

# **I Pick Up Talents on the Interstellar Battlefield**

*Chapter 36: Chapter 36: Trap, Snake-man*

The night was as calm as water.

A cool breeze swept across the plain, pitch black all around.

The four members of the Earth Dragon Team, wearing multifunctional helmets, turned on the night vision feature, chatting as they walked.

"We've been walking for three or four hours already, and we still haven't found any clues,"

Xiao Yunlong said dejectedly.

Qin Tian frowned slightly; initially, he could detect a faint scent of blood along the way, but at a certain point, it suddenly disappeared. Since then, they could only choose a direction at random to keep moving forward.

"How about we find a place to rest for a bit?"

Looking at the desolate and lonely surroundings, Xiao Yunlong said, "Traveling at night isn't safe."

"Alright."

Qin Dadi nodded.

The group found a small hill and sat on the leeward side. Qin Dadi pulled out some instant meals and bottled water from his backpack and shared them with everyone.

"Captain, I forgot to ask, which legion do the teams we're looking for belong to?" Xiao Yunlong asked while eating.

After twisting open the bottle cap and taking a sip of water, Qin Dadi replied, "The White Tiger Legion."

"The White Tiger Legion's special operations team~"

Xiao Yunlong was shocked, "It's them? This mission is feeling more dangerous."

"That's why we must be on high alert,"

Qin Dadi said solemnly, "If anything seems off, contact headquarters immediately, and don't try to be a hero."

"Yeah, I definitely won't try to be a hero; I'm a coward,"

Xiao Yunlong shrugged.

Qin Tian took small bites of a compressed biscuit, finding the chocolate flavor better than he expected, though it was a bit too dry and needed water to swallow.

Just then, an extremely faint sound came from afar, capturing his attention instantly.

Listening carefully for a while, Qin Tian squinted his eyes slightly and spoke:

"There are people nearby."

People?

Upon hearing this, the three others became vigilant immediately.

Qin Dadi asked in a low voice, "In which direction?"

Qin Tian pointed in one direction, "Over there, about two kilometers away."

"Wait, you can hear sounds from two kilometers away?"

Xiao Yunlong's mouth dropped open in shock, "What are your ears made of? Bat?"

It's cat, cats also have strong hearing.

Qin Tian answered silently. His current [Shadowbone Physique] was obtained from a Tier Four Shadow Catman, with the talent orb reaching deep blue.

His hearing, smell, and night vision abilities far surpassed ordinary people.

Moreover, they were currently on a plain, with nothing but the whistling wind as background noise, so hearing noise two kilometers away wasn't surprising.

"Qin Tian, are you sure it's people? Could it be some animals?" Qin Dadi asked cautiously.

"I heard the sound of conversation," Qin Tian replied.

Liu Zhaozhao said, "Could it be other teams?"

"No."

Qin Dadi shook his head, "For this mission, every team has its own designated area. I'm sure the Earth Dragon Team is the only one in this sector."

"If it's not a special ops team, then it means..."

Xiao Yunlong's eyes flashed with excitement, "We've found the targets!"

"If Qin Tian didn't hear wrong, then it should be,"

Qin Dadi said, a smile appearing on his face. The Military Department placed a high priority on this mission, offering substantial military points, and they successfully found the missing personnel in just half a day.

This operation turned out to be unexpectedly smooth~

"Let's move~"

The Earth Dragon Team immediately sprang into action, running quickly, and soon arrived in front of a cave entrance.

"Is anyone there?"

Xiao Yunlong shouted at the cave entrance.

"Yes, yes."

A hurried and somewhat weak voice came from inside.

There really is someone!

The group exchanged glances, turned on their flashlights, and entered the cave.

The cave was dark, with a very noticeable damp odor, and aside from that, there was a faint smell of rust.

"We're here~"

A voice came from the front, and Qin Dadi quickly shone the flashlight in that direction.

They saw two men in special ops military uniforms sitting on the ground, their upper bodies leaning against the cave wall, with tattered clothes and dark red bloodstains. Their lips were a bit pale, indicating they were not in good condition.

"Which special ops team are you from?" Qin Dadi asked.

A crew-cut man said weakly, "My name is Xue Lin, and he's Wang Tiancheng. We're both members of the Celestial Wind Squad from the White Tiger Legion."

Xue Lin, Wang Tiancheng.

Qin Dadi compared the missing persons' list with their faces, confirmed it was correct, nodded, and said in a deep voice:

"We are the Earth Dragon Team of the 319th Legion, ordered by the Military Department to search for the personnel who went missing a few days ago. We now confirm your identities, and I will contact headquarters to escort you back to the base."

"Thank you."

Wang Tiancheng spoke, his voice very hoarse and weak, "Brothers, could you get us some water to drink first?"

"No problem."

Xiao Yunlong immediately took out two bottles of water from his backpack and handed them to the two.

"Thanks."

The two took the water as if it were a treasure, quickly unscrewed the caps, tilted their heads back, and gulped it down without a moment's pause.

"Don't rush, drink slowly, I still have..."

Before Xiao Yunlong could finish his sentence, the two had already finished the entire bottle of water.

"... a few more bottles~"

Xiao Yunlong's voice became softer.

"Are your wounds okay? Do you need any medication?"

Qin Dadi noted the multiple injuries on the two men, a hint of suspicion flashing in his eyes.

"No need, we'll treat them when we get back to the base."

Xue Lin refused Qin Dadi's kind offer.

"Could you give us some food as well?" Wang Tiancheng said hoarsely.

Upon hearing this, Xiao Yunlong quickly rummaged through his backpack, putting back the hard-to-swallow compressed biscuits and took out two energy bars.

"Thanks."

Wang Tiancheng handed one to Xue Lin, then slowly tore open the packaging, took a small bite, and chewed with difficulty.

At that moment, Qin Tian suddenly spoke up:

"What happened to your wounds?"

Upon hearing the question, Xue Lin and Wang Tiancheng paused, then looked up at Qin Tian.

"Let me explain."

Xue Lin sighed, "A few days ago, several of our teams received a mission to investigate the disappearance of the Steel 7 Company. After reaching the scene, since we couldn't find any valuable clues, the captains decided to split up and share intelligence daily."

"Later, our Celestial Wind Squad followed a direction to search, only to unexpectedly encounter a group of Snake-men along the way."

Snake-men?

In Qin Tian's mind, a classic image of Snake-men—a Medusa—immediately appeared.

"This group of Snake-men wasn't very strong; we quickly killed most of them. However, as we prepared to finish them off, a Tier Four Poisonous Snake-man suddenly appeared."

"Poisonous Snake-man!"

Xiao Yunlong exclaimed, and shock appeared on the faces of Qin Dadi and Liu Zhaozhao as well.

"Yes, a Poisonous Snake-man,"

Xue Lin smiled bitterly, "Once he appeared, the situation reversed instantly. Our entire squad was no match for him. In the end, our captain burned his bloodline power to hold him off, creating a chance for us to escape."

"During our escape, we split into pairs, and Tiancheng and I managed to break through many Snake-men with all our strength, finding a safe place to hide."

"But both of our communicators were lost during the battle, so we couldn't contact the Military Department. Fortunately, they didn't give up on us."

After listening to Xue Lin's account, Xiao Yunlong and the others were secretly shocked. A Poisonous Snake-man is much scarier than the Shadow Cat-man they previously faced.

For Xue Lin and his team to survive a Poisonous Snake-man encounter is truly a stroke of luck~

While everyone focused on the Poisonous Snake-man, Qin Tian felt that something seemed off.

What could it be?

Qin Tian's gaze swept over Xue Lin and Wang Tiancheng, then suddenly, a detail caught his attention.

Wang Tiancheng's leg!

Xiao Yunlong and Qin Dadi's flashlights were focused on their upper bodies, leaving the lower bodies concealed in the darkness.

However, Qin Tian had excellent night vision, able to see everything clearly.

Wang Tiancheng's leg was severely injured, seemingly corroded by some strong substance, with a large area of skin sloughed off, extending from the calf to the ankle.

The once-developed calf muscles now seemed to have been bitten off.

With such a severe injury, even walking would be difficult, let alone breaking through a group of Snake-men.

Is he lying?

But why would he lie?

Qin Tian frowned slightly; just then, his vision blurred, a faint dizziness washing over his brain.

Thud~

Thud~

The sound of a body hitting the ground reached his ears, and as he turned his head, Qin Dadi, Xiao Yunlong, and Liu Zhaozhao were all collapsed on the ground.

He was startled, glancing to the side.

Xue Lin and Wang Tiancheng were staring at him intently, eyes filled with inexplicable emotions, as if torn between helplessness, struggle, and remorse.

Qin Tian's mind raced; he clutched his head, staggered a couple of steps, then slumped into unconsciousness.

A few seconds later

Sss sss sss

From deep within the cave came a faint rustling, as if something smooth was scraping against the ground.

Soon enough, several large figures emerged.

Upper bodies bare, solid and strong, with hair a deep green, their features a blend of human and serpentine, eyes sharp and yellow, with pupils like slender slits akin to those of snakes.

Their lower bodies had thick, muscular serpent tails, scales shimmering faintly dark green in the dim light.

*Chapter 37: Chapter 37: Cold Blood and Qinglin Snake Poison*

Four Snake-men emerged from the shadows, swishing their tails, and approached Xue Lin and Wang Tiancheng.

"You... are good."

The tallest Snake-man leader in the middle looked down at Xue Lin, speaking in imperfect Imperial language, his elongated yellowish snake pupils flickering with cunning and mockery.

Xue Lin and Wang Tiancheng lowered their heads, their eyes filled with deep pain and guilt.

"Xue, Wang, don't be sad."

The Snake-man leader grinned, revealing rows of sharp teeth, "They will soon be just like you, loyal to His Highness Egger."

Xue Lin clenched his fists tightly, his nails digging into his flesh, his whole body trembling slightly.

As a Royal Soldier, he was not afraid of death.

From the day he enlisted, he was prepared for sacrifice for his country.

However, he who thought he had a will of steel, was ruthlessly broken under the cruel torture of the Snake-men.

He had become the traitor he despised most, a collaborator.

"Where's the antidote?"

Wang Tiancheng asked hoarsely.

The Snake-man leader flicked his tongue, speaking sinisterly:

"This is merely a test of your loyalty. Next, according to His Highness Egger's plan, you will guide people to Hujian Grand Canyon. The antidote will be given to you after the task is completed."

"Think carefully about what to say to your comrades when you meet them. I'll take these people away."

The Snake-man leader waved his hand, indicating the Snake-men nearby to take away the people lying on the ground.

Just as the Snake-men were swishing their tails and heading toward the Earth Dragon Team, suddenly, the Snake-man leader's pupils contracted.

Something's wrong

A person was missing from the ground.

Pfft~

A blue laser beam pierced through the back of the head and through the forehead, leaving the Snake-man leader's body rigid, eyes full of shock.

Pfft pfft pfft~~

Three laser beams followed closely, exploding the heads of the remaining Snake-men.

This sudden scene caused Xue Lin and Wang Tiancheng to tremble violently, their hearts in turmoil.

They turned their heads and saw a figure slowly emerging from the shadows.



"It's you!"

When they saw the person's face, Xue Lin and Wang Tiancheng's pupils contracted sharply, immediately looking back.

Sure enough, there was one less person on the ground.

"How... how could you be fine."

Xue Lin stammered a little, knowing that in this damp air, there was a poisonous gas concocted by the Poisonous Snake-men, almost colorless and odorless, with strong hallucinogenic effects.

Even those with the Spiritualist physique would immediately fall into a daze and coma after inhaling a small amount of the gas.

They were fine because their bodies contained other toxins injected by the Poisonous Snake-men, capable of counteracting the hallucinogenic gas, but how was this guy immune?

Qin Tian looked at them coldly, able to survive thanks to the extremely strong constitution granted by [Steel Bones and Iron Flesh], allowing him to rapidly metabolize the inhaled gas. Additionally, the green talent [Quick Recovery] also played a crucial part.

[Name] Quick Recovery (Green)

[Type] Passive Talent

[Introduction] Those with this talent have cells that are far more active than normal people, possessing strong regenerative abilities, as well as greatly enhanced resistance to various toxins.

Pa pa pa~~

Qin Tian walked towards the two step by step, the sound of his footsteps crisp, yet striking their hearts like the drumbeats of death.

Xue Lin and Wang Tiancheng turned pale, sweat beading on their foreheads, their hearts racing as if they'd leap from their chests.

Pa~

Suddenly, Qin Tian stopped, pressing the muzzle of his laser gun to Xue Lin's temple, coldly stating:

"Wake them up, or else, die!"

The cold muzzle pressed against the skin, the air filled with tension.

For some reason, Xue Lin suddenly calmed down. After a moment of silence, he spoke:

"They've been poisoned by the Poisonous Snake-men's gas, only they can unravel this poison."

"He's right."

Wang Tiancheng said hoarsely, "We also have Poisonous Snake-men's toxin in us, that's why we can be immune to the gas."

Qin Tian stared at them, taking a long time before slowly withdrawing his gun, and asked, "Where are the Poisonous Snake-men?"

"A Poisonous Snake-man is a Tier Four Beast Spirit Warrior, going after him is walking to your death."

Xue Lin said dejectedly, "Notify the military to send experts. If we can take down a Poisonous Snake-man, we can die with merit for the Empire."

Xue Lin knew very well that once Imperial reinforcements arrived, their betrayal could no longer be hidden, and then they would surely be sent to the military court.

However, the deadly poison within them would erupt before that, and they would die eventually.

"You just need to tell me where the Poisonous Snake-men are."

Qin Tian said coldly.

He had inhaled some of the toxic gas earlier, clearly sensing the neurological harm it posed. If the toxins weren't expelled quickly, they would cause irreversible damage to his body.

Especially for an Extraordinary, this impact was unacceptable.

Moreover, even if the military experts could indeed arrive quickly, the battle was unpredictable.

If they accidentally kill the Poisonous Snake-men, who will save the Earth Dragon Team then.

Therefore, he had to quickly find the Poisonous Snake-men and seize their snake venom talent.

Xue Lin heard the determination in Qin Tian's voice, hesitated for a moment, then said:

"The Poisonous Snake-men are in the deepest part of this cave."

"Besides them, there are dozens of Azure Qilin Snake-men. You're going to your death alone."

Qin Tian replied coldly:

"That's my decision."

After saying this, Qin Tian suddenly grabbed Xue Lin's hand, and then gave it a fierce twist.

Ka~

The hand twisted 90°, the bone shattered.

"Ah!"

Xue Lin screamed in pain, but this pain had not yet ended.

Ka ka ka

Both his hands and feet were broken by Qin Tian.

The intense pain surged through his nerves like a tide, causing him too much agony to even scream, his body trembling like a sieve as he lay on the ground.

"What are you doing?"

Wang Tiancheng looked angrily at Qin Tian, roaring loudly.

Qin Tian said coldly, "I won't kill you, but I also won't let you be intact with my teammates."

"And, not killing you isn't because I'm soft-hearted. If the intelligence is wrong, the pain you'll endure will be ten times or even a hundred times what's here now. I'll make you—"

"Worse than death."

Qin Tian's voice was cold, like the freezing wind of winter that could freeze one's soul.

He didn't want to know why Xue, Wang had surrendered to the Beastmen, nor did he care if they had grievances, that was for the military court to worry about.

His only concern was his teammates.

Ka ka ka~~

Wang Tiancheng's hands and feet were broken one by one by Qin Tian, but he was much tougher than Xue Lin, not making a sound throughout.

Qin Tian did not let the two continue to suffer; two chops to the neck knocked them both out.

Then, Qin Tian dragged his teammates out of the cave, avoiding inhaling more toxic gas.

Standing in front of the pitch-black cave entrance, Qin Tian's eyes were deep, like a cold pool, as his thoughts sank into his mind.

After killing four Snake-men, he acquired two new talents.

[Name] Cold Blood (White)

[Type] Passive Talent

[Introduction] Your body temperature will change with the ambient temperature, with a relatively keen perception of surrounding heat sources.

...

[Name] Qinglin Snake Poison (Green)

[Type] Passive Talent

[Introduction] Able to secrete highly toxic snake venom within the body, with greatly improved resistance to toxins.

*Chapter 38: Chapter 38: Thermosense Control, Infiltration*

Hoo~

Qin Tian raised his hand, a wisp of green smoke rising from his fingertips, the manifestation of the Qinglin Snake Poison vaporizing.

Not only that, but he could also release the snake poison through various means such as breathing and saliva.

However, compared to the Green Talent [Qinglin Snake Poison], Qin Tian valued another White Talent [Cold Blood] more.

It's often said that snakes are cold-blooded animals, though this statement is somewhat misleading.

To be precise, snakes are poikilothermic animals.

Snakes lack a complete thermoregulation mechanism and cannot maintain a relatively stable body temperature like warm-blooded animals (such as birds and mammals).

When the external temperature rises, the snake's body temperature also increases, accelerating its metabolism and enhancing its activity; conversely, when the temperature drops, its body temperature decreases, slowing down its metabolism and reducing its activity.

In terms of effects, being poikilothermic has both pros and cons.

However, once [Cold Blood] is upgraded, perhaps the downsides will no longer exist.

Additionally, part of the effect of [Cold Blood] allows the perception of heat sources.

Soon he will face an even stronger Snake-man, the Poisonous Snake-man, whose heat source perception is certainly more acute. If he cannot control his body temperature well, he is bound to be exposed prematurely.

Thinking of this, Qin Tian immediately invested 300 Evolution Points to upgrade the Talent [Cold Blood]

The white orb trembled slightly, and soon a touch of new green appeared within the orb, occupying the entire space.

[Name] Thermosense Control (Green)

[Type] Active Talent

[Introduction] You can autonomously adjust your body temperature to blend with the external environment, your aura significantly concealed, with an extremely keen perception of surrounding heat sources.

At this moment, Qin Tian felt his body change; he could easily control his blood flow, his pores contraction, and his body temperature rose and fell with his thoughts, allowing him to merge perfectly with the environment.

Not only that, but in his perception, everything was emitting heat, including the soil underfoot, the rocks, the vegetation, as if an additional infrared sensor was inside his body.

"I made the right bet."

Qin Tian's eyes showed a hint of joy. With [Thermosense Control], he could regulate his body temperature, avoiding detection by the Poisonous Snake-man.

Moreover, [Thermosense Control] exceptionally complements another Talent [Shadowbone Physique],

[Shadowbone Physique] grants an aura concealing bonus, and [Thermosense Control] further enhances the aura concealing ability.

The cultivation technique he practiced, "Shadow Thunder Prison Technique," also focuses on the stealth characteristics of the Dark Element.

With multiple layers of enhancement, his aura almost leaks not a trace.

Unless a powerful Spiritual Power indiscriminately sweeps through, otherwise, he is like a walking phantom, even if close to others, he wouldn't be discovered.

"Everything is ready."

Qin Tian re-entered the cave, blending into the darkness.

"Poisonous Snake-man, here I come."

...

The cave's tunnels were winding and crooked, like the intestine of a sleeping Giant Beast, deep and seemingly endless, dark as thick ink, devouring all light.

Water on the cave walls slid down like tears, with dripping sounds echoing in the silence, adding more to the eeriness.

In one of the deep tunnels, strange rustling sounds could be faintly heard, like clothes rubbing, or perhaps scales shivering. Several Snake-men lazily wagged their tails, moving slowly.

The Snake-man at the front held a Luminous Pearl, faintly illuminating the dim environment.

"Boss, I've never understood, what use does Lord Egger have for capturing those humans?"

One of the Snake-men voiced a question that had been pent-up for days.

The Snake-man leader turned around to look at him, a hint of coldness and sharpness in his yellow snake pupils. The questioning Snake-man suddenly felt a chill through his body and quickly lowered his head, saying:

"Sorry, boss."

The Snake-man leader withdrew his gaze and said lightly:

"Don't ask what you shouldn't. Talk too much, and beware of being thrown into the Cave of Ten Thousand Snakes."

Hearing the name Cave of Ten Thousand Snakes, all the Snake-men present couldn't help but shiver, a trace of fear appearing in their eyes.

"Continue the patrol."

The Snake-man leader captured the expressions of his subordinates, snorted coldly, and continued to lead the patrol.

However, he walked very slowly, like a human taking a leisurely post-meal stroll.

In his view, this cave was extremely hidden, accidentally discovered by a Snake-man, with no creatures able to infiltrate this place for a long time.

Thus, he gradually relaxed his vigilance, making daily patrols just a formality, going through the motions.

Shush shush~~

The snake scales scraped the ground, making a rustling sound.

As the Snake-man leader walked, he realized that the surroundings were getting quieter, with only his own sounds audible.

"What's going on?"

The Snake-man leader turned around but found no one behind him.

Startled, he quickly tightened his grip on his steel saber, cautiously moving forward.

After turning a corner, the Snake-man leader halted, his yellow snake eyes suddenly contracting.

In the straight tunnel, the Snake-man guards lay on the ground, spaced apart, with a blood hole in the back of each head, thick fluid seeping out.

What terrified the Snake-man leader was that he had not noticed when the Snake-man guards behind him had died.

In an instant, a sense of immense fear enveloped him, the scales on his neck opening and closing slightly in fright, making faint scraping sounds.

"What are you looking for?"

An icy and unfamiliar voice sounded behind him, the Snake-man leader suddenly felt a chill down his spine, instinctively wanting to turn around.

Whoosh, a sharp object violently pierced into the back of his head, his body stiffened, then slowly collapsed to the ground.

"The fifty-sixth."

Qin Tian laid the Snake-man leader flat on the ground, took a cloth from the Spatial Bag, and wiped the stains off the Military Dagger, to avoid exposure due to the scent.

From the moment he entered the cave until now, he had killed 56 Snake-men, using the same method, silently appearing behind the Snake-men through Shadow Jump, then stabbing the Military Dagger into the back of the head.

His actions were quick and ruthless, the faint sounds he made overshadowed by the noise of snake scales scraping against the ground, thus encountering no obstruction throughout the process.

However, using Shadow Jump repeatedly made him feel somewhat fatigued.

The superpower consumes physical strength and spiritual power, though his physical strength is abundant, his spiritual training has just begun, and now there is a slight pain in his brain.

Fortunately, through powerful smell, hearing, and thermal perception, he finally found the target.

Qin Tian proceeded along the tunnel, making not a sound, like a ghost. Moments later, a light appeared ahead.

He cautiously approached it, holding his breath, his body temperature synchronized with the surrounding rock, seeming to merge with the mountains.

Ahead was a dead-end tunnel, he lay on the ground peering down.



At the confluence of several tunnels, a pool lay quietly. The pool, irregular and round, with ghostly black waters, like a deep mirror reflecting no light, yet exuded a piercing cold.

Beside the pool stood a tall Snake-man, its features leaning masculine, with hair a seductive purple, its scales glittering like diamonds.

Beside the Snake-man, there were two humans, one kneeling on the ground, another nailed to a cross, covered in blood, with a mutilated left hand half severed by a sharp blade.

Upon seeing their faces clearly, Qin Tian's heart jolted,  
it was actually them.

*Chapter 39: Chapter 39: Hero, Gunning Down a Tier 4*

Tick tock, tick tock.

The cave ceiling hung densely with stalactites, with water droplets constantly gathering at their tips, dripping into the cold pool below, creating ripples.

Bearded Dai Jun was tied to a cross, his left hand severed, his ripped clothes revealing numerous wounds, one eye gouged out, leaving a hideous bloody hole.

"Mr. Dai, have you not yet made up your mind?"

The Poisonous Snake-man Egger walked up to Dai Jun, a slight smirk on his lips, speaking in perfectly standard Empire language:

"I value your abilities greatly. If you are willing to join my Snake-man tribe and diligently train the Snake-man warriors, I can procure a portion of Life Spirit Liquid for you."

"Life Spirit Liquid not only can help you regrow your severed hand and eye but also can change your constitution, making your Spiritual Cultivation smoother."

At these words, Dai Jun slowly lifted his head, his hollow eye socket facing Egger, the other eye filled with hatred, speaking hoarsely:

"Little snake, remember this, I am a Royal Soldier, a war hero; in this life, I will only kill Beastmen, and never surrender to them."

"Tsk ts, Mr. Dai, stubborn people like you are really rare."

Egger said, with a gentle yet sinister smile on his face, placing his scaly hand lightly on his bald head: "Mr. Lin Chao, maybe you should persuade him; my patience is limited. If he still refuses, then I will have to bestow upon him the most painful way to die."

"Alright! Alright!"

The bald man scrambled to Dai Jun's side, stood up, his eyes red with emotion, and said:

"Brother Dai, just surrender, your body...."

"Da Chao!"

Dai Jun suddenly shouted coldly, interrupting the bald man's words.

"Brother Dai."

The bald man grabbed Dai Jun's right hand, tears streaming down the corners of his eyes, his voice trembling.

"Surrender... please, everyone... has surrendered."

Upon hearing this, Dai Jun slowly lowered his eyes, a dark sigh in his heart. After a long while, he spoke in a low voice:

"Da Chao, I remember telling you my father was a Royal Soldier who sacrificed himself when I was very young, killed by Beastmen."

"My mother died over a year later from overwhelming grief."

"Because of the Beastmen, I lost my parents at a young age and became an orphan; it was the Empire that raised me and nurtured me into a Spiritualist."

"After enlisting, my squad leader who treated me like a brother got killed by Beastmen, and one by one, my comrades died under the Beastmen's claws."

"Da Chao, anyone else in this world can surrender to Beastmen, but not me, Dai Jun."

Dai Jun looked up, staring straight at Egger, the solitary eye burning with the flames of hatred.

"My parents, my brothers were all harmed by Beastmen. In this life, I only have one wish — to kill all Beastmen in the world."

"Brother Dai."

The bald man tightly held Dai Jun's hand, his heart torn by pain and guilt, not even daring to lift his head to meet Dai Jun's eyes.

Not far away, Qin Tian looked at the scene below with a complicated expression; previously, his impression of Dai Jun was negative, seeing him as a reckless soldier with a corrupt nature.

However, as the scene unfolded before him, he had to admit, Dai Jun was the toughest man he had ever seen, worthy of the title of war hero.

...

"Mr. Dai, it seems we cannot reach an agreement."

Egger leisurely approached, speaking with a tone of regret: "I admire Mr. Dai greatly, your will is like iron, deserving of everyone's respect. It's a pity that your hatred runs too deep."

"In that case, I can only send you on your way, but before you die, I will let you experience this world's ultimate pain."

"Pah!"

Dai Jun spat out a mouthful of bloody phlegm dismissively: "If I surrender to you, I'll be your grandson."

"Ha, so stubborn."

Egger's eyes flashed coldly, raising his hand ready to grasp Dai Jun's face.

At that moment, the bald man, stepping back, suddenly surged forward, his fist gathering fiery Spiritual Energy, striking at the back of Egger's head.

Pa~

The thick snake tail shielded Egger's head like a barrier. He turned around, his murky snake eyes staring at the bald man, his tone eerie:

"It seems there are more foolish people than just him. Since you wish to die, I will grant you the wish."

"I'll fight you to the death!!!"

The bald man's eyes were bloodshot, shouting angrily, gathering all his Spiritual Energy into his right fist, like a burning fireball, hammering toward Egger.

Pa~

Egger's palm gleamed with a dark green light, clutching the bald man's fist, while the other hand swiftly thrust out, gripping the bald man's entire face.

Purple mist erupted from his palm, spewing onto the bald man's face.

Sizzle sizzle sizzle~~~

The bald man's face burned as if splashed with acid, emitting corrosive sounds.

"Aaaaah!!!"

The bald man screamed miserably, struggling in agony, yet Egger's hand gripped his face like iron pincers.

"Da Chao! Da Chao! Damn you!!! If you have anything, come at me!!"

Dai Jun's eyes widened in fury, roaring angrily, his body twisting wildly, the chains clanging loudly, scraping sharply against the cross.

Despite Dai Jun's desperate struggle, the chains seemed as if they were part of him, unyielding.

With every struggle, the chains dug deeper into his flesh, blood trailing down his arms and legs, pooling in an ever-growing puddle on the floor beneath him.

The stalactites above still dripped rhythmically, "tick tock, tick tock," the sound mocking his powerless resistance.

"Don't worry, your turn is coming soon."

Egger said with an icy smile, the purple mist in his palm growing denser.

In no time, the blood and flesh of the bald man's face were corroded away, revealing biting-cold white bones.

"Da Chao! Da Chao!"

Dai Jun cried out in agony, his once steel-like resolve now unable to contain the despair and sorrow in his heart, tears freely streaming down his blood and sweat-streaked cheeks, leaving grimy trails behind.

Dai Jun knew, it was his words that had affected Lin Chao.

Lin Chao must have known that with his strength, he couldn't possibly hurt the Poisonous Snake-man.

But Lin Chao still resolutely launched the attack.

When he acted, Lin Chao didn't plan to survive; he wanted to die alongside Dai Jun.

Pa~

Egger released his grip, and the bald man's body fell to the ground.

Horribly, his lower body remained intact, but above the neck, only a skull remained, all the tissue and flesh corroded by toxins, unimaginable the pain he endured in that process.

"Next, it's your turn."

Egger slowly approached Dai Jun, purple mist rising from his palm.

"Little snake, even as a Ghost, I won't let you go!!"

Dai Jun roared, his voice full of hatred and fury.

"Then I'll be waiting for you."

Egger's lips curled into a cold arc, lifting his hand to grab Dai Jun's face, ready to act again.

Boom!!!

At that moment, the sound of an explosion rang out, Egger turning his head instinctively toward the sound.

But as he turned, an immense sense of danger surged, the scales on his neck standing up.

His body reacted before his brain, Spiritual Energy automatically activated, appearing on his surface.

A high-speed rotating bullet came shooting from behind, with unmatched penetrating power, piercing through the Spiritual Energy shield, precisely hitting the back of his head.

Bam!

That arrogant and cold face exploded in front of Dai Jun, spraying sticky liquid all over him, his pupils contracted, briefly stunned, then he turned to look in the direction the bullet came from.

In the small cave entrance, a figure slowly stood up, tall and straight, holding an extraordinarily exaggerated sniper rifle in both hands.

And recognizing the face of the person, incredulity filled Dai Jun's eyes.

How could it be him!

*Chapter 40: Chapter 40: Master of Snake Spirits, Poisonous Snake Body (Purple)*

Time rewinds to one minute ago

"Ah ah ah!"

The bald man's scream echoed within the culvert.

Qin Tian witnessed everything that happened, his gaze cold.

Although there was some enmity between him, the bearded man, and the bald man, seeing a fellow human being so humiliated and tortured by the Beastman filled him with anger, as if a fire was blazing inside him.

However, he did not let anger cloud his judgment.

He had seen it clearly from the back earlier; actually, the Poisonous Snake-man had been on guard against the bald man the whole time, body taut and extremely cautious. If he had fired at that moment, not only would he have failed to save the bald man, but he would have also exposed himself.

It might sound cold-blooded, but for his teammates and his own safety, he had to make sacrifices.

To kill a Tier Four Poisonous Snake-man, he had only one shot.

To increase the success rate of that shot, he decided to enhance a talent—

[Burning Embers Critical Strike]

Currently, he had accumulated over 8000 Evolution Points, more than 4000 of which were contributed by the Tier Four Shadow Catman. Earlier, he killed over 50 Snakemen, harvesting nearly 3000 more Evolution Points.

He kept 3000 Evolution Points as a backup, and invested the remaining over 5000 into it.

Enhancing [Burning Embers Critical Strike]

The blue light sphere shuddered slightly, and its color deepened rapidly, from light blue to medium blue.

At the same time, the value panel for [Burning Embers Critical Strike] changed.

[Name] Burning Embers Critical Strike (Blue)

[Type] Active Talent

[Introduction] Burns up to 10% of will, physical strength, and energy, giving the next attack a significant chance to inflict 200%-250% damage, a smaller chance to inflict 300%-350% damage, a very slight chance to inflict 400%-500% damage, and a negligible chance to inflict a maximum of 600% damage.

Compared to before, the minimum critical multiplier was increased from 150%-170% to 200%-250%, and the maximum critical multiplier increased from 500% to 600%, marking a significant enhancement.

This also gave Qin Tian more confidence.

To create a better shooting opportunity and prevent the Poisonous Snake-man from reacting in time, Qin Tian took a timed grenade from his backpack, used Shadow Jump to quickly move to the opposite side of the tunnel, and set the grenade's explosion time.

Then he returned to the original spot, took out the Shadowstrike Rune Spear, adjusted his breathing, and waited for the moment to come.

Boom!

The timed grenade detonated, the huge explosion sound attracted the Poisonous Snake-man's attention, his head tilted to the side.

Seeing this, Qin Tian immediately pulled the trigger, Spiritual Energy, Physical Strength, and Spiritual Power were instantly consumed, activating [Burning Embers Critical Strike]

{[Burning Embers Critical Strike] triggered, your next attack will inflict 320% critical damage.}

The three major runes on the Shadowstrike Rune Spear lit up, the special bullet quickly shot out, accelerated a second time under the enhancement of [Burning Embers Critical

Strike], and flew towards the back of the Poisonous Snake-man's head without making a sound.

The distance of several hundred meters was covered in an instant for the rune bullet.

The Poisonous Snake-man sensed impending danger, Spiritual Energy automatically shielded his body, but the temporary Spiritual Energy shield was instantly pierced under the dual amplification of the Shadowstrike Rune Spear and Burning Embers Critical Strike.

The bullet lifted the skull cap, the brain exploded like a watermelon, red and white spread all over the ground.

Viscous liquid splashed on his face, Dai Jun finally reacted, his solitary eye full of shock and horror.

Tier Four Poisonous Snake-man

A Poisonous Snake-man who could destroy a city with poison, considered more dangerous than a Tier Six Beast Spirit Warrior by the Empire, was actually shot dead with one bullet.

He quickly turned his head, looking towards the direction the bullet had come from.

The sight that met his eyes only intensified his disbelief.

How could it be him!!!

.....

After killing the Poisonous Snake-man, the Evolution Points surged by 5300, and at the same time, three Talent Light Spheres flew towards Qin Tian.

One of them fused with [Thermosense Control], the light sphere's color slightly deepened.

The other two light spheres brought Qin Tian immense surprise.

[Name] Master of Snake Spirits (Blue)

[Type] Active Talent

[Introduction] You can communicate with all snake species, command the Snake Race for your use, and establish a mental connection with the Snake Race, remotely sharing senses.



.....

[Name] Poisonous Snake Body (Purple)

[Type] Passive Talent

[Introduction] Your body has a new venom sac that can absorb most of the world's poisons and turn them to your use, freely controlling the secretion and release of venom; poisons subtly enhance your body, with stronger poisons providing better refinement effects.

A mystical power reshaped his body; Qin Tian could sense a new organ in the upper abdomen area, the venom sac of the Poisonous Snake Body.

At this moment, the venom sac was teeming with a rainbow of toxins, mixed but not interfering with each other.

Amazingly, Qin Tian could automatically discern the properties and uses of each poison, able to extract and release toxins at any time.

After release, the venom sac continued to secrete the same type of toxin steadily.

"No wonder every Poisonous Snake-man is a major threat to the Empire."

Qin Tian murmured, even though the Poisonous Snake Body is a purple talent, equivalent to a Silver Bloodline, in terms of lethality and destructiveness, a Tier Four Poisonous Snake-man is much more terrifying than a Tier Six Silver Beast Spirit Warrior.

As long as he absorbs enough toxins, a Poisonous Snake-man can transform into a walking poison cataclysm, everywhere he goes, everything perishes, not a blade of grass remains.

Now that he had acquired the [Poisonous Snake Body], from now on, toxins are a source of nourishment and supplements for him, he will actively seek out various toxins to enhance the venom sac.

Additionally, he could both release poison and neutralize it.

As long as any toxin enters the venom sac, it will be absorbed and deconstructed by the sac, not only can it secrete the toxin again, but it can also secrete the corresponding antidote.

He found the toxin that made the Earth Dragon Team unconscious, and later, as long as the three of them inhaled the antidote gas, they would wake up.

[Poisonous Snake Body] was his first purple talent, extremely powerful in effect.

And the other blue talent [Master of Snake Spirits] was also very good.

This talent allows him to communicate and command snake species, and most importantly, he can also share senses and perspectives with snake species, which plays a crucial role in environmental detection and intelligence gathering.

After absorbing the two major talents, Qin Tian shouldered the Shadowstrike on his back, clasped the stone crevice with both hands, and like a gecko, quickly climbed down the smooth mountain wall, finally standing firmly on the ground and walking towards Dai Jun.

Looking at the man approaching, Dai Jun's face was complex, hoarsely saying:

"I didn't expect it to be you who saved me in the end."

"I didn't expect someone who gets into trouble when drinking to be so tough."

Qin Tian used a knife to break the iron chains around Dai Jun's hands and feet, helped him by the shoulder, letting him stand slowly on the ground.

Hearing Qin Tian's evaluation of him, Dai Jun should have felt happy, but when he saw the broken corpse not far away, his heart felt like it was being sliced, the pain making it hard to breathe.

Qin Tian noticed the grief on Dai Jun's face, sighed, and said:

"Sorry, I couldn't save him then."

"It's not your fault, I killed Da Chao."

Dai Jun lowered his head, a tear of blood silently slipped from the corner of his eye.

"Qin Tian, can I borrow your knife?" Dai Jun said in a low tone.

Qin Tian frowned, "You..."

Dai Jun lowered his head, his mouth bitter:

"Da Chao left a few minutes earlier than me, if I go now, I might still catch up with him."

"Qin Tian, I'm a cripple now, with broken hands and blind eyes, I'll never be able to kill Beastmen again, to me, life like that is worse than death."

"Let me die here, having the Poisonous Snake-man accompany me in death, I can stand proud and meet my parents after I'm gone."

Seeing the grief and determination in Dai Jun's single eye, Qin Tian tightened his lips, but eventually, he handed the Battle Sword to Dai Jun.

"Thank you."

Dai Jun raised the Battle Sword to his neck, and just before acting, he suddenly smiled:

"Brother, I always wanted to tell you, that blow——"

"Damn, it hurt!"

Slurp!!!

The blade slid across his throat, the trachea cut open, blood gushed forth.

Clang~~~

The Battle Sword fell to the ground, Dai Jun clutched his neck, staggered to the bald man's side, lay next to him, and opened his solitary eye to look at the cave roof, a smile on his lips.

"Da Chao, slow down, brother is coming to join you."

Drip drip

Water dripped into the cold pool, mixing with blood, and spreading out.

Qin Tian stood beside Dai Jun and Lin Chao, sighed, then slowly raised his hand towards the two, giving a standard military salute.

"Farewell~ journey~ well~"