

Dawn of a New Era #Chapter 91: Things Remain, People Change - Read Dawn of a New Era Chapter 91: Things Remain, People Change

Chapter 91: Chapter 91: Things Remain, People Change

At this moment, a military vehicle sped towards them from a distance.

With a sudden brake, the tires screeched harshly against the ground.

Two or three dozen soldiers quickly jumped off the vehicle, some armed with guns on alert, others quickly checking on the soldiers lying in pools of blood, many of their guns were aimed at Chen Shouyi who stood holding a sword.

Fortunately, the misunderstanding was quickly resolved.

The leading officer, looking grimly at the numerous corpses, managed to pull himself together and shook hands firmly with Chen Shouyi, saying, "Thank you very much for your help."

"In such matters, I think no one would stand idly by. However, I came with my family to Dongning City this time, so I hope you can keep this confidential." Chen Shouyi said, recognizing that as the cult had not been completely eliminated, revealing his identity could invite retaliation.

"Of course!"

...

Chen Shouyi returned to the bus.

The bus was extremely quiet, and everyone looked at Chen Shouyi with awe and avoided his gaze.

Martial artists were distant and unfamiliar to ordinary people, almost like characters from the horizon.

No one could feel at ease in the presence of someone who could easily take lives. Especially since they had just witnessed a bloody slaughter.

Chen Shouyi sat back in his seat, and Mrs. Chen turned around and glared at him.

She wasn't affected in the slightest, no matter how extraordinary her son was, he was still her son, could he defy the heavens?

Fortunately, perhaps influenced by the bus's quiet atmosphere, she ended up saying nothing.

However, the peace didn't last long; half an hour later, the bus finally arrived at a stop.

...

"Pa!"

"You're getting more capable, huh?"

Chen Shouyi felt a pain at the back of his head and habitually shrunk his neck.

Mrs. Chen, angry beyond words, said, "You rushed towards such a dangerous situation; do you not value your life?"

She didn't have such high awareness, for her, her son's safety was the most important.

"Actually, it wasn't that dangerous." Chen Shouyi attempted to justify, only to receive another slap on the back of his head.

Chen Xingyue was gloating on the side.

"Alright, alright! He's already a martial artist; he's not a child anymore. He's not an ordinary person. I'm sure he knows what he's doing," Chen Dawei advised.

"Knowing my ass! I think he's just foolish, how did we have such a foolish son."

"Stop talking, a lot of people are watching!"

...

Dongning City was filled with police and soldiers, the place was heavily guarded, but people's minds were relatively calm, most shops on both sides were open, and there were many pedestrians.

Instead of going home, they chose a hotel far from their home.

After all that had happened, even the most careless people have developed a basic sense of vigilance. After all, with the cult forces not fully eradicated, no one could guarantee if anyone was still watching here.

After checking into the hotel, Chen Shouyi returned to his room to put down his luggage.

He opened the window to check the surroundings; this place was in a bustling area, and there were several military police patrolling the street in front.

It seemed relatively safe.

He checked the time; it was only nine in the morning, still early for lunch.

He knocked on his parents' door, made an excuse, grabbed his briefcase, and slipped out of the hotel.

...

Walking down the road, he passed by a primary school.

Seeing the little students on the playground taking a PE lesson.

Chen Shouyi suddenly realized that Dongning was back to school.

He couldn't help but feel a ripple of emotion and quickly flagged down a taxi.

"Where to?" the driver asked.

"To Five Middle School!"

The driver looked at Chen Shouyi through the rearview mirror and asked, "Late for school?"

"In a hurry!" Chen Shouyi replied impatiently.

"Right away!" The driver smiled and quickly drove off.

Watching the scenery outside the window quickly fade away, his heart pounded.

A dozen minutes later, Chen Shouyi handed over a hundred-Yuan bill and got out of the car.

"I still need to give you change!"

"Don't worry about it!"

Chen Shouyi hurriedly walked towards the school gates.

The original electric sliding door of the school had been dismantled, replaced by a massive iron gate with four security guards standing on both sides.

Evidently, during this period, the school had also strengthened its security.

Of course, that big iron gate was for school personnel and vehicle passage, while students used a small iron gate to pass through.

"Sir, please open the gate," Chen Shouyi knocked on the security room.

The guard carefully examined Chen Shouyi and hesitantly asked, "Who are you here for?"

This young man looked youthful but had a strong aura, giving a sense of pressure, making it hard to tell whether he was a student or an outsider.

"I'm Chen Shouyi from Class 7, Grade 3."

The guard, with a suspicious look, put on reading glasses, took the roster, and started searching, finally finding the name in Class 7, Grade 3.

Seeing this, Chen Shouyi also slightly breathed a sigh of relief, seemingly the student roster hadn't been changed since he took time off, otherwise, he would have to climb in over the wall.

Seeing that he was a student, the guard's attitude changed, and his authority came through:

"You see the time, you're over an hour late. Come, fill in the register!"

Chen Shouyi had no choice but to sign his name.

...

Walking back into the campus, he had a sense of things that felt the same yet different.

The school was still the same, but he was no longer the same.

He quickly walked to the corridor of Class 7, peering through the window inside but did not see Zhang Xiaoyue. Thinking he had missed her, he looked over again...

It was still class time, and Teacher Cao Lili was buzzing with words on the podium.

"This month's test, look at the grades you all scored?"

Our Class 7 is almost at the bottom!

I've been teaching for six years, and this is my third graduating class.

You are the worst batch I've taught."

Seeing someone repeatedly looking outside, winking and motioning, Cao Lili couldn't suppress the anger surging:

"Sun Xin, what's so attractive outside? Stand up and tell us... You scored last in the class in the last monthly exam, and this time you didn't fall further, stable results..."

Sun Xin, already indifferent, boldly said, "Reporting to the teacher, it's Chen Shouyi affecting me!"

Cao Lili paused, opened the door, and was surprised to see the slightly unfamiliar-looking young man:

"Chen Shouyi!?"

Although not seeing Zhang Xiaoyue made him a bit unsettled, Chen Shouyi still mustered a smile, "Hello Teacher Cao!"

Cao Lili, in disbelief, said, "It's really you. Are you here to reinstate your studies?"

"No, I just came to see my classmates," Chen Shouyi stated.

Then he added, "Also, I've already been certified as a Martial Artist Apprentice."

He refrained from mentioning the Martial Artist Certificate, as it was too shocking.

But even so, Cao Lili was astonished, her mouth agape, and the whole class was abuzz. Five Middle is just an ordinary high school; the number of students who achieve the Martial Arts Apprentice certificate annually is fewer than those entering prestigious universities.

"Teacher Cao, I'll not disturb your class for now, I'll come back after class!"

Feeling downcast, Chen Shouyi walked downstairs step by step and sat along the flowerbed, silently in a daze.

Zhang Xiaoyue hasn't had anything happen to her, has she?

The more he thought about it, the more uneasy he felt.

His mind was a mess!

Finally, the class bell rang.

Chen Shouyi got up and quickly returned to the class. He was immediately surrounded by a large group of people.

"You've changed so much, I didn't even recognize you."

"Chen Shouyi, you really passed the Martial Artist Apprentice test?"

"Really envy you, finally free."

"Pity us because we still have to suffer through it."

After patiently dealing with the enthusiastic and curious classmates, Chen Shouyi pulled Sun Xin over to the corridor and asked, "Why didn't I see the class monitor?"

"Wow, the first thing you ask about is the class monitor, do you two really have something going on? You really forget your friends when you have a lover!"

"Cut the nonsense, tell me quickly!"

Seeing Chen Shouyi's impatient expression, Sun Xin felt an unexplainable pressure and quickly said,

"She transferred, I heard her father's job was relocated, and she went to school somewhere else."

"Did she mention where?" Chen Shouyi hurriedly asked.

"She didn't come personally, how would I know? It was what the class teacher said!"

Chapter 92: Chapter 92: Demanding Money

Chen Shouyi walked into Cao Lili's office.

Cao Lili was very polite, even made a cup of tea, and asked a lot about him.

During their conversation, Chen Shouyi mentioned Zhang Xiaoyue. She seemed a bit surprised, but quickly understood. Young love isn't unusual, not even in junior high, let alone high school.

She told him what she knew, but unfortunately, she didn't know much about Zhang Xiaoyue's situation. The transfer procedures were handled by Zhang Xiaoyue's father, and he hadn't mentioned where she was transferring to.

Chen Shouyi didn't stay long in the office and left the school soon afterwards.

Walking on the street, he couldn't help but feel a bit lost inside.

It seemed like fate was playing a joke on him, giving him hope only to bring disappointment.

...

He wandered aimlessly and unknowingly found himself near the unfinished building again.

He noticed the building and surrounding structures had been demolished, with high cement walls erected around them. Passing by the entrance, he saw several soldiers on guard, indicating that it had been turned into a military camp.

Chen Shouyi took a glance and quickly left.

...

After having lunch outside, Chen Shouyi accompanied Mrs. Chen to an office building.

It's equipped with a generator, so there's no power shortage.

They took the elevator to the seventh floor.

Seeing the company doors still open, Mrs. Chen let out a sigh of relief.

Chen Shouyi glanced at the company name "Yuanlongsheng Investment Company."

It seemed most of his family's money was invested here.

Jiangnan Province has always valued commerce, with numerous small and medium enterprises. These enterprises often find it difficult to get loans from banks, as the process is lengthy and the approval slow and inflexible, leading to a flourishing underground finance sector.

...

"Sister Jiang, I'm sorry, the boss is busy. Please wait!" After explaining their purpose, a flamboyantly dressed receptionist guided them to the reception room.

Soon, two cups of tea were served.

Chen Shouyi played with the tea cup while looking out the window at the office outside.

The company was small, with just over a dozen people, some of whom were muscular and burly, obviously trained in Martial Arts.

After sitting for about five or six minutes, the boss walked in with big strides.

He appeared to be around forty-five, middle-aged, bald, and looked amiable. As he came in, he smiled and said:

"Sister Jiang, I'm sorry for the delay. How rare it is to see you today!"

Is this your son? He's grown so much. I held him when he was little."

Mrs. Chen, whose name is Jiang Fen, laughed and said, "Yes, call him Uncle Huang. We all used to be from the same village. You might not recognize him."

"Hello, Uncle Huang!" Chen Shouyi felt a bit helpless, but greeted him.

Then Mrs. Chen complained, "Why would I want to invest money? We're moving away. I'm here today to get my money back."

Upon hearing this, Boss Huang sighed and said with difficulty, "We're all from the same village. I won't hide it from you, the money has been a bit tight lately. You know how bad the situation is now; many businesses are closing down. We can't get the money either, and we need to wait a bit longer until I can process the collateral and return it to you."

"That's not what you said initially. We can do without the interest, but we still want the money back," Mrs. Chen said.

The boss frowned slightly as he listened and said, "Ah, Sister Jiang, don't you trust me? Give me some more time, and when I gather the funds, I'll repay you first with double the interest. I really can't do it now."

Mrs. Chen, who is soft-hearted despite seeming strong, hesitated when she heard this. After all, they've known each other for many years, and his reputation has always been excellent. She wavered and asked:

"How long will it take? I really need the money urgently!"

Boss Huang breathed a sigh of relief and said firmly, "Give me one month, at most one month, and I'll return the money immediately. My word is as good as a bond."

Watching Boss Huang's earnest promises, the more Chen Shouyi listened, the more he doubted.

In fact, he already found it odd that the company hadn't closed down with the boss running away.

Although such company loans usually require collateral, mostly real estate, storefronts, or luxury cars, even if these collaterals were smoothly collected.

But Dongning City is not Hedong. Continuous power cuts and the cult incident have severely impacted commercial activity. Many capable and wealthy people have probably already left Dongning.

This kind of asset is now not only significantly devalued, even if they can be disposed of, it would still be a problem. Even if Dongning City resumes power and lifts martial law, it's a distant hope to return to its former prosperity.

Most of the investment company's funds are not its own but are sourced through illegal private lending from the public's savings.

In a sense, they have already gone bankrupt.

Thus, the company still operating normally seems somewhat amusing.

Seeing Mrs. Chen about to leave, Chen Shouyi quickly said, "Mom, let's not be in such a hurry. How much did our family invest in total?"

"About 3.8 million!"

Chen Shouyi almost choked; he had suspected the amount wasn't small, but he didn't expect it to be so much.

But thinking about it, it made sense. Their family restaurant had been running for years, and they didn't have to pay rent.

Both parents are frugal people. Over the years, their biggest expenses, besides his and his sister's tuition and training fees, was buying the minivan that was recently destroyed by fire, which only cost over a hundred thousand.

This money was their painstaking savings, bit by bit, set aside through frugality and investment.

...

Chen Shouyi set the teacup down with a "bang": "Let me say something. Boss Huang, is it? I don't care what you're trying to do, but our family's money must be returned today!"

Huang's face showed a flash of anger, but it was fleeting. He quickly smiled and said, "Your son is quite impulsive. Don't worry about the money; in a month, it will bring both principal and interest back to you. Sister Jiang, I'm sorry, but I have some documents to handle, so let's not chat today."

He stood up as if preparing to leave.

Chen Shouyi smiled, "It seems you didn't hear me clearly. I said the money must be given to us today. If you run away, who will we ask for it?"

Huang's face darkened, his cheek muscles twitched, but his deep-seated cunning quickly produced a smile again:

"You might not understand me, young man. I've always had a longstanding relationship with your parents. The money your family invests here every year, and I've never shorted the interest, always at the highest rate.

Then he turned to Mrs. Chen: "Sister Jiang, your son is wronging me. Please speak for me!"

Mrs. Chen also sensed something was off, especially with the word "runaway" being so sensitive. The more she thought about it, the more possible it seemed. Her face also darkened: "I listen to my son!"

Huang shook his head, no longer bothered to pretend, lit a cigarette, leaned back in the chair, and exhaled a puff of smoke: "If you're being unreasonable, I can't help it, there's really no money left at all."

As he spoke, he knocked on the table.

Two burly men approached the door, scanning the two of them, then asked, "Boss, what's up?"

"Escort these two out!"

"Haha! I like it straightforward; what's the point of beating around the bush?" Chen Shouyi laughed loudly.

Saying this, he suddenly grabbed the red table in front of him, which weighed over a hundred kilograms. To his current strength, it was as light as grabbing a straw. In the next moment, he hurled it towards the door.

He didn't dare to use too much force, fearing the two might not dodge in time and be crushed to death.

In the next moment, there was a loud "bang," shaking the entire floor. The office's partitioned walls were instantly smashed, and the doors flew out amidst flying dust.

As for the two burly men, they had already fled head over heels.

Chen Shouyi stepped over and grabbed the still-shocked Boss Huang: "The interrupters are gone. Now we can have a good chat."

Boss Huang came to his senses, sweat pouring from his forehead, saying with a forced calm, "Young man, don't get impulsive. The world is more complicated than you think. Force doesn't get you far; some people shouldn't be messed with."

"No matter how complicated, if I can't resolve it with force, then the force must be too weak." Chen Shouyi took out a document, slapped it on his face:

"This is my Martial Artist Certificate. Now, tell me who you are connected with?"

Chapter 93: Chapter 93: Threat

A few employees who were about to enter quickly retreated upon hearing this, and the atmosphere suddenly went silent.

Boss Huang's face turned pale.

Martial Artists are not ordinary people. The more you know, the more you realize how terrifying these people can be.

Their positions might not be high, and their personal power might not be great, but their status is lofty, enjoying special national privileges. No one would offend a Martial Artist for no reason. Even when some Martial Artists commit crimes, unless it's too egregious, people often turn a blind eye and don't investigate too closely.

Boss Huang hastily forced out a smile that was more wretched than crying, and said, "Young brother, it's a misunderstanding, just a misunderstanding. Look at me, the dog eyes that failed to see Mount Tai!"

"What about the money?"

"I'll give it immediately, that's for sure." Boss Huang's forehead was drenched with cold sweat as he declared with certainty. No one dares to swipe money from a Martial Artist; that would be asking for death.

"Let's go to your office then?"

"Alright, alright, alright!"

Chen Shouyi grabbed Boss Huang and walked out of the reception room, casting a cold glance around. All the employees quickly averted their eyes, pretending nothing happened, their whole bodies trembling with fear.

He snorted coldly and strode into the general manager's office, throwing Boss Huang down.

Mrs. Chen followed behind without a word. Her face revealed no expression as she walked in after him.

Boss Huang clumsily got up from the ground, sat in his chair, trembling as he opened the account book on his computer, forcing out a smile, "The total amount of money is 3.83 million. Sister Jiang, can you confirm if it's this amount?"

Mrs. Chen estimated in her mind and replied, "It's the right amount!"

"That's good, that's good. I'll transfer it right away."

"Wait a minute!" Chen Shouyi interrupted, "Isn't there supposed to be interest?"

"Right, right, I forgot, the interest!" Boss Huang awkwardly laughed, wiping the cold sweat from his forehead. He took out a calculator and quickly punched in the numbers, "It's 4.113 million, rounding it up, I'll transfer 4.2 million to you. Check if that's correct?"

Chen Shouyi didn't question why 4.113 million rounded up to 4.2 million.

...

The transfer couldn't be immediate, so Chen Shouyi stayed in the office to keep watch.

The anxious Boss Huang felt nervous and didn't dare to breathe heavily, and the whole company fell silent.

After an hour, they checked the bank card number and confirmed the transfer was received, then Chen Shouyi rose and left the company with Mrs. Chen.

...

On the way back.

"You know someone by their face but not by their heart. It's hard to believe this person is so conniving, clearly having the money but unwilling to pay it back. Almost losing it completely." Mrs. Chen sighed.

"Good thing I was clever and saw through it," Chen Shouyi said proudly.

"Clever my foot! I've noticed you're getting more violent. Can't you just talk things through instead of acting like a murderer?" Mrs. Chen glared at him. The loud noise earlier made her heart pound with fear, and even now, thinking about it made her heartbeat race.

Her son used to be so obedient, but recently he's been getting more troublesome.

...

Afterwards, they visited a real estate agency to list their old house for sale.

Now, the housing prices in Dongning City have completely hit rock bottom. Prices that were originally eight or nine thousand, or even ten thousand, have now dropped to only three or four thousand, and they're still falling.

The house owned by Chen Shouyi's family was in a nice area, facing the street. With a 230-square-meter building area and an additional 50-60 square meter courtyard, it could have easily sold for four million in the past, with buyers fighting over it.

But now, to sell it quickly, they listed it at a low price of just 1.2 million.

On the way back, Mrs. Chen sighed repeatedly.

Perhaps more than the painful price, it was the emotional attachment that was hard to let go.

...

In the evening, while eating at a small restaurant outside.

Chen Dawei suddenly mentioned, "How about tomorrow we invite our eldest brother and sister-in-law out for a meal together?"

They were referring to their uncle's family.

"No, let's wait till Dongning stabilizes, plus Yu Ting is studying at university in Hedong, so it will be easier to contact then." Mrs. Chen cautiously advised.

Chen Dawei sighed and finally said nothing more.

...

Memory Space.

Chen Shouyi focused his heart on Director Fang, carefully experiencing every movement within his body.

The heartbeat was strong and forceful, the muscles contained explosive power.

What a powerful body!

The muscles coordinated highly like a precise yet sensitive machine, with no internal friction or delay. Every command was executed, every move conveyed a sense of simple and coordinated beauty.

This was the strongest human he had ever seen.

He estimated internally that the opponent's strength was about one point five to one point six times his own, nearly five or six hundred kilograms, which translates to an attribute of roughly 14.5.

Unfortunately, he lacked memories of the opponent's combat, making it difficult to estimate their reaction ability.

After all, this was a memory, and his mind couldn't control this body.

But just this terrifying strength alone was enough to crush any Martial Artist.

Is this the great Martial Artist?

Facing such an existence, Chen Shouyi felt he couldn't block even one move.

...

He exited the Memory Space and just as he opened his eyes, he saw a small figure leap through the air in front of him. He instinctively reached out and caught it.

The next moment, he heard a sharp scream.

"Let go of me, @#¥ giant, you're hurting me."

Upon closer inspection, Chen Shouyi found it was the Shell Lady. He quickly released her and carefully checked to ensure she wasn't damaged.

"Why are you jumping around?" Chen Shouyi asked irritably.

If he had used just a bit more force just now, the Shell Lady might have been crushed to death.

The Shell Lady was in tears from the pain, "I just wanted to see if I could fly?"

"Can you fly?"

"No!" The Shell Lady shook her head dejectedly. After being pinched, she seemed to have become somewhat sentimental, replying in a crying voice, "I've forgotten how to fly."

"I'm sure you can still fly, just not here," Chen Shouyi comforted.

"I want to go back to my old place. I don't like it here!" the Shell Lady sulked, and tears started to roll down.

Not watching TV and being stuck in a briefcase clearly took a toll on her.

"In the old place, there was no Prepared, you don't want to watch Prepared." Chen Shouyi tempted her.

"But you won't let me watch it!" The Shell Lady's expression changed, and she quickly wiped away her tears, her face lighting up with excitement, "If you let me watch it now, I won't go back."

"Just wait a few more days!"

"One sunrise to sunset or one more sunrise to sunset?"

"At most six days!" Chen Shouyi considered and said.

In six days, there will be a small Martial Artist gathering hosted by the Provincial Government. Regardless of whether the house sells smoothly, he must rush to Hedong.

The Shell Lady counted on her fingers and shook her head vigorously, "No way! No way! No way!"

"Too long..." Suddenly, she turned her head, "But if you give me another big gem, I'll agree; otherwise, I want to go back."

She gestured with her hands to indicate a big size.

Damn, is this a threat?

Chapter 94: Chapter 94: Nonsense

Chen Shouyi listened speechlessly to the Shell Lady's weak and powerless threats.

Did she really think she could go back?

Childish!

He wasn't subject to such threats and cruelly refused, "No!"

The Shell Lady pouted sadly, about to burst into tears.

"I only have this one big one, I've already given it to you, do you want the small ones?"

The Shell Lady's face changed instantly, revealing a smile as she responded loudly, "Yes!"

Chen Shouyi took the backpack, opened a small pocket, and took out the smallest glass bead from inside.

The Shell Lady impatiently extended her hand, "Quick, quick!"

"Why the hurry, here you go!" Chen Shouyi placed the bead in her hand.

The Shell Lady stared in disbelief at the small gemstone in her palm. She had expected the giant would give her a medium-sized gem; she didn't expect him to be so stingy, giving her the smallest one.

She stood up angrily, hands on her hips, and loudly threatened, "Damn giant, I'm going back!"

Ever since she got the crystal ball, such a small gemstone no longer caught her eye.

Seeing the Shell Lady puffing up like she'd been greatly wronged, Chen Shouyi sighed helplessly and swapped it out for a larger one.

He felt a little regret in his heart, knowing he probably shouldn't have given her the crystal ball. Now she had developed expensive tastes, and he didn't know what to tempt her with in the future.

...

Four days passed in a row, and during this time, there were quite a few property viewings.

However, much like the stock market's chase-highs-and-kill-lows mentality, the more the housing prices dropped, the more people observed cautiously. Although the price was already very low, many intended to buy, yet no one decided on the spot.

In the afternoon, after Chen Shouyi accompanied his parents and dealt with a picky potential buyer, they suddenly heard a burst of gunfire reminiscent of roasted beans on their way home.

"Quickly, hide in the store!" Chen Dawei said anxiously.

The group quickly dashed into a clothing shop for temporary shelter, and the shop owner reacted swiftly, promptly pulling down the shutter.

Fortunately, the gunfire was far away, and half a minute later, it completely ceased.

The group waited for a few minutes until no more shots were heard, then they left the clothing store.

As they passed by an intersection, an army vehicle zoomed past, loaded with fully armed soldiers, each one with a solemn expression.

Clearly, the recent cult incident had already reached a significant breakthrough, and it was time for a confrontation.

"Stop looking, let's head back!" Mrs. Chen urged anxiously.

Chen Shouyi nodded, and the three of them quickly returned to the hotel.

"Dongning is too chaotic; we'll leave tomorrow. The house can be sold later, there's no rush. The money we have now should be enough to buy a place." Chen Dawei said.

"You haven't even accounted for my settlement allowance, which should be considerable too," Chen Shouyi added.

"Your money is your money, now that you're a Martial Artist, you're considered established in your career. These should be separate. You don't need to spend your money on buying a house!" Chen Dawei replied.

"That's right, brother!" Chen Xingyue chimed in.

Chen Shouyi was pretty indifferent, saying, "But, four million plus isn't enough for a big place. I don't want to end up sleeping in the living room."

"Three thousand per square meter, you could get a hundred-square-meter place, right?" Chen Dawei questioned, completely unaware that the property prices in Hedong City had surged, still thinking it was around three thousand.

"That's old news; it's at least five thousand now?"

"So expensive?" Mrs. Chen exclaimed in surprise.

Chen Dawei paused for a moment and said, "It's not a big difference; we'll just take out a loan then."

"Dad, why separate everything so clearly in a family? You'll still want to open a restaurant, the upfront investment for that will be significant. Besides, this money is for settling down. Plus, I have a monthly Martial Artist allowance from the national government, and both the province and city government will provide subsidies. We'll never be short of money." Chen Shouyi said resignedly.

At least, they wouldn't be short of small amounts.

Chen Dawei glanced at Chen Shouyi, noting his genuine expression. After a brief hesitation, he sighed and said, "Well, okay then. You've really become sensible."

...

Early the next morning, the family took a vehicle and left Dongning.

On the way, the bus was stopped and checked multiple times, only near Pingqiu City did these checks finally disappear.

They returned to Changmen Town.

"Are you really leaving?" the landlady asked somewhat reluctantly, with Zhou Xue standing nearby.

"Yes, we're leaving today, moving to Hedong City since the conditions there are better," Mrs. Chen replied.

"Well, Hedong is the provincial capital after all."

...

Not long after, the Chen family each picked up their luggage and left.

The landlady and Zhou Xue watched them leave the courtyard.

The landlady suddenly sighed, "I didn't expect them to leave so soon, not sure when we'll see each other again."

Zhou Xue didn't say anything, watching the already vanished figure; her heart felt a bit empty.

She couldn't help but think, maybe she should have said goodbye before he left, instead of showing him such a cold face; after all, he had helped her.

"Xiao Xue, Xiao Xue!"

"Uh, Mom, you called me." Zhou Xue snapped out of her thoughts and quickly said.

"I've called you three times now." The landlady said, then suspiciously asked, "You're not secretly crushing on that Chen Shouyi, are you?"

Zhou Xue blushed and stamped her foot, scolding, "Mom, what nonsense are you talking about? I didn't!"

"Then why are you blushing? Actually, liking someone is normal. He's not only handsome but also young and has become a Martial Artist, and he doesn't have an attitude. It's a pity they've moved to Hedong. Otherwise, if you find someone like him, I'd wake up laughing even in my dreams!" the landlady teased.

Her daughter had always been sensible, but her personality was a bit too cold, especially cautious around the opposite sex, which frequently made the landlady worry about her future. Today obviously marked a positive change.

"Mom, if you keep talking nonsense, I won't talk to you anymore!" Her face reddened as if steam was coming out, she said indignantly.

"Alright, alright! I'm off to cook." she laughed, feeling quite cheerful.

Zhou Xue returned to her room, covering her still warm face, and mused to herself: "What's so special about a Martial Artist? I will definitely become one too!"

PS: The book goes live on May 1st, everyone please save some votes for me.

Chapter 95: Chapter 95: Internal Trading Network

A hotel in Hedong City.

Chen Shouyi tapped his fingers quickly on the keyboard, finishing a line of URL, then pressed enter.

The computer swiftly jumped to a simple account login page.

There were no registration options available.

Chen Shouyi took out his Martial Artist Certificate, opened it, and glanced at it, entering his martial artist number and initial password. A second later, a webpage similar to any normal site popped up.

This is an internal trading network exclusive to martial artists.

When he registered as a martial artist, he also registered an account for this site. It was only now that he managed to log in, having been eager to return home initially.

The webpage has only two sections: an e-commerce transaction section and a martial artist forum.

He first opened the e-commerce section and discovered it had three categories.

Auxiliary drugs, poisons, weapons and armor.

Chen Shouyi clicked on the category for auxiliary drugs.

There weren't many items, roughly a page or so, with a dozen types.

The sellers mostly used laboratory names as suffixes, like the highest priced "Divine Marrow" and "Divine Blood" coming from the Extraordinary Biological Research Institute in the Capital City, while the third-ranked "Soul Liquid" came from the Zhonghai Special Pharmaceuticals Laboratory.

Chen Shouyi had thought these items would be extremely expensive, but found them significantly cheaper than imagined.

Among them, "Divine Marrow" is priced highest, at only one million, with a volume of about twenty milliliters.

A million seems quite high, but any martial artist's settlement fund can easily purchase a portion.

Second, the commonly heard "Divine Blood" is priced at eight hundred thousand, with a volume of around one hundred milliliters.

As for the third-ranked "Soul Liquid," its price is only six hundred thousand.

But soon, Chen Shouyi realized that purchasing these drugs comes with restrictions. For instance, with the top three ranked drugs, each martial artist can purchase a maximum of three portions, after which contribution value is needed.

Chen Shouyi thought it's only reasonable because if a martial artist were wealthy or purchasing on behalf of others, buying dozens, even hundreds, would be simple.

Obviously, the production of these items by Great Xia Country is limited, making them scarce resources. Reselling them at several or even dozen times the price wouldn't be unusual. It's clear that no obvious loophole would be left in this system.

He then clicked on the most expensive Divine Marrow; inside a small glass bottle, a drop of transparent liquid emitted a gentle glow.

Reading the product description, Chen Shouyi found that it wasn't actually derived from a god's corpse's marrow, just spinal fluid. The effect, according to the description, significantly strengthens a martial artist's neural reaction ability, enhances intelligence, and improves physical condition to some extent.

Chen Shouyi's expression shifted and he read the effect description again.

He wasn't interested in the other effects; his twice-optimized Body Refining Thirty-Six Moves could enhance everything except intelligence, which could not be trained through those moves.

Had it not been for the Book of Knowledge causing his body to transform once, his intelligence would still be pitifully around ten points.

He felt extremely tempted,

but unfortunately, with all his current funds plus gold, he only had about fifty thousand, needing to wait for the settlement funds to make a purchase.

He then clicked on the second-ranked "Divine Blood."

This was a transparent liquid emitting a weak golden glow, derived from divine cell fluid.

Its effect, as described, is to reinforce human strength and physique, enhance self-healing ability, and potentially grant supernatural abilities.

As for "Soul Liquid," compared to the glitter of the former two, it appeared ordinary, an uncolored viscous fluid. According to the description, it's extracted from the brain of a specific creature, greatly amplifying sensory abilities.

Aside from these three, the rest of the drugs were priced much lower, from a few hundred to tens of thousands at most.

For instance, the Enhancing Liquid for internal organs and external muscles, or training auxiliary Body Refining Oil, made from powerful extraordinary beings and various precious medicines from other worlds, even the large bottle cost around thirty thousand.

The goods on this internal network clearly aren't aimed at profit but to strengthen the martial artist community.

At the end of the page, Chen Shouyi saw several potent stimulants, evidently used in the desperation of battlefields.

...

Next, Chen Shouyi clicked on the poison category out of curiosity.

He immediately felt his eyes opened with revelations, finding biological toxins like snake venom, mineral toxins such as cyanide, and even radioactive toxins sealed in lead boxes. Most were sold by the gram, even milligram, and if smeared on a sword or arrowhead, the victim would almost instantly fall.

However, Chen Shouyi noticed that as these items were notably dangerous, with some being volatile and radioactive, purchasing required strict limitations, needing substantial contribution value and explorer status for authorization to buy.

Weapons and miscellaneous items had nothing noteworthy, mostly products from renowned cold weapon companies, with significant discounts here, generally cheaper by fifty to sixty percent than on external cold weapons e-commerce sites.

...

Chen Shouyi didn't make any purchases and closed the webpage.

He was still staying in the hotel without a fixed address, and it would be troublesome if he changed locations when deliveries arrived.

He then opened his briefcase and let the Shell Lady out.

He immediately felt her damp body, sniffing at it, wrinkling his brow to ask:

"Did you wet the bed?"

The Shell Lady angrily turned away, twisting her body forcefully. Seeing this, Chen Shouyi quickly picked up scissors to cut the ropes binding her hands and feet, then tore off the tape from her mouth.

Unexpectedly, she had a bigger temper than Chen Shouyi, standing up angrily and saying:

"Who told you to lock me up? Where else would I wet if not here?"

"Can't you hold it a little longer?"

"Can't hold it. If you lock me up this long, I'll need to wet and defecate, stink you to death." The Shell Lady snorted, puffing angrily; her temper had been getting worse day by day, needing a vent every day.

Chen Shouyi's finger trembled as he pointed at the Shell Lady, taken aback by her attitude, taking a deep breath he said:

"Humph, I was going to show you Prepared, but now there's no need."

As soon as he spoke, the Shell Lady, previously furious, widened her eyes, her expression frozen.

She looked around at the now unfamiliar environment, then at the glowing computer. Surprise, delight, and regret flashed through her mind in quick succession, her expression shifting.

After a while, she bashfully said:

"This... well, I just couldn't hold it."

"Earlier, you even said you wanted to defecate?"

The Shell Lady shook her head desperately, loudly replied, "I won't!"

"Still going to throw tantrums?"

"I won't anymore!" The Shell Lady continued shaking her head, then turned her eyes with a bright look, adding, "As long as you show me Prepared, I won't throw tantrums."

Chen Shouyi pointed at the Shell Lady, then grabbed her with his large hand.

The Shell Lady immediately screamed, "You giant, let go of me, I want to see Prepared!"

"Go take a bath, you stink."

"Don't want to bathe, I hate bathing!"

Chapter 96: Chapter 96: Martial Artist Meet-and-Greet

The bathroom didn't have a bathtub, so Chen Shouyi could only fill the sink with some warm water.

He took off the Shell Lady's clothes and threw them into the trash.

"My clothes!" the Shell Lady cried out in heartache.

"I'll buy you new ones next time," Chen Shouyi said.

"I want them to be as pretty as these!" the Shell Lady demanded.

"Alright, alright!"

Once Chen Shouyi agreed, she didn't wait for him to urge her and went to the edge of the sink to sit down, and then slid down the porcelain wall like a slide into the basin, splashing water everywhere.

She dove into the water, submerged for about ten seconds, then surfaced and spat a mouthful of water at Chen Shouyi.

She walked around in the sink, constantly splashing and playing, occasionally doing the dog paddle.

After all, she's a sea creature, how could she be afraid of water?

Looking at her petite yet shapely figure, Chen Shouyi felt no emotion.

What's the use of having those?

"I want fragrant bubbles!" she said loudly after a while.

He had no choice but to get some bath gel, tear open the packet, and pour it into the sink: "Stop playing and hurry up and wash!"

...

After a dozen minutes, Chen Shouyi dried the Shell Lady's body and dressed her in new clothes.

Then he turned on a cartoon and ignored her.

Meanwhile, he bitterly took his briefcase and began cleaning meticulously.

He felt like picking up the Shell Lady was like having a daughter.

...

Hedong Grand Hotel.

A famous five-star hotel in Hedong City.

Today's Martial Artist meeting is arranged here.

"Welcome!" Two greeters dressed in qipao said in a coy voice.

Chen Shouyi walked straight through the door, his gaze unwavering. To look more formal, he specifically bought a suit, which made him appear a lot more mature.

He pressed the elevator button and soon reached the fifth-floor hall, which was already quite bustling.

The representatives of the provincial capital from various counties and cities in Jiangnan Province had already set up their exhibition stands.

Except for the fact that the number of interviewers far exceeded the number of Martial Artists, the place was akin to a job fair.

Chen Shouyi spotted the Dongning City representative's stand among them.

"Here he comes!"

"Yes, indeed!"

The greeting was from the same group of Martial Artists, the two casually exchanged pleasantries before passing each other to seek out their intended targets.

Chen Shouyi noticed that they weren't the only ones attending the meeting, there was another group of around twenty to thirty people, but compared to the nearly fifty to sixty representatives here from various counties and cities, it's still an imbalance of supply and demand.

Among them was a representative from a county-level city who, finding no inquiries for a while, decided to stand up and shout:

"Choosing us Louhua City is the best choice. Although our city isn't as developed as Hedong Ningzhou, we value Martial Artists differently. Anyone who comes to Louhua City gets a settlement fee of five million and a villa..."

Seeing Louhua City being so shameless, a neighboring county-level city's representative started to loudly promote: "Our Luoshan City offers even better conditions. I've come with the mayor's orders to recruit Martial Artists at any cost. Five million is nothing; our Luoshan City offers six million, also a villa, and if you come to Luoshan City, all conditions are negotiable!"

"We Ping Hill City also offer six million with the same conditions..."

Chen Shouyi found himself puzzled:

"Didn't Director Fang say the highest settlement fee in Hedong City was three million? How come a city just offers six million, and if willing to negotiate, the settlement fee might even be higher?"

But thinking about the chaos in Dongning nowadays, Chen Shouyi suddenly understood.

With the supernatural powers invading from another world, satellites losing contact, mobile signal outages, communications except for landlines nearly cut off, most counties and cities are even still in power outages, with regional surveillance virtually useless.

The ability of counties and cities to defend against the supernatural plummets, a few rampant Barbarian invasions are enough to leave them utterly baffled and in chaos.

The role of Martial Artists immediately stands out.

...

The last two stands belonged to two Martial Artist Departments.

One was the Third Category Affairs Investigation Bureau, a department that appeared when he first encountered a cult ritual incident.

The other was the Martial Arts Certification and Discipline Inspection Office, which Chen Shouyi was familiar with.

"Hey, Chen Shouyi, come over here!" Director Fang, keen-eyed, immediately called out to Chen Shouyi upon seeing him.

Chen Shouyi felt helpless and had to walk over.

"Have you thought it over?" Director Fang asked.

Beside him sat a young, beautiful assistant, who curiously glanced at Chen Shouyi.

Chen Shouyi gently replied, "I haven't decided yet, I want to take a look around."

"Tell me, what's puzzling you? I can help analyze it," Director Fang suggested with a sly smile.

Chen Shouyi was about to respond when the voice suddenly came from the Third Category Affairs Investigation Bureau's stand next to him: "Hey old Fang, you're abusing public privilege here!"

Soon, a middle-aged man with a square face came over with a smile:

"Young man, what's good about going to the Certification Office? It's so boring there, you'll be busy to death every day. You're better off coming to our Third Bureau, where nothing happens unless there's an accident."

If someone valued enough to be recruited by the Certification Office doesn't need saying, they're definitely the best talent. Moreover, this young man, with a youthful look on his face, must be quite young, and youth itself symbolizes potential.

"Go away, every time it's you, your department's one incident is a big one, with the highest mortality rate," Director Fang sneered.

"You think yours is much better? You sacrificed two people just last year!" the square-faced man retorted, then said: "We have the best benefits and the highest subsidies. Besides the city's settlement fee, our department will also resolve housing issues."

"You can resolve housing?" Chen Shouyi couldn't help but ask; this issue has become a major family concern.

The square-faced man smiled triumphantly: "Indeed, our department has self-built communities that are directly villas."

"Your place is practically rural; what's there to brag about? Moreover, you might be dispatched to county-level cities, making returning difficult," Director Fang said with a

cold face: "We're different, except for short-term business trips, the work is mostly in Hedong. As for housing issues, besides the normal settlement fee, our department will give another ten million."

"You're just arguing, aren't you?" the square-faced man said with a darkened face.

"You're the one arguing!" Director Fang lightly tapped the table, standing up.

The two started getting aggressive, causing the atmosphere to freeze.

Seeing this, Chen Shouyi quickly said: "Thank you, leaders, for your favor. Let me say this: considering I'm still a minor and have no plans for work yet, neither department is suitable for me. I'll look around elsewhere first!"

He stood up and swiftly made his exit, not wanting to get involved in the dispute between two bigwigs. Agreeing with one would offend the other, and although the conditions were tempting, they weren't so easy to attain.

Watching Chen Shouyi leave.

Director Fang snorted, his face darkening, glaring at the square-faced man as he sat down.

The cooked duck somehow flew away.

...

Chen Shouyi breathed a sigh of relief, soon arriving at the Hedong City representative's stand, only to find it unoccupied, surrounded by quite a few Martial Artists nearby.

"What's going on here? No one's around!"

"The Hedong City representative is on the phone trying to get a higher settlement fee," explained a Martial Artist in the know.

So that's it!

It used to be that the Hedong City representative's settlement fee was the highest, but unexpectedly today this Martial Artist meeting has become so popular, with various counties and cities directly inflating the prices, disrupting the market order, making the three million settlement fee somewhat unpalatable now. If they adhere to the previous standard, Hedong City might not recruit anyone this time.

Before long, the Hedong City representative hurried back.

Without waiting to catch his breath, he took out a correction fluid and whiteboard marker, quickly modifying the fare on the stand.

"Eight million, Hedong City's settlement fee changed to eight million."

Chapter 97: Chapter 97: A Chance Encounter

The treatment of eight million for resettlement is definitely not the highest here.

But since the whole family has moved to Hedong City, Chen Shouyi did not want to make any other plans.

Moreover, compared to the treatment, he values the safety of Hedong City more, after all, it is the provincial capital, resources are concentrated, and the Provincial Military Region is stationed here, making it undoubtedly safer than other places.

Before long, a young assistant brought over a new brochure at a jog and distributed it to the martial artists nearby: "Take a look, the benefits of Hedong City have changed!"

Chen Shouyi took a copy of the Hedong City brochure, feeling the warmth of it, evidently just printed not long ago.

He flipped through it roughly and found that the benefits of Hedong City were indeed not bad.

For example, the otherworld training room operated by the Hedong City Government can be used for free.

Also, there are tax exemptions.

In addition, the city government subsidy for martial artists is as high as twenty thousand. If you add the national unified subsidy for martial artists of ten thousand and the provincial subsidy of another twenty thousand, the monthly income alone can reach fifty thousand, enough to live comfortably in Hedong.

This doesn't even include the salary from the unit he will be seconded to.

In fact, this is also to meet the basic material needs of martial artists.

The saying goes, "The martial artist violates the law with force," and the personal force of this kind of people is too strong; they strike as fast as lightning and run as fast as a galloping horse. They can even initially fight against firearms, essentially making them kings among soldiers. If they risk everything for profit, who can stop them?

Chen Shouyi waited for the person ahead to leave before stepping forward and sitting down.

"Hello, hello, welcome to choose Hedong City. Is there anything you want to know? Feel free to ask." The Hedong City representative said politely, adopting a very humble posture.

"I just want to ask, if I join Hedong City, which unit will I go to?" Chen Shouyi thought for a moment and asked.

The assistant next to him quickly handed over a document.

The Hedong City representative glanced at it.

"Name: Chen Shouyi

Age: seventeen

...

Physical fitness assessment: excellent

Combat assessment: excellent"

Seeing this, he couldn't help but feel a boost of spirit, immediately paying more attention: "Hello, Mr. Chen. For newly joined martial artists like you, according to personal inclination, there are generally three directions to choose from.

First, to be seconded to the district public security bureau, which is usually quite leisurely, but requires martial artists' assistance in extreme situations occasionally.

Second, to be attached to various levels of district governments, taking on some idle positions.

Third, if you are interested in politics, you can also take on substantive positions. According to relevant regulations, you generally start with a treatment equivalent to a principal section-level position."

The benefits of the relevant positions are that the first one is the highest, with a basic salary of about thirty thousand, bonuses upon completing tasks, and martial artist merit points. The second and third are according to the normal civil servant position's salary."

Chen Shouyi pondered slightly and immediately ruled out the last option.

He has no interest in politics; the thought of working nine to five every day sends shivers down his spine.

In comparison, he prefers to practice martial arts every day. The feeling of growing stronger little by little with effort motivates him greatly.

As for the second option, it is indeed leisurely, but he cannot gain any martial artist merit points from it. He still wanted to buy a few more sticks of divine marrow and divine blood, not only for himself but also to prepare a few for his family.

Especially his parents, who are getting on in years, and such things clearly have the effects of prolonging life, preventing disease, and strengthening the body.

...

Having decided, Chen Shouyi no longer hesitated, took the pen, filled out the letter of intent, and the Hedong City representative processed the filing procedures on the spot.

The official entry will take place on the upcoming Monday, three days later.

As for the eight million resettlement fee, it will be credited to his bank account in the afternoon.

He walked out of the Hedong Grand Hotel, took off his suit, and draped it over his arm.

"Lower District Public Security Bureau."

He said to himself, unable to help feeling a little nostalgic.

Who would have thought a few months ago he would end up being a policeman, albeit an amateur one?

What was his dream before?

Seems like a scientist...

...

"Chen Shouyi!?" Walking on the road, he heard someone calling him; the voice was very familiar. He turned his head following the sound.

"Teacher Wang, what are you doing here?" Chen Shouyi said in surprise.

Unexpectedly, he saw Wang Ruyue here, his former tutor.

Next to her stood a youthful, fair-skinned lady with an oval face, holding big and small bags in her hands, clearly indicating the two were shopping.

"Recently moved to Hedong. What are you doing in a suit? I almost didn't recognize you dressed like this," Wang Ruyue said with a gentle smile. She wore a light green casual shirt and low-waist jeans, showing off her perfect curvy waist.

"Just came from a relatively formal occasion, so wearing a suit makes me look more mature," Chen Shouyi explained.

Wang Ruyue didn't press on: "Indeed, you've matured quite a bit. How's your swordsmanship learning going lately? Did you learn the moves I taught you last time?"

"Uh!" Chen Shouyi didn't expect Wang Ruyue to ask about this, his face froze for a moment, quickly replying, "I've already learned them."

Wang Ruyue, somewhat apologetic, said, "That's good, fortunately, I ran into you today; otherwise, I would have broken my promise about the remaining two lessons."

Did you come to my house looking for me? Actually, my family moved to Hedong shortly after the power outage."

Chen Shouyi hastily said, "It doesn't have to be so troublesome, you've already taught me a lot."

"A promise is a promise, especially since I received your tuition," Wang Ruyue said seriously.

"But..." Chen Shouyi hesitated. He couldn't exactly say that he had already mastered all the basic swordsmanship and had become a martial artist.

"Why, are you busy lately?"

"Quite a bit!" Chen Shouyi replied ambiguously.

"Then come by when you have time. I live in Lanshan District, Building 15, Apartment 602, in the Lower District. Call me before you come, my home phone is *****."

With the invasion of Mysterious Power from the otherworld, mobile phones became unusable and were gradually phased out, and fixed-line phones were evidently making a comeback nowadays.

Chen Shouyi repeated the number, pretending to memorize it: "Thank you so much, Teacher Wang!"

"Then I'll be leaving!"

Watching Wang Ruyue's departing silhouette, Chen Shouyi exhaled a long breath.

Such an embarrassment!

Should he visit again to hit her face?

...

"That young man is quite handsome. Have you changed your taste and fancy a toy boy?" After walking away, Wang Ruyue's friend teased.

"Don't be so dirty-minded; I can't fancy such a little kid," Wang Ruyue snorted coldly. She then added, "But he's quite impressive, already having strength of a Martial Artist Apprentice. If I don't go all out, we could fight on par."

"Then why do you still train him?" the friend with an oval face asked, puzzled.

"The kid has good talent, learns instantly upon practice, and his body seems to have grown strong as if he's been fed pig food, just lacking foundation!" Wang Ruyue pouted, a bit envious. If only she had half that talent, she would have become a Martial Artist long ago:

"Forget it, let's not talk about him. How come you have time to come out today?"

"Ah, my miserable self, I'm on a day off. I now realize mobile phones were better, otherwise always worrying about suddenly getting called for a task, one phone call and I'm back on duty."

Chapter 98: Chapter 98: Optimization Once Again

Chen Shouyi returned to the hotel.

He was immediately bombarded with questions from Father Chen, Mrs. Chen, and his sister.

When they heard him say he was now a security consultant at the Lower City Public Security Bureau, enjoying the treatment of an official at the division level, with a relocation allowance of eight million, they couldn't help but feel delighted.

To avoid worrying his parents, in his account, this security consultant role had entirely turned into an honorary inactive position, requiring no exertion, being entirely risk-free, and offering exceptionally generous compensation, stable and secure.

...

After having lunch early, Mrs. Chen and Father Chen called on the siblings to eagerly go house hunting; they were used to frugality, and these few days staying at the hotel costing five to six hundred every day had undoubtedly caused them great distress.

Then, after spending nearly a whole half-day looking around, although they had visited a few houses, they either felt the locations were too remote or the prices were too high.

Lower city was already considered the city center, with housing prices generally above fifty or forty thousand.

With the parents' savings, they simply couldn't afford anything substantial, and it was apparent they didn't want to spend much of Chen Shouyi's relocation allowance.

"Mom, forget it, we don't need to look any further; I think this place is nice." Seeing his parents' intentions, Chen Shouyi estimated they wouldn't decide today, so he straightforwardly made the decision.

The real estate agent, initially somewhat dismissive in attitude, perked up and said:

"Mr. Chen has a good eye. The owner has only owned this house for a year, and after redecorating, hasn't even lived in it. It was originally intended as a marital home, but things changed, and now the owner plans to go abroad, so they're selling this house."

Chen Shouyi was still wearing a suit, making it difficult to discern his exact age.

"It's really too expensive; can it be any cheaper?" Mrs. Chen asked with a bit of heartache.

The entire house was on the fifth floor, in an elevator building, with three bedrooms, one living room, one kitchen, and one bathroom, totaling one hundred and thirty square meters. It also came with a balcony, and the community environment was nice.

Furthermore, it was already decorated, ready for move-in with just the bags, so Mrs. Chen was quite satisfied, only the price was really too high.

"Sister Jiang, fifty-five thousand is already the lowest price in the area. A similar floor house in this community was sold last week for as much as fifty-eight thousand. If the owner weren't in a hurry to go abroad, they wouldn't offer it at such a low price." The real estate agent persuaded.

Chen Shouyi shook his head, thinking it'd be better to directly talk to the owner rather than with the agent, so he interrupted: "Isn't the owner preparing to go abroad? Call them here so we can talk; we're ready to pay in full!"

The real estate agent realized he misspoke, leading to the client's distrust. Fortunately, it could still be salvaged, so he hurriedly said: "Sure, once we're downstairs, I'll use the public phone to call them!"

...

The owner was evidently eager to leave the country, and the house price was eventually negotiated down to fifty-two thousand.

The next morning, both parties went to the Housing Authority to complete the transfer procedures, rounding off to a total of 6.75 million.

Chen Shouyi insisted on not letting his parents pay, using the relocation allowance that had arrived the previous afternoon.

With the departure of this 6.75 million, his savings rapidly shrank from the original 8.26 million to just 1.51 million.

...

"Finally done!"

Chen Shouyi walked into his own new bedroom.

All day, he had first accompanied Father Chen and Mrs. Chen to the Housing Authority, then spent the afternoon running around various malls, purchasing furniture, appliances, bedding, and living necessities, everything needed.

His body wasn't tired, but his mind was.

However, looking at the house he bought with his relocation allowance, he still felt a sense of satisfaction.

Chen Shouyi released the Shell Lady.

"Giant, why did you change places?" she asked dejectedly.

Perhaps, to her, the hotel was the ideal place.

"Look at this!" Chen Shouyi hummed, opening the laptop on the desk, pressing the power button.

This laptop was bought in the afternoon along with the appliances; two in total, one for him and one for Chen Xingyue, and they had already set up the internet.

The Shell Lady was initially confused, as the hotel had a desktop computer and she'd never seen a laptop before, but as the familiar startup screen appeared, her face lit up, and she rubbed Chen Shouyi's hand back ingratiatingly, saying: "Great Giant, it's glowing, you can watch Prepared inside, right?"

Chen Shouyi glanced at the Shell Lady.

All decency was gone just to watch cartoons.

He purposely ignored her, opened a webpage, and began to check the news.

As soon as he opened it, a sensational news headline caught his attention:

"A giant spatial passage in Tony Country was breached, with the second-largest city, Five Rivers City, falling. The Tony Country government officially requests international military aid."

What's this about?

A well-guarded passage being breached, how is that possible?

Though Tony Country's military power is far behind military giants like Great Xia Country, there's no doubt that the defensive forces on the passage should be more than sufficient.

For the past twenty years, the shadow of war has loomed over Earth. Even the weakest countries have had to scrape the last coin from their treasury to arm themselves as much as possible.

Take Great Xia Country as an example, where the military budget accounts for as much as 7% of GDP each year, having decreased from around ten years ago when it once reached 15%.

Chen Shouyi quickly clicked on the news headline, finding that the disclosure was limited to announcing that Great Xia Country had responded to Tony Country's request for military aid, dispatching the South Sea Fleet.

The reasons for the fall and the number of casualties, however, were not mentioned, and it seems everything is still unknown.

Chen Shouyi did not give it much importance. After all, it happened in a distant, unfamiliar small country.

"This isn't interesting." At this point, the Shell Lady jumped onto the keyboard, shouting: "Giant, let's watch Prepared!"

Chen Shouyi snapped back, picked up the Shell Lady, and helplessly said: "I'll let you watch it soon!"

He swiftly opened the cartoon, then scooped up the Shell Lady and placed her on the bed, away from the laptop.

...

After settling the Shell Lady, he eagerly opened the attribute panel.

It's been nearly a month since the last optimization of the Thirty-Six Refinement Styles, and today at noon, the Book of Knowledge's Energy Accumulation finally reached three points. Had it not been for spending all day outside, he couldn't have resisted.

Then, without hesitation, he chose the skill of Meditation Refinement for a second optimization.

The dream came over him once again.

In the dream, he sat cross-legged, palms up, repeatedly entering meditation; his heart grew increasingly serene, and his meditation deepened.

Gradually, he sensed an aura of extreme tranquility.

Quiet, very quiet.

It was as if he fell into the deepest layer of serenity, and simultaneously, the network of his body slowly unfurled before his "eyes".

Starting from the fine muscle fibers, it gradually filled out, becoming more detailed and rich, then slowly extending towards the internal organs...

If the earlier scenes and the first optimization of Meditation Refinement were similar, only richer in detail, then this time, Meditation Refinement began to develop in a microscopic direction.

His body seemed to magnify continuously, as if becoming an immense giant, yet his perspective remained a full three hundred sixty-five degrees. In his trance, he seemed to see individual cells making up his body...

Chapter 99: Chapter 99: Onboarding

The haunted house at 18 Shigang Alley is only one or two kilometers away from the new home. Early in the morning, Chen Shouyi arrived here with his wooden sword.

The place is quiet, with no one to disturb.

It's undoubtedly the best place to practice.

Today, as soon as he started practicing swordsmanship, Chen Shouyi clearly felt a difference from before.

His mind seemed to focus more easily, without any effort, he entered a state of high concentration, distractions nonexistent, emotions calm, everything appeared natural.

Each move with the sword appeared no different from usual, yet carried a condensed sharp aura.

After practicing for a few minutes.

He suddenly thrust forward sharply at a nearby large camphor tree.

A sharp whistle suddenly sounded, the sword tip stopping abruptly just one or two millimeters from the tree.

The tree bark exploded into a cloud of dust by a miniature sonic boom, and a small crack about an inch long, several times finer than a hair, appeared. It was almost unnoticeable unless closely inspected.

Chen Shouyi retrieved the wooden sword and approached.

Facing the tree bark, his right hand formed a claw and grabbed forcefully. The tree's tough bark was no stronger than paper to his current strength; a tearing sound was heard as he ripped off a large piece along with the trunk.

He examined the piece of bark in his hand carefully and was quickly surprised.

"The crack is actually three centimeters deep!"

Previously, his Sword Qi could only reach about two centimeters deep.

"Could it be the effect of the second optimization of 'Entering Stillness and Refining the Self'?"

Compared to the world-altering changes of the second optimized version of the Body Refinement Thirty-six Moves, the second optimized 'Entering Stillness and Refining the Self' didn't change much in terms of self-refinement, especially in the initial stages. The refining steps were almost identical, only the final refining direction changed.

The only major change was that the second optimized version allowed him to meditate more deeply, entering an inexplicably serene state.

"Obviously, under the influence of this highly deep meditation state, my mind has become more easily focused and cohesive.

The same willpower, which used to be a dull sword with a rough shape, is now sharpened and honed, becoming sharp and much more powerful."

"Three centimeters is still a bit short!" Chen Shouyi clicked his tongue.

He then waved lightly, sweeping through the grass.

At that moment, the wooden sword seemed like an extremely sharp alloy sword. The countless weeds didn't even come into real contact with the sword as they were sliced by an invisible force, cutting a large swath instantly.

...

Monday, seven in the morning.

Chen Shouyi got up and opened the wardrobe, where several sets of suits were hanging. He casually picked one and put it on.

His face was too youthful, his skin fair and smooth, making him look like a minor.

Blending into this adult world often brought age-based disregard and distrust. Now, he purposefully dressed more maturely, with a suit being the simplest and most convenient option.

He then went to the bathroom, picked up a razor, and cleaned up the fuzz above his mouth.

Looking in the mirror, he immediately felt much better.

With the fuzz gone from his lips, the high school student's vibe had nearly disappeared. Were his eyes sharper and expression colder, no one would likely question his age.

The house was empty; his parents and sister had gone out early to find a restaurant location.

He left the neighborhood, had breakfast at a breakfast shop, and hailed a cab for the downtown police substation.

Sitting in the car, he closed his eyes and opened the attribute panel.

Strength: 13.4

Agility: 13.4

Physique: 13.9

Intelligence: 12.6

Perception: 11.5

Willpower: 12.5

Knowledge: Chinese Language (Mastery 6); Physics (Proficient 12); Biology (Proficient 10); Chemistry (Proficient 11); Math (Proficient 9); English (Proficient 6); Computer Science (Beginner 6); Cooking (Beginner 5); Body Refinement Thirty-six Moves (Mastery 5); Entering Stillness and Refining the Self (Mastery 1); Swordsmanship (Proficient 20); Archery (Proficient 13)

Talent Ability: Beginner Self-Healing

Energy Accumulation: 0.24

"In the past couple of days, both agility and perception have increased by 0.1, and swordsmanship has reached 'Proficient 20,' just a step away from mastery, yet I feel stuck at a bottleneck, as if something is missing," he thought to himself.

In fact, he had a vague guess about what was missing.

He hadn't completed the 'Refining Flesh' stage of Entering Stillness and Refining the Self yet. Compared to those senior martial artists, he still lacked something, falling short like a machine lacking lubrication, making each move slightly awkward.

His practice of Entering Stillness and Refining the Self was still too brief, totaling only about two months from the beginning. Without the body's initial transformation by knowledge and then the absorption of the mysterious tree seed that rapidly boosted physical attributes, his progress would have been much slower.

Relying solely on a little practice and training, he would at best be a martial artist apprentice, far from being a martial artist.

Unfortunately, physical attributes might grow through fortuitous encounters, but mental attributes could only gradually improve, resulting in perception lagging significantly behind.

"Luckily, there's no rush. In terms of combat power, with physical qualities far exceeding ordinary martial artists, especially with agility a full point higher, my combat abilities should be no less than those of senior martial artists!"

...

Half an hour later, Chen Shouyi walked into the downtown police substation. Not bothering to search, he went straight to the service window in the service hall and inquired:

"Hello, I'm a new martial artist here for a secondment, who should I contact for the onboarding procedures?"

A pretty female officer with light makeup heard this and immediately stood up: "Hello, Sir, for this matter, you need to contact the personnel department. Would you like me to take you there?"

"Would that be too much trouble?"

"Not at all, not at all! Please wait a moment." The policewoman left her post and opened the back office: "A safety consultant is here to start the job. Xiao Jun, can you cover for me?"

"A new safety consultant!" A surprised voice came from inside as a petite, young woman officer stepped out, looking outside at Chen Shouyi with awe before saying to the other officer: "Alright, you go ahead."

Soon, the pretty policewoman returned: "Sir, please follow me."

Chen Shouyi nodded.

The two left the service hall and walked towards an office building behind it. Chen Shouyi spoke up: "Are there many safety consultants here?"

"I'm not entirely sure; safety consultants belong to the Public Safety Police Unit, but there should be around ten."

That many, Chen Shouyi thought to himself. It truly is the provincial capital; just one district's police substation has so many seconded martial artists.

"Sir, you look so young?" The policewoman complimented with a slight smile.

"Really? Maybe it's because I have a baby face!" Chen Shouyi replied with a smile.

Thankfully, he was wearing formal attire.

Soon, the two arrived at the office of the Director of the Personnel Department on the fourth floor. The policewoman walked up and knocked on the door. With a "Come in" reply, she opened the door for him: "Director Zhang, the new safety consultant is here to start the job."

The Director of the Personnel Department was a mid-aged man in his thirties or forties, wearing glasses. When he saw Chen Shouyi entering, he immediately stood up, quickly walked over to shake hands, and said with a smile: "You must be Mr. Chen Shouyi. We received the Director's notification in advance; welcome to our downtown police substation."

"No need for formalities!"

"Please take a seat first, I'll notify the director." Director Zhang exited the office.

Soon, a solidly built middle-aged man entered with a hearty laugh.

Chen Shouyi stood up.

"Please, have a seat! Don't be so formal!

Mr. Chen, you are indeed talented at such a young age. When the files came through the day before yesterday, I was also taken aback. Our substation highly values such talent.

Once your onboarding is complete, we'll arrange a meeting for you to get to know the other colleagues in the Public Safety Police Unit. It would be awkward for nobody to recognize each other then.

In principle, safety consultants don't need to attend regular work hours; you'll only be called upon in emergencies, and a dedicated liaison will be arranged to contact you."

Chapter 100: Chapter 100: Shocked

"Meeting time, everyone to conference room number two!" The captain of the second team of the Public Security Police Brigade, walked out of the office and knocked on the door, loudly announcing.

"Another meeting, huh? I haven't finished my report yet!" Bai Xiaoling irritably scratched her head, murmuring under her breath.

"Today we have a new security advisor coming, don't ask for leave for nothing," the captain, with keen ears, glared at Bai Xiaoling: "If you haven't received a case, get out and attend the meeting!"

Bai Xiaoling, startled, quickly bowed her head, grabbed a notebook and a pen, and headed towards the conference room with a group of colleagues.

"Really envy those martial artists!" Bai Xiaoling sighed, not only do they have high salaries and benefits, but they also don't have to work usual hours, as for the risks, they as public security police aren't much less.

"Don't envy them, do you think martial artists became like that for nothing, it's all traded for with sweat and blood, which martial artist didn't train from a young age, the sweat they shed could probably fill a swimming pool," said a middle-aged policeman with Martial Artist Apprentice strength, shaking his head.

Bai Xiaoling threw him a look of disinterest.

I was just envying a bit, alright?

Of course, I know. Back then, if she hadn't been unable to endure the hardship, she almost got into Martial Arts Academy.

...

After ten or so minutes, everyone was seated.

The chief came in with a young man into the conference room.

"Let me introduce everyone, this is our bureau's new security advisor, Chen Shouyi, everyone welcome!"

The conference room immediately erupted in enthusiastic applause.

The chief pressed his hands down, continuing to smile: "Does everyone think Advisor Chen looks a bit young? He truly is young, as a matter of fact, Advisor Chen is only seventeen years old, but he excelled in all aspects of the Martial Artist evaluation, this kind of talent is probably unique across the whole of Hedong City. Having him at our bureau is an honor for the entire bureau, everyone give another round of applause!"

The conference room burst into even more enthusiastic applause.

In the eyes of everyone, there was astonishment, surprise, and excitement.

Seventeen years old!

At this age to qualify as a Martial Artist Apprentice is already extremely rare, let alone being a Martial Artist, in another few years, will he become a Grand Martial Artist?

If the bureau acquired a Grand Martial Artist, in encounters with other bureaus outside, it would be bragging rights for a few years.

Chen Shouyi had a faint smile on his face, feeling a bit helpless inside.

This suit was worn in vain; he initially thought of hiding his age, but with the chief's words, now everyone knows.

Bai Xiaoling, face full of excitement, clapped fervently.

This new security advisor, both handsome and young, tall and slim in stature, the sharp black suit perfectly set off his unique high-cold aura, completely standing out among the old and ugly security advisors.

Just as she clapped, her hands gradually slowed down.

The more she looked, the more she felt a vague familiarity, as if she had seen Advisor Chen somewhere before.

What was his name again?

Shou Yi... Chen Shouyi.

That name was quite memorable, almost like a famous seasoning, only differing in the surname.

Oh my god!

She suddenly covered her mouth, instinctively stood up, and her chair fell over.

At that moment, her somewhat slow brain finally remembered.

"Isn't this the student from the buddy training class I ran into while shopping with my girlfriend the day before yesterday? My girlfriend even said she wanted to tutor him!"

The chief, who was smiling moments ago, noticed the commotion below and his face immediately turned dark:

"Bai Xiaoling, what's going on? Is there no meeting discipline?"

"I... I..."

Bai Xiaoling was taken aback by her own excitement, her mind blank. This was the big boss, offending the big boss, and no more good days ahead.

Chen Shouyi noticed Bai Xiaoling at this moment, she seemed familiar, after a brief recollection, he recognized this somewhat confused policewoman, turned to the bureau chief and whispered: "Sorry, she's my friend, I just hid my identity as a Martial Artist, she's probably surprised today!"

Although just a passing acquaintance, it was nothing much to him.

As for whether it helped, that was outside his concern.

"No wonder!" The bureau chief nodded knowingly: "Sit down then, and don't make such a fuss next time."

Bai Xiaoling reluctantly sat back down, her face alternating between blue and white.

...

The meeting soon ended.

Bai Xiaoling returned to the office, slumped back in her chair, looking pained: "I'm done for, I should have said my period came just in time."

"Then why didn't you?" a friendly female colleague asked with a laugh.

"Mind went blank from fright, couldn't react," Bai Xiaoling scratched her head, distressed.

"I hadn't asked yet, why did you stand up during the meeting?"

Bringing up the topic, Bai Xiaoling momentarily forgot her distress, scooting her chair closer, slightly excited and incredulous: "Let me tell you, I know that Advisor Chen..."

Before she could finish, the captain walked out of the office: "Bai Xiaoling, the chief wants to see you in his office."

Bai Xiaoling's face immediately fell, unsure: "Captain, is such a small matter worth going to the chief's office? Isn't it unnecessary, are you sure you didn't hear wrong?"

"The chief calls, then go. How would I know? Asking me is no use, hurry along."

Bai Xiaoling had no choice but to get up reluctantly, arriving shortly at the door of the chief's office, secretly psyching herself up:

"It's no big deal, just getting scolded, writing a self-reflection, won't lose much skin."

She took a deep breath, stepped forward to knock on the door.

Upon hearing a "come in," she pushed the door open and entered, apprehensively: "Chief, you called for me."

"Sit, don't stand!" the chief said with a smile.

The anticipated storm didn't happen, she let out a small sigh of relief, feeling slightly favored: "Chief, I'd rather stand."

"Bai Xiaoling, you know Advisor Chen?"

"Know him!"

Seen once counts as knowing.

"That's great, I was initially thinking of finding a clerical officer from the comprehensive department, since you know each other, all the better, from now on you're Advisor Chen's dedicated liaison officer."

...

Bai Xiaoling was still a bit dazed until she got home.

"Mom, I'm home! I'll go to my room first."

She greeted Mrs. Bai, who was busy in the kitchen, and quickly walked into her room, couldn't wait to pick up the phone and dial her friend's number.

Patently waited till the phone rang six or seven times before the other side finally picked up.

She spoke with mystery: "Ruyue, you definitely don't know who I ran into today?"

"Who? Which handsome guy?"

"You'll be startled to hear, you know Chen Shouyi?"

"Chen Shouyi? My tutoring student? Of course I know, did you run into him again today?"

"Then you surely don't know his identity!"

"What identity, second-generational official or rich kid? Stop beating around the bush, speak up, I need to train." The response on the phone was quite indifferent, impatient.

Bai Xiaoling showed a sly smile, no longer hiding it: "Of course it's not that, guess where I saw him? At our bureau, he's the new security advisor."

Wang Ruyue took a moment to process, then reconfirmed with another sentence: "Security advisor! Which aspect?"

"The kind you think, security advisor, Martial Artist!"

"That's impossible!"