the ground, emitting a faint glow.

It was about one square meter, over two meters high, seamlessly integrated with the ground below, as if a patch of grass had sprouted on the concrete floor.

"An undiscovered spatial passage!" he thought in shock.

He had seen spatial passages on TV and the internet, both large and small, but none compared to seeing one with his own eyes.

"But why would a spatial passage appear here?" he quickly calmed down.

If he remembered correctly, this unfinished building was constructed three years ago, which means three years ago, the spatial passage hadn't formed. This suggests the passage only appeared recently.

This indicates that after the spatial fusion event twenty years ago, which had stalled for two decades, spatial fusion seemed to have begun again.

He suddenly recalled the recent news and the shape-shifted barbarian incident in Dongning City: "No wonder there have been more interdimensional creature attacks lately."

However, at this moment, he didn't have time to think much further.

He picked up the stick and walked step by step towards the passage.

As he approached this passage, he felt his body becoming hotter, as if there was a flame roasting inside him. Under this strange situation, his condition seemed to be getting better, and there seemed to be a force sprouting within him, transforming his body.

Soon he was close to the spatial passage.

Looking at the grassland within reach, it seemed like a step could take him into an alternate world.

"Should I take a look? If it's dangerous, I'll come back immediately." Feeling the intense changes within himself, Chen Shouyi couldn't help but have this idea.

He tentatively stretched a stick into the spatial passage, and it immediately sank, as if something was holding it down. He wasn't surprised because the gravity in the alternate world is three times that of Earth.

Soon the stick touched the grassland, and he found that there was no refraction of light causing a height difference. It matched perfectly with what he saw; the alternate world seemed to be seamlessly connected to the parking lot.

Then he pulled the stick out, carefully observing it under the dim light. It was unharmed.

"Looks like it's safe to enter."

He took several deep breaths, and then tentatively stepped in with one foot.

The next moment, space shifted suddenly, and his body sank heavily.

Although Chen Shouyi was mentally prepared for this, he almost fell to the ground on his bottom.

In this kind of gravity, sitting like that might break one's coccyx.

The threefold gravity made his whole body feel like it was being weighed down, breathing became difficult, and even his heart felt vaguely uncomfortable. Without time to marvel at the terrifying gravity here, as soon as he stood firm, he vigilantly surveyed the surroundings.

On Earth, it was still dark over there, but here it was daytime. He found himself standing halfway up a mountain, from where he could see the distant sea. As far as his sight could reach, there were no large creatures, only a few indistinct black dots soaring above.

Next, he carefully checked the surrounding grassland again and did not find any insects from the alternate world.

He finally breathed a sigh of relief.

Along the abrupt concrete ground on the grass, he slowly sat down, holding the stick tightly in his hand.

Only then did he have time to focus on the changes in his body, which was becoming hotter and hotter, almost to the point of spontaneous combustion. His skin was red all over, and steam was rising from his body.

Oddly enough, despite the burning sensation, his body felt increasingly lighter.

When he first entered, he felt a bit of chest tightness and shortness of breath, but as time passed, he felt the gravity here seemed to be decreasing, his breathing gradually became smoother, and the chest congestion feeling slowly subsided.

Undoubtedly, this was clearly related to the Book of Knowledge.

He immediately called out to the Book of Knowledge.

In this alternate world, the Book of Knowledge seemed to become more active. With just a thought, the attribute panel instantly appeared in his mind.

Name: Chen Shouyi

Attributes

Strength: 11.6 (10)

Agility: 11.7 (10)

Constitution: 12.1 (10)

Intelligence: 10.8 (10)

Perception: 10.8 (10)

Willpower: 11.4 (10)

Knowledge: Chinese Language (Mastery 6); Physics (Proficient 12); Chemistry (Proficient 11); Mathematics (Proficient 9); English (Proficient 6); Computer Science (Beginner 6); Culinary Skills (Beginner 5); Body Refining Thirty-Six Forms (Proficient 8); Meditation and Self-Refinement (Proficient 2); Swordsmanship (Proficient 4); Archery (Uninitiated)

Innate Ability: Natural Healing

Energy Accumulation: 2.35

Chen Shouyi was stunned at first glance.

He couldn't help but look at it a few more times, almost thinking his eyes were playing tricks on him.

In a short period of time, his attributes had changed astonishingly.

"No wonder I feel more and more relaxed."

Not only that, but the attribute panel also included a new innate ability: "Natural Healing."

He suddenly remembered the material of the Book of Knowledge, which seemed to be made from the heart of the World Tree from the alternate world. In the legend of the World Tree among the barbarians of the alternate world, it was born at the beginning of the world, with the ability to support space and balance nature.

Of course, in Chen Shouyi's mind, legends are just legends, bound to have exaggerated parts due to divinity, and the real situation would definitely be much less impressive.

Even if they are gods of the alternate world, even in this world, their power has not reached beyond imagination. Most of the civilization of the alternate world remains within a barbaric stage, still dominated by tribes; a state has yet to be formed.

Many of their gods are worshipped Totem Gods, or divine beasts, powerful giants, or some natural spirits. They may have some abilities beyond human comprehension but far from being omnipotent.

However, even if the legends are greatly downgraded and on Earth, they become fragmented and worn out, with their power not apparent, it seems to still retain some abilities and have transformed his body.

Moreover, this transformation hasn't stopped; it seems to have just begun. In just over ten seconds, he noticed that his strength had once again increased by 0.1.

ps: Seeking recommendation