

## Battlefield 451

### Chapter 451: Imperial Glory Medal, Royal Major General\_2

Lin Zhou raised his hand to receive the medal, his fingertips gently brushing over the star-trail pattern as he bowed in thanks, the applause from the audience carrying a hint of admiration for his wisdom.

Next, several more officers took the stage in succession—a regiment commander who led a surprise attack on the Demon Source, tearing open the defensive line with valiant courage, received the "Tiger Medal"; a company commander who calmly directed a breakout from a demon trap, leading his entire company to safety, received the "Bauhinia Medal"; and a military doctor who, at the risk of demonic Qi infection, treated the wounded on the battlefield, received the "Compassion Medal".

The medals on the tray gradually decreased, the silver and blue crystal stone brilliance being carried away one by one. Finally, only the "Empire Radiance Medal" remained at the center, the red-gold and orange ruby shining ever more brilliantly under the lights, like a small sun suspended in midair.

The atmosphere in the audience quietly shifted.

Many regiment commanders discreetly adjusted their posture, their previously tense backs relaxing somewhat. As their gazes brushed past the "Empire Radiance Medal," they felt a sense of relief—they understood their own achievements were commendable but fell short of "outstanding merit." Their earlier anticipation gradually settled into waiting for the awardee to be announced.

Yet a few still sat upright, their eyes fixed firmly on the center stage.

The Huxin Battle Group commander, sitting to Qin Tian's right, unconsciously rubbed the lion-patterned embroidery on his dress uniform sleeves. Having led his team to capture two Demon Sources during the latter stages of the campaign, he considered his achievements truly outstanding.

Meanwhile, the Tianlang Battle Group commander raised an eyebrow slightly. He had once led his team to intercept the main forces of demons and fought against a Tier Seven demon in the final sealing battle, enabling the sealing team to successfully complete its mission, secretly pondering that he might be a contender.

Their breathing was lighter than before, eyes filled with anticipation, seemingly engaged in a distant standoff with the "Empire Radiance Medal," waiting for Dongfang Yue to call their names.

Qin Tian remained seated, his gaze resting on the "Empire Radiance Medal," his fingertips gently tapping his knee, feeling not an urgency but a calm before the dust settled.

Dongfang Yue closed the merit roster, his gaze sweeping over the crowd once more, his previously steady tone now layered with gravity: "Next, we bestow the highest honor of this campaign—the 'Empire Radiance Medal'."

These words dropped like a pebble into a tranquil lake, and the audience fell silent at once, everyone's eyes converging on the red-gold medal, as if even their breath had paused.

Dongfang Yue's gaze slowly swept across the room, finally settling on Qin Tian in the front row. The merit roster in his hand closed with a crisp sound, like a heavy hammer pounding on everyone's heart.

He took a deep breath, his voice suddenly rising, carrying the power to penetrate the hall, resonating in every inch of space:

"Sixth Battle Zone, Chijin Battlegroup Commander, Qin Tian!"

Those brief six words sent silent ripples through the audience—some abruptly looked up, their eyes full of shock; some corners of mouths turned upward, unsurprised by the choice; while those regiment commanders who harbored high hopes just moments ago now wore stiff expressions, glancing around as if searching for this Commander Qin Tian.

Bang~

Qin Tian slowly stood up, the black dress uniform fitting his tall stature, the Chijin Battlegroup insignia on the sleeve reflecting a faint glow under the lights.

He stepped onto the stage, his military boots confidently treading on the dark carpet. Each step was steady and powerful, devoid of any panic, as if he had expected this moment while still revering the honor.

Dongfang Yue raised his hand, lifting the "Empire Radiance Medal" from the tray—the red-gold-forged medal radiated dazzling light under the lighting, the pigeon-egg-sized blazing orange gemstone gleaming like a burning star, surrounded by twelve gilded wings, while tiny diamonds adorned the wing-ends, so it seemed even the air was tinged with gold.

Holding the medal, his gaze solemn, his voice filled with respect for the meritorious warrior:

"In the Demon Suppression Abyss campaign, Qin Tian led the Chijin Battlegroup to destroy eight demonic rifts and demolish one Demon Source. Through strategem, he incited two Tier Seven Demon Kings to kill each other, ultimately beheading both. During the final sealing phase, Qin Tian utilized his spatial ability to translocate millions of troops across dominions within an hour, effectively intercepting demon incursions into the Empire's territory. When the sealing team encountered setbacks afterward, Qin Tian forcibly sealed the spatial passage with a personal artifact and safely withdrew the millions-strong army post-seal completion via subsequent teleportation."

The moment his words concluded, the grand hall fell into a brief silence, even the sound of breathing seeming to freeze.

The next second, shock surged through the audience like a tidal wave—the officers who had subtly questioned Qin Tian earlier now widened their eyes, instinctively straightening their backs.

The Huxin Battle Group commander abruptly paused his fingers rubbing the sleeve's lion pattern, his face devoid of unwillingness, replaced by utter astonishment; while the Tianlang Battle Group commander's mouth slightly agape, the look he cast toward Qin Tian was devoid of any competitiveness, leaving only incredulous admiration.

No one had anticipated that the military accomplishments of this young Colonel could be so significant—destroying eight rifts and demolishing a Demon Source were already heights ordinary battlegroups found hard to attain; facilitating two Tier Seven Demon Kings to self-destruct warranted the Deep Blue Medal for stratagem; not to mention translocating millions across realms, sealing the passage with his artifact, and safeguarding the army in retreat.

Individually, any of these feats would merit a High Tier medal, yet all were now resting on Qin Tian's shoulders, allowing no room for rebuttal.

Those who harbored discontent in their hearts now only felt their cheeks burning, as tangible military achievements lay before them, making them recognize that behind this honor lie valor, intelligence, and responsibility surpassing common limits.

#### Chapter 452: Imperial Radiance Medal, Royal Major General (Part 3)

The discussion below turned silently into hushed exclamations. Everyone subconsciously nodded, and the doubt in their gaze towards Qin Tian disappeared completely, leaving only profound admiration and heartfelt reverence. It was as if he was not a young officer before them but a towering mountain built from battle achievements, inspiring awe and willing respect.

"Due to these outstanding achievements, by the highest committee decision of the Azure Wood Star Realm Military Department, Qin Tian is specially awarded the 'Empire Glory Medal,' to honor his remarkable battle contributions and to express the Empire's reverence for heroes!"

With these words, Dongfang Yue solemnly pinned the "Empire Glory Medal" onto Qin Tian's black formal attire, on the left side of his chest—where the scarlet gold medal and the golden star of the Colonel's epaulet brilliantly complemented each other, instantly becoming the most dazzling presence in the room.

Qin Tian straightened his spine, quickly raised his right hand to his brow, and saluted with perfect military precision.

Clap, clap, clap!

A thunderous applause erupted from the audience, more enthusiastic than ever before, forming a wave of homage.

The applause lasted for a long time, persisting until Qin Tian lowered his arm and turned to acknowledge the audience, where the previous looks of skepticism had all transformed into burning respect.

As the applause subsided, Dongfang Yue raised his hand slightly, calming the commotion in the hall. All eyes focused once again on the center of the stage. Looking at Qin Tian, expectant and hopeful, he spoke with the grave and authoritative tone characteristic of the Military Department:

"Additionally, following the review by the highest operational committee of the Military Department, considering Qin Tian's exceptional contribution in the Demon Suppression Abyss campaign, and according to Article 7 of the 'Royal Army Promotion Regulations' concerning 'exceptional battle merits promotion,' I now formally announce: Qin Tian is promoted from Royal Colonel to Royal Major General, effective immediately!"

"Boom—"

This statement was like thunder, instantly causing a stir among the audience.

Many officers abruptly stood from their seats, their faces full of shock—advancing from a Colonel to a Major General was a significant leap in a military career, and Qin Tian's direct promotion from Colonel past Major General to Major General was a rare occurrence in the history of the Royal Military Department.

After a brief commotion, the applause in the hall resumed, more passionate and resounding than before.

No one questioned the legitimacy of this exceptional promotion, as Qin Tian's achievements were evident; he alone protected millions of Spiritualist warriors, preventing billions of Demons from breaking through the space passage. Without him, who knows when the fourth space passage, which wasn't supposed to exist, could have been sealed, or how many warriors would have perished because of it.

This advancement from Colonel to Major General, placed upon Qin Tian, not only seemed warranted but felt "well-deserved."

"Major General."

Qin Tian's eyes wavered, tinged with emotion. In his past life, a Major General would have been an unreachable figure, only seen in the news.

Yet now, within just two short years, he transitioned from a cannon fodder Cloned Soldier to a Royal Major General. The glory is backed by hardships, trials, and several perilous, wire-walking situations unknown to anyone but himself.

"Major General Qin Tian."

Dongfang Yue's voice pulled him back from his thoughts, as the Marshal personally took the Major General's epaulet from the ceremonial soldier's hand—a black base with entwined golden foliage pattern, exquisitely detailed, its matte-edged leaves, and the center adorned with a brilliant gold star, revealed a cold, commanding presence under the lights.

Dongfang Yue stepped forward, his movements steady and meticulous, undoing the buttons of the existing Colonel epaulet on Qin Tian's shoulders. The old epaulet was gently removed, and the new Major General epaulet was snugly attached to the shoulder of the formal attire. The golden foliage encircling the gold star complemented the scarlet gold brilliance of the "Empire Glory Medal" on Qin Tian's chest, instantly giving the outfit an aura of the steadiness befitting a high-ranking officer.

Qin Tian straightened his spine, and as the epaulet replacement was completed, he quickly raised his right hand to his brow, saluting with an impeccable military precision.

Clap—

The applause erupted like rolling thunder throughout the grand hall the moment the military salute concluded.

The applause persisted for a long time, refusing to cease.

Qin Tian lowered his arm, gazing forward, his eyes carrying a hint of determination.

The Empire Glory Medal and Major General rank are not only recognition of his past achievements but also a heavy responsibility—from now on, he must safeguard the lives of more warriors, the Empire's territories, and the peace of billions of citizens.

## Chapter 453: Sensation

When Qin Tian stepped into the temporary camp of the Chijin Battlegroup dressed in a black major general's ceremonial uniform, the originally noisy battalion instantly fell into a brief silence, and the next second, it exploded as the warriors' eyes locked onto his shoulder, the sensational sound wave almost overturning the tent's roof.

"Is that a major general's shoulder badge? Golden leaves encircling a golden star, am I seeing things?" a young warrior rubbed his eyes, his tone full of disbelief.

"It's really a major general! Our leader has truly been promoted to major general!" Another veteran clapped his thigh abruptly, his voice filled with uncontrollable excitement.

"Our leader was a colonel previously, how long has it been, directly promoted by two ranks to major general!"

"What about crossing two ranks?" Immediately, a warrior retorted, his tone full of protection for Qin Tian, "Have you forgotten how many demons we killed in the Demon Suppression Abyss? Our battlegroup's enemy eradication count is several times, even ten times that of other battlegroups, and the number of demonic qi fissures we've destroyed is something they couldn't even dare to imagine. The leader deserves this promotion, even a three-rank promotion wouldn't be excessive!"

Amidst the discussions, the warriors gathered around, crowding Qin Tian, their young faces filled with excitement and pride.

Feng Xiaotian was the first to step forward, his smile particularly sincere: "Leader, congratulations, congratulations!"

He indeed felt envy, but not a shred of jealousy—only those who fought alongside Qin Tian in the Demon Realm knew how much this leader sacrificed for the Chijin Battlegroup and for this battle.

As everyone surrounded discussing the shoulder badge, Li Wufeng's eyes widened, his gaze firmly fixed on Qin Tian's left chest—this professional soldier, graduated from a formal military academy,

understood better than anyone the weight of military honor. His fingers trembled slightly, his voice carrying a hint of uncertainty: "Leader, that medal on your chest..."

Qin Tian glanced down at the "Empire Glorification Medal" on his chest, the ruby on the chijin base gleamed warm in the sunlight, he raised his hand and gently brushed the edge of the medal, smiling slightly: "This is the Empire Glorification Medal."

"It really is the Empire Glorification Medal!"

Li Wufeng's pupils contracted abruptly, subconsciously taking half a step back, his face filled with shock.

He understood better than anyone the weight of this medal—it's the pinnacle honor in the Royal Army, only awarded to warriors who have accomplished "war-changing level" extraordinary feats. Across the entire Azure Wood Star Realm, those who achieve this medal have always been rare, and it's been several years since anyone has even touched the threshold for this medal.

More importantly, the Empire Glorification Medal is never merely a "symbol of honor."

The wearer of the Empire Glorification Medal, no matter which star realm's garrison they visit, receives the highest-level hospitality from the local government and army; the medal holder's relatives, from job allocation to medical care, education, to interstellar travel, enjoy top-tier benefits of the Empire.

A single medal can almost propel an entire family to rise.

"Empire Glorification Medal."

Upon hearing the name of this medal, the warriors immediately checked Star Net, and the search left them gasping at the weight of the medal.

"Oh my, the Empire Glorification Medal is top-tier honor in the Military Department, feels like the weight of this medal is heavier than that of a major general."

"Yes, major generals are appointed every year, but those who earn the Empire Glorification Medal, there are only a few in the entire Azure Wood Star Realm."

Amidst the discussion, the warriors' gaze towards Qin Tian grew hotter—before they only knew the leader accomplished great deeds, but never expected this honor to be so precious.

The major general rank is proof of strength, but the Empire Glorification Medal is a symbol of legend, and their leader is holding these two honors firmly in hand.

Old Ghost stood on the outskirts of the crowd, his hands behind his back, watching Qin Tian surrounded by the warriors, those slightly cloudy eyes reflecting a layer of complicated emotion.

His fingertips unconsciously rubbed the sleeve—no one knew what kind of waves were surging inside this Tier Six Soul Master at the moment.

Initially, when Qin Tian forcibly planted the Soul Seed and took him in as a Soul Servant, he didn't know how many nights he tossed and turned.

Living independently for decades, finally breaking through the bottleneck to advance to Tier Six Soul Master, he thought he would live more freely, yet he ended up in the hands of a young officer, becoming a soul servant at their disposal—this, in his view, was the greatest irony of his life.

But during the time they've spent together, the days he worried about never appeared.

Qin Tian never arrogantly demanded him to do things, instead would ask for his opinion during tactical discussions; knowing that soul master cultivation requires resources, he even proactively gifted him elixirs and treasure materials, helping him break through a minor blockage that lasted for years.

And today, witnessing Qin Tian dressed in a major general's uniform, the Empire Glorification Medal shining brightly on his chest, Old Ghost's last bit of discomfort dissipated, he gently sighed, the emotion in his eyes gradually turning into a smile of clarity.

Perhaps, being planted with a Soul Seed by such a person isn't irony, but instead the most fortunate "falling down" in his drifting half-life.

Beyond the crowd, Poisonous Widow's gaze was like a slender string, firmly locked onto Qin Tian surrounded by warriors.

The pair of beautiful eyes quietly unfolded a layer of soft, moist light, she looked at Qin Tian's shoulder badge reflecting light, the smile at the corner of his lips, and suddenly felt that such an energetic boss would probably be engraved forever in her memory, never fading.

"Xiong, 'Major General'... is it a very powerful thing?"

Terreda squeezed into the outskirts of the crowd, half-familiar with the Empire's language, barely grasping the word "Major General" repeatedly mentioned. But just by looking at the warriors around him, their flushed faces, and excitedly waving their arms, he could guess that their boss had achieved something remarkable.

Xiong scratched the back of his head, answering in a booming voice: "Seems like... it's supposed to be a very powerful high-ranking officer."

Once out of the Demon Suppression Abyss, the two could finally communicate using the translator, but Terreda's understanding of "high-ranking officer" still stayed in Barbarian Race's perception—the translator converted this term into Barbarian language, popping up the interpreted meaning as "tribal chief."

"Turns out the boss has become a tribal chief!" Terreda's eyes lit up, his face full of realization, he then leaned forward again, asking eagerly: "Are we supposed to have our own territory now? Can we hunt freely, and wage war on other tribes?"

"Uh..." Xiong was taken aback, pondering that a major general is a high-ranking officer in the army, commanding a lot of men, presumably capable of "battling other people," so he nodded emphatically: "I think so!"

This statement instantly ignited Terreda's interest, he immediately turned around and gestured to the Barbarian Warriors behind him, shouting loudly in Barbarian language.

The group of tall warriors erupted upon hearing "having their own territory" and "can hunt freely," letting out rough roars that reached the sky, some even pounded their chests in excitement, with such fervor it looked as if they were about to rush out to stake a territory and build a tribe.

Qin Tian watched this scene from afar, his mouth uncontrollably twitching.

He figured it out, Xiong and Terreda, these two lively characters, were even better at exaggerating than the old gossips at the village entrance—somehow, the decent major general rank, through their interpretation, transformed into "Barbarian chief" and "able to attack others", at this rate, who knows what outrageous stories they might come up with next.

After returning, he must give them a thorough lesson in cultural education.

Suddenly, Xiong and Terreda shivered as if feeling a chill on their back, like some trouble was about to arise.

#### Chapter 454: Farewell and Return

The room was dimly lit, Qin Tian raised his hand to activate his smart wristwatch, lightly tapping on the virtual screen to send a video call request.

A few seconds later, a soft blue holographic projection lit up in the air, revealing a familiar face.

"Officer!" Qin Tian straightened up and gave a standard military salute.

"Qin Tian, congratulations on successfully completing the Demon Suppression Abyss mission." Yan Qing's face broke into a smile, and as his gaze swept over the badge on the shoulder, there wasn't a hint of surprise in his expression.

"Also, congratulations on your promotion to Major General—now, our ranks are equal."

Qin Tian was originally from the Seventh Bureau, and even though this promotion was handled through a special process, his original unit would certainly be notified.

Previously, Qin Tian's promotions were all submitted by the Seventh Bureau and approved by higher units of the Military Department.

But this time was different. Qin Tian triggered the "Special Merit-Based Promotion" regulation, which was directly decided by the highest military committee of the Azure Wood Star Realm, and even Marshal Lin from far-off Kyoto had no say in it.

Previously, to disguise Qin Tian's identity as a Clone and his 'rocket-like' growth speed, Marshal Lin personally suppressed his promotion to avoid drawing attention. But now, it's beyond his control to stop it.

Thinking of this, a sense of sentimentality rose in Yan Qing's heart.

Qin Tian was someone he personally discovered—at their first meeting, he was a silent and reticent Cloned Soldier who had just awakened his Spiritual Energy. It was Yan Qing who sent him to the military academy for further studies.

At that time, he had noticed the extraordinary qualities in Qin Tian and had high expectations for him.

But he could never have imagined that in just two short years, Qin Tian would not only achieve numerous successes on the battlefield, but his strength and rank also soared rapidly, now even catching up to an old veteran like himself who had been navigating the waters of the Seventh Bureau for decades.

Of course, this was also the inherent limitation of the Intelligence Department.

In the early stages, promotions in intelligence work are quicker; as long as a few lurking missions are completed, or some key intelligence is intercepted, one's rank can steadily rise. But the further one goes, the harder it becomes.

Reaching the level of a general officer, those who can lead troops and turn the tides of battle are far more likely to earn merits than intelligence officers, and to look across the Empire, there isn't a single Marshal or General from an intelligence background.

If not for this Demon Suppression Abyss campaign, Qin Tian would have had to endure at least three to five more years, maybe even longer, to become a Major General.

But now, all that is in the past.

Yan Qing looked at the tall and upright figure of Qin Tian in the projection. Now that they are both Royal Major Generals, Qin Tian can no longer spend his idle time on Silver Gray Star, waiting for him to assign tasks.

As a Major General, he would inevitably take a pivotal role in the core of the Seventh Bureau.

Yet within the Seventh Bureau, it's going to be hard to find a position that matches Qin Tian's abilities and rank.

Yan Qing let out a gentle sigh, a knowing look flashing in his eyes—Qin Tian's days of leaving the Azure Wood Star Realm and heading to the Imperial Capital for a higher appointment are probably not far off.

"Officer, no matter how my rank changes, I am still your subordinate, and that has not changed." Qin Tian said earnestly.

Hearing this, Yan Qing felt warmth in his heart, and he couldn't help but sigh. Compared to that introverted Cloned Soldier he first met, Qin Tian has changed so much now.

But it's a good thing.

Yan Qing knew well that while the military is based on strength and achievements, climbing to the top position requires much more than these two things.

The higher one goes, the more unavoidable are the intersections of connections and exchanges of resources.

If Qin Tian remained as silent and unsociable as before, no matter how strong his combat power, he would only become a "blade" in others' hands, seemingly glorious, but in reality just a pawn manipulated at will.

Only by being someone who can remain true to himself and knows how to navigate interpersonal relationships can he truly integrate into the circle of high-ranking officers and possibly break free from the fate of being a "pawn," becoming the player holding the board and controlling his own life.

"Officer, the Demon Suppression Abyss mission has been successfully concluded. Please instruct on our next course of action." Qin Tian stood straight, his tone filled with seriousness.

Yan Qing waved his hand, his tone softening a bit: "This mission has been taxing on you. Return to Silver Gray Star and take a good rest for a while."

His gaze fell on the Emperor Medal on Qin Tian's chest, its red-gold base sparkling, each pattern silently recounting the weight of meritorious deeds—he knew better than anyone else that this medal was never handed out lightly, only awarded to those who had reversed the tides on the battlefield and survived numerous brushes with death.

For Qin Tian to earn it, there must have been untold hardships behind it.

As the supervisor who had guided Qin Tian, Yan Qing felt a sense of pride in his subordinate's success, as well as empathy for the effort behind these achievements.

At this moment, what Qin Tian most deserved was a break, rather than immediately plunging into a new task.

As for the arrangements moving forward—since Qin Tian is now a Major General and holds the Emperor Medal, decisions in the Seventh Bureau alone won't suffice. It's necessary to quickly consult with Kyoto and see Marshal Lin's input.

"Yes, Sir!"

Qin Tian saluted.

Ending the video communication, a smile appeared on Qin Tian's face. The chance for a vacation was just what he needed, as he had many things to handle next.

First, there was the sale arrangement of the Youth Potion, which he had promised Dongfang Yu a share in, and he certainly couldn't go back on his word.

Secondly, during his absence, a large batch of Barbarian slaves had been sent to Silver Gray Star, waiting for him to train them.

Lastly, he needed to find a type of Thunder Element Treasure Material to help balance the darkness and thunder spiritual energy within him, allowing him to break through to Tier Six.

With a holiday, he could start working on these matters.

...

The news of Qin Tian's promotion to Major General and receiving the Emperor Medal quickly spread through the station, and as he walked, many people cast curious glances at him, wanting to see what this rising star of the Military Department looked like.

And Qin Tian's youth and appearance surprised many.

This newly minted Major General was not only excessively young but also had a face comparable to a male celebrity, sharp yet rugged.

However, as the outside world prepared to dig deeper into Qin Tian's identity and background, they were surprised to find that the only accessible information about Qin Tian was from the past two years. His prior history was completely blank.

It seemed unlikely a person could emerge fully formed from nowhere, indicating that Qin Tian's information must have been deliberately concealed.

Yet with so many inquiries, even from members of the Golden Bloodline family, unable to uncover Qin Tian's background and origins, the power behind this secrecy was all the more intimidating.

A week quickly passed, and the clean-up work from the Demon Suppression Abyss campaign was gradually completed. The casualty lists for all battle groups were finalized, and compensations were disbursed to the families through military channels.

The heroes who had made significant contributions stood on the podium to receive their honors; while ordinary warriors also received Military Merit Points matching their achievements.

The improvised battle groups, formed for the Demon Suppression Abyss campaign, now faced disbandment as the task concluded.

Alongside the spaceships at the Star Port, Chijin Battlegroup warriors carrying their bags frequently looked back, waving at Qin Tian's group, their voices full of reluctance:

"Commander! Battalion Leader! Brothers, until we meet again!"

Qin Tian stood beside the ship's gangway, raising his hand and waving hard. This farewell meant everyone would head to different stars, likely never to meet again, but the days spent fighting demons shoulder to shoulder in the Demon Suppression Abyss, defending the line together, would surely be etched in each person's memory like a brand, forever vivid.

"Brothers, farewell!"

Chapter 455: Post-Battle Inventory

Outside the porthole, millions of stars dotted the ink-black sky, with fine starlight filtering through, casting a faint silver glow inside the cabin.

Qin Tian lay on the soft bed, opened the system panel, and indulged in his favorite activity—post-battle summary.

The Demon Suppression Abyss battle held great significance for him.

Whether from the military merits gained, the resources captured, or the rate of his own power breakthroughs, it was incomparable to any past battle.

Indeed, this battle marked the most fruitful harvest and the fastest transformation since he joined the forces.

Let's start with talents.

[Night Demon King] evolved into [Night Emperor], [Desolate Battle Body] evolved into [Immortal Sacred Body]

Two grand talents at the Holy Blood level, each brought distinct benefits.

Night Emperor, the ruler of the night

Granted him the cosmos's most powerful Dark Element talent, unparalleled perception, and extraordinary speed and stealth abilities.

Most importantly, the evolution of the Night Emperor's bloodline enhanced the strength of all Night Demon Apostles under his command, enabling him to create hundreds, even thousands of Night Demon Kings comparable to the Golden Level bloodline at will.

In training his followers and developing his influence, only the Cain bloodline in the cosmos could match the Night Emperor.

The Immortal Sacred Body, not involving any Elemental Power, presented a qualitative leap in his physical strength, with enhancements in power, recovery, defense, resistance, and Danger Perception, even binding the body and soul with immortal rules, allowing him to integrate essence into artifacts and attain rebirth opportunities in the future.

In terms of combat power augmentation, the Immortal Sacred Body surpassed the Night Emperor.

Each had its advantages and both were under his control.

Besides these two golden talents, he acquired numerous other practical and powerful orange and purple talents.

Orange talents included [Divine Weapon Emperor] and [Soul Devourer Flame]

The former enhanced weapons, capable of temporarily reinforcing them on a large scale or nurturing them long-term, significantly improving the performance of weapons and equipment with a chance to awaken spirituality.

Shadowstrike and Black Frost, originally ordinary weapons, awakened their spiritual artifact souls under the nurture of [Divine Weapon Emperor], now possessing the ability to easily break Tier Six defenses.

Soul Devourer Flame served as a comprehensive Flame Element talent, with extremely high temperatures, soul scorching, black flames for armor piercing, and Flame Master symbiosis, undeniably versatile.

As for purple talents, there were many.

[Demon Pattern Turtle Shell], a powerful reflective damage talent, reflected 40% of the received damage (including physical, energy, and mental attacks) back to the attacker, while temporarily increasing self-defense by 70%.

[Life Together with Demise], a talent of mutual destruction, but combined with his powerful recovery ability, it would only be unlucky for the enemies.

[Momentum Charge], enhancing speed, accumulating power during acceleration, capable of dealing tenfold damage, and the faster the speed, the higher the damage, potentially exceeding tenfold when combined with Demon King's Wings and other speed bonuses.

[Heart of the Earth], a talent version of the Barbarian Armor, restoring 1% of the maximum life value every 10 seconds out of combat, and increasing power by 30% when standing on the ground, equivalent to a long-term power buff.

[Dark Corpse Control], a talent whose role needs no further explanation is indeed a divine technique in large-scale army confrontations.

[Bloodline Dominator], a talent akin to the fruit of fragmentation, even with the Immortal Sacred Body, its effect is noteworthy, at least saving some Qi and Blood expenditure for physical recovery, and, at times, serving as a deterrent.

Beyond these, there was a blue talent, [Damage Transfer].

Its purpose is straightforward, using oneself as a medium, forcibly transferring the negative state and 30% of the injuries of the designated target to oneself, able to save comrades' lives at a critical moment.

Of course, beyond these talents, at the Demon Suppression Abyss, he collected hundreds more talents, ranging from green to purple, though ordinary talents no longer catch his eye, unwilling to casually merge them with his body.

But these talents are stored in the talent recovery station, perhaps in a future situation, some talents could prove exceptionally effective.

Regarding weapons and equipment.

Shadowstrike and Black Frost awakened spirituality simultaneously, their power greatly increased—one for long-range sniping, the other for close combat—and with continued nurturing from [Divine Weapon Emperor], both have vast room for improvement.

Additionally, he obtained four other Spiritual Artifacts and one Monolith.

Spiritual Artifacts are—Heaven-Burning Purgatory, Fire Spirit Jade Pendant, Shadow Concealing Ring, Blood Spirit Bead

Among them, Heaven-Burning Purgatory, one of the Ten Great Guns, was undoubtedly his greatest acquisition.

The hand cannon's powerful explosive force granted him the ability to threaten Tier Seven, but compared to other great guns, Heaven-Burning Purgatory was more suited for large-scale destruction.

With one shot, mountains crumble and earth splits, even the Demon Source couldn't withstand the devastating strike of Heaven-Burning Purgatory.

As for the Monolith, though it's currently dormant and unable to be awakened, he believes one day, the Monolith will shine brightly again.

Regarding Spirit Beast.

Jie La's strength surged after consuming a large amount of demon corpses and all the blood in the Blood Spirit Bead, now very close to the peak of Tier Six.

Once Jie La consumes enough resources to reach the peak of Tier Six and takes the Center of Wood Marrow gifted by the Dongfang Clan, she would safely overcome the Spirit Plant Tribulation, smoothly breaking through to Tier Seven.

During a series of battles, Karsas harvested millions of demon soul fragments and quietly absorbed massive Soul Power in the final spatial passage sealing battle, now successfully breaking through Tier Six.

Karsas is refining soul fragments from the Ten Thousand Souls Record, and soon his Death Army will be formed.

Kazik's growth was equally remarkable, with long-term high-intensity hunting, nourishing from the Celestial Guardian Bloodline, and furthermore, receiving stimulation from the blood of Night Emperor and Immortal Sacred Body, Kazik also smoothly broke through Tier Six, becoming a fearsome hunter traversing the void.

Regarding personal strength.

He leaped from Tier Five Four Stars directly to Tier Five Nine Stars. If not for the imbalance between his Dark Spiritual Energy and Thunder Spiritual Energy, he would have already broken through to Tier Six.

Even though he hasn't reached Tier Six, with multiple talents fortifying him, he's confident in defeating any Spiritualist below Tier Seven, including Holy Blood geniuses.

Finally, regarding military rank and military merits.

He made a two-level jump from Colonel to Major General, formally stepping into the ranks of the Empire's general-level officers, apart from that, the military merit points reward exceeded his expectations.

Currently, his total military merit points reach 3,500K, and his Military Department treasure vault permissions upgraded by two levels, meaning he can exchange for more rare and precious treasures, and even customize a military-grade personal starship.

Overall, the Demon Suppression Abyss was the most impactful battle on his combat power thus far, laying a solid foundation for his future ascent.

Qin Tian gazed outward at the streaming light silently passing by the porthole in the vast starry river. Although the Demon Suppression Abyss battle granted him dual leaps in rank and power, his path ahead was far from resting.

Breaking through to Tier Six, purchasing wood element treasure materials for Jie La, cultivating the Barbarian Battle Group, developing The Shadow Division...

These matters, like stars, are woven into his future journey, waiting for him to tackle them one by one.

Chapter 456: Winter Tribe

Three days later, the starship penetrated the atmosphere of Silver Gray Star and finally landed steadily at the designated berth in the military star port.

Unlike previous civilian entries, Qin Tian now held the rank of Major General and possessed the Empire's Radiance medal, which allowed him to apply for a special military channel based on his authority.

Outside the porthole, the orderly tarmac showed no busy crowds, but a sense of solemn order in the environment.

"Pssst——"

After the light sound of pressure valve releasing, the cabin door slowly opened to the sides.

As Qin Tian stepped onto the boarding ladder, he saw two rows of soldiers already lined up below, dressed in crisp uniforms. Their black military boots made contact with the metal ground, so aligned that even the shadows were in line.

Once his figure fully appeared, all the soldiers simultaneously raised their hands in a smart and uniform action, their salutes perfectly impeccable.

"General Qin!"

A steady voice rang out, and a man dressed in a Major General's uniform quickly approached. The edges of his hair were slightly frosted with grey, his posture exceptionally upright, a warm smile on his face, as he proactively extended his hand: "I am Teng Shaohai, Chief of Staff of the Second Army Region of Silver Gray Star, specially here to welcome General Qin Tian back with honor."

Qin Tian stepped forward and clasped his hand, feeling the calloused knuckles of the other's palm, and smiled, "Chief Teng, you yourself coming is really too generous."

Holding his hand, Teng Shaohai's gaze fell on Qin Tian's somewhat excessively youthful face, unable to suppress another internal sigh.

Half a day earlier, upon receiving a subordinate's report, he hadn't paid it much attention—general officers often came and went in the army region, and in his position, he need not personally welcome everyone.

But upon seeing the name "Qin Tian" and the attached resume afterwards, he immediately changed his mind.

This Major General Qin Tian had recently jumped two ranks from Colonel to Major General, holding the Empire's highest-tier medal, the Empire's Radiance. He was a true hero of the Demon Suppression Abyss campaign.

Such exemplary figures should naturally be met with the highest honors.

Even more astonishing were the details found later—this General Qin was a current student at Silver Gray Star's Eagle Military Academy, only having enrolled two years ago, with a four-year program still incomplete, yet now was already at a rank equal to his.

Such "rocket-like" promotion speed, without substantial support and background, was absolutely impossible.

Thinking of this, Teng Shaohai's smile became more genuine, he gestured invitingly with a sideways posture, "General Qin, you've had a long journey, the army region has prepared a welcoming banquet. Might I have the honor to invite General Qin to attend?"

"I would be delighted." Qin Tian accepted straightforwardly. His roots were on Silver Gray Star, thus fostering good relationships with key figures in the local army region was undoubtedly beneficial for subsequent development and resource coordination.

Just then, the sound of footsteps "da-da-da" approached from the direction of the ship's cabin door—Xiong walked at the front with heavy strides, his broad shoulders blocking nearly half the cabin door; Terreda followed closely, possessing the unique wild aura of a Barbarian Warrior between his brows; Li Qi in tight attire, with sharp eyes; Old Ghost in the rear, his wide robes skimming the ground, his eyes holding deep, inscrutable calmness... Behind them, the Barbarian Warriors appeared, each with a tall posture, seemingly surrounded by an aura of bloodthirsty evil qi.

Teng Shaohai's gaze suddenly sharpened, instinctively holding his breath—having fought and scraped through decades in the army, his sensitivity to "murderous intent" far surpassed ordinary people.

These men were obviously beyond "well-trained," they were ones who had truly fought, faced death numerous times, descending from mountains of corpses and seas of blood, steeled by such experiences.

What a formidable team!

Teng Shaohai was secretly shocked, his gaze swiftly surveyed everyone—these individuals evidently belonged to Qin Tian's private forces, not the Military Department's assigned soldiers, especially the Barbarian Warriors among them, clearly not of native Empire descent.

Managing such a complex, powerful, private force within the framework of Empire law indicated that Qin Tian's background was likely far richer than he had initially imagined.

Quickly composing himself, his smile grew warmer as he greeted everyone with a nod, "You must be the capable officers under General Qin's command, indeed, all are truly outstanding."

Hearing this, Qin Tian held a faint smile at his lips, turned to his men behind him, and instructed, "You all head back first, I'll accompany Chief Teng to the banquet."

"Yes, Boss!" Xiong, Poisonous Widow and others responded in unison.

Boss?

This address made Teng Shaohai's eyes flicker slightly, but his expression remained unchanged, "General Qin, please."

Qin Tian followed Teng Shaohai onto the military flying device, its silver-gray body reflecting a cold metallic shimmer in the sunlight, while Xiong, Poisonous Widow, and the others, guided by two soldiers, headed towards the exit of the star port.

Just stepping out of the military star port's automatic doors, several flying devices marked with "Lingfeng Trade" came into view, Feng Mochuan stood at the frontmost position, and as soon as he saw people coming out, he hurried forward, scan of the crowd not finding Qin Tian, inevitably puzzled as he asked, "You've finally come out, where's the Boss?"

"The Boss went to the welcoming banquet with the regional military leaders," Poisonous Widow explained.

"Oh..." Feng Mochuan furrowed his brow slightly, he originally had many matters to report to the Boss, looks like they would have to wait for a bit.

At this time, his gaze fell on the unfamiliar Old Ghost within the group, his eyes laced with a few traces of inquiry, "Who is this..."

"He recently joined our Boss's command, a Tier Six Soul Master, Zong Xian Gui." Again Poisonous Widow replied, simply pointing out Old Ghost's identity.

Tier Six Soul Master?

Feng Mochuan felt a chill in his heart, quickly stepped forward, extended his hand, "Mr. Zong, hello, I am a subordinate under the Boss, Feng Mochuan."

Chapter 457: Winter Tribe (Part 2)

Old Ghost showed a smile on his face: "Director Feng, I've heard the boss mention you. He said you are his capable subordinate. All of our food, clothing, and cultivation resources now rely entirely on your management."

"Those are very kind words." Feng Mochuan laughed heartily, waving his hand. "Everything I have now was given by the boss—if it weren't for his support, where would Feng Mochuan be today? Moreover, Ling Feng Trading is originally his business; I'm only helping to manage it."

He stepped aside to make way for the flying device behind him, the cabin door had slowly opened, revealing a soft dark-patterned carpet inside, with wall lights emitting a warm glow: "Everyone, now that we've returned to Silver Gray Star, it's like coming home. Though the boss is not here, I have prepared a lavish dinner. Shall we head to the place to settle in and chat while eating?"

The crowd boarded the flying device one after another, with Xiong, Terreda, and Old Ghost—a few core members—sharing one cabin.

The flying device ascended slowly, Feng Mochuan leaning against the seatback, looked at Li Qi opposite him, and remarked with a smile: "Seeing you all return safely from the Demon Suppression Abyss, the weight on my heart has finally lifted."

"Following the boss, we've never had anything to worry about." Li Qi spoke with certainty, his eyes showcasing complete trust in Qin Tian.

"Ah, I must say, I'm quite envious of you all." Feng Mochuan showed a trace of bitterness on his face, "These past few months have been filled with ledgers, contracts, and a cluster of merchants to entertain. I'm just a Mercenary Corps Leader at heart, simple and rough; what do I know about these things? It's really driving me crazy."

He wasn't actually complaining. Qin Tian had once "pushed him into the position", having him act as the legal representative and general manager of Ling Feng Trading. Although most affairs were managed by Yang Fan, as the "hands-off manager," he still had to oversee the big picture and deal with the partners and local officials who occasionally visited.

They did earn a lot of money, and the brothers of the Hurricane Mercenary Corps were living better, but he always felt something missing, often reminiscing about the days when he led his brothers on adventures and battles in the Cosmos, camping in the wastelands.

"There's no helping it; the boss trusts you the most." Li Qi patted his shoulder.

Yang Fan was neither a Night Demon Apostle nor the boss's Soul Servant, so proper precautions and balancing were necessary. Besides, as Ling Feng Trading grew, it would inevitably encounter problems that couldn't be solved by business means. At such times, they would still need the support of Feng Mochuan's Hurricane Mercenary Corps to handle both overt and covert troubles.

Feng Mochuan, listening, gave a wry smile, and was just about to say more when his gaze fell on Terreda, who had been staring out of the porthole. A thought struck him, and he said, "By the way, Terreda, another batch of your Barbarian Race compatriots arrived at Silver Gray Star over the past two months; they are now settled in your previous quarters. Would you like to visit them first?"

"What?" Terreda abruptly turned his head. Qin Tian, knowing Terreda's impulsive nature, hadn't mentioned this earlier. Now hearing the news, he was so excited his eyes widened, nodding repeatedly, "Yes! Let's go now!"

"Alright, then we'll head there first since there is still time before dinner." Feng Mochuan agreed with a smile, though his tone was tinged with some helplessness, "But honestly, your Barbarian Race compatriots are really stubborn—I asked the elders and children of your tribe to persuade them several times, yet they remain full of distrust, thinking we are deceiving them. I believe only you, as one of their own, can step forward and showcase some of your strength to truly ease their hearts."

"I'll handle it." Terreda nodded strongly, his expression determined. He understood the Barbarian Race's nature too well; despite the strength of outsiders, they couldn't be subdued by force.

Originally, he had chosen to follow the boss for two reasons: one was for his people, and the other was Qin Tian's promise to "help them return to their homeland in five years."

Now, with him as the guide and showing the transformations his brothers underwent by following the boss, these new compatriots would surely understand that the boss was different from those humans who captured them as slaves.

Half an hour later, the flying device landed on an open area in the Barbarian Race settlement.

Even before it stopped fully, a large group of Barbarians gathered below—the tall warriors wore beast leather armor, wielding rough stone axes, watching the flying device with cautious eyes. Yet, the elderly,

women, and children standing behind the warriors wore clean cotton clothes and looked towards the flying device not with suspicion, but with anticipation.

"Poof—"

The cabin door opened, and Terreda leaped out first, followed by the Barbarian Warriors stepping out.

"Udi! You're back!"

"Dad!"

The elderly, women, and children immediately rushed forward, hugging the warriors beside Terreda, crying and laughing, voices filled with excitement.

Meanwhile, the newly arrived Barbarian warriors, seeing Terreda and his companions, widened their eyes, their faces full of confusion and shock—why were these fellow tribesmen mixed with humans, dressed in unfamiliar clothes?

Terreda pushed away the surrounding tribesmen and strode to the new Barbarian warriors, shouting in Barbarian tongue, "Who is your leader? Come out and speak!"

The new Barbarian warriors looked at each other for a moment until a man, a head taller than Terreda, stepped forward—his hair braided in thick plaits tight against his scalp, a light blue totem painted on his neck, his voice as steady as the rock of an icy plain: "I am Mu Ya of the Winter Tribe. Who are you? Why are you mingling with humans? Have you forgotten they are the culprits who invaded our homeland and turned us into slaves?"

"I haven't forgotten." Terreda met his gaze, speaking with firm conviction,

"But humans aren't all the same. The man I follow saved us from the slavers, restored our freedom; he treats our families kindly, providing us with enough food and warm houses; he even granted cultivation resources to make us stronger—he promised, when we become powerful enough, that he would help us reclaim our homeland, take back the land that was stolen."

"You actually trust a human's words?" Mu Ya sneered coldly, his eyes full of ridicule, "In our tribe, how many of our people were deceived by their honeyed words, only to become cold corpses?"

Terreda didn't argue, only shook his head slowly: "I know you don't believe, but here is the proof."

Even before he finished speaking, he suddenly tensed his body, and the Qi Blood Power within him erupted like a roaring wave—the golden Qi Blood spread outward, causing the air's temperature to soar, making even the air slightly distort.

Mu Ya and the new Barbarian warriors were forced back by the overwhelming Qi Blood, and the anger on their faces was instantly replaced by shock, their eyes round with astonishment.

"Are you a tribal chieftain? Or a legendary warrior?" Mu Ya asked in disbelief—such formidable Qi Blood could only belong to a tribal chieftain or a legendary warrior from a large tribe!

"Neither." Terreda pulled back some of his Qi Blood, his voice still resonant, "I was originally just a high-level warrior in the tribe, my strength similar to yours. But after following the boss, he gave us potions to enhance our bodies; recently, he led us in battle against demons, using demon blood to inscribe battle patterns—now, each of us is several times stronger than before! Brothers, let the Winter Tribe people see our current strength!"

"Yes!"

The Barbarian Warriors behind him responded in unison, and even before their shouts ended, they collectively channeled their Qi Blood. In an instant, over a hundred solid columns of Qi Blood surged skyward, intertwining in the air to form a blazing "Qi Blood Canopy" over the settlement.

The entire settlement seemed enshrouded by this ferocious power emanating from Barbarian bloodlines, making even the air feel scorching.

Mu Ya and the new Barbarian were entirely rooted to the spot, faces filled with disbelief: among this group of tribesmen, each possessed a level above that of a middle-level warrior, and some's Qi Blood intensity was nearly on par with that of a small tribal chieftain!

By the Barbarian God... what kind of team is this?

Could following that human truly make one so powerful?

Mu Ya looked at the scene before him, his wary heart experiencing the first loosening.

Chapter 458: Displaying Strength and Joining

"How about now? Do you believe it?" Terreda looked at Mu Ya, his gaze sweeping over the new Barbarians behind him.

Looking around, there were hundreds of unfamiliar faces, several times the number of their first batch of Barbarians.

His heart couldn't help but heat up. If he could convince all these compatriots, the strength of the Barbarian battalion would increase several folds, giving them more confidence to reclaim their homeland and drive out intruders in the future.

Mu Ya's gaze fluctuated intensely, his fingertips gripping the handle of the stone axe tightly — his resistance to humans was engraved in his bones, but his desire to "become stronger" was ignited by the towering pillar of Qi and blood moments ago.

The deep-seated hatred of his clansmen's blood sea pressed heavily on his heart. He knew better than anyone that without strength, all talk of revenge was empty. Before him lay an opportunity to strengthen the entire tribe, and he couldn't bring himself to push it away.

"By working for that human, will they really set us free and let us return to our homeland?" Mu Ya's voice carried a slight tremble that was hard to detect, his last concern.

"Of course! I swear by the bloodline of the Barbarian race!" Terreda's tone was firm, filled with trust in Qin Tian.

During this time following the boss, he had seen clearly that if the boss intended to deceive them, why pour so many resources into them?

Wouldn't it be much easier just to treat us as cannon fodder?

Mu Ya remained silent for a moment, then asked, "What about the other clansmen? Will those elderly and children who aren't skilled in combat be treated well too?"

"Just look at the clansmen behind me, and you'll know!" Terreda stepped aside, revealing the elderly, women, and children among the tribesmen, who were surrounded and talking — they were dressed in clean and thick cotton robes, with faces showing peaceful smiles, no longer displaying the past fear when they were in the slave camp.

"They're all women, elders, and children, but the boss dresses them in beautiful clothes, gives them warm houses, and provides endless meat and grains every day. The boss never mistreats anyone just because they're weak, and your clansmen will be treated the same when they arrive."

At this point, Terreda suddenly raised his voice, shouting to the Barbarian warriors behind him, "Brothers, show off our gear and let the brothers from the Winter Tribe have a look!"

"Alright!"

The Barbarian warriors responded in unison, each opening their black iron cases — in an instant, the cold, hard metallic gleam was blinding: the black heavy armor was engraved with demonic patterns, gleaming sharply under the sun; the alloy shields had red energy buffer crystals embedded in the center, and there were shiny great axes, spears, and sabers, every weapon edge bore the coldness of slaying living beings.

These equipments were custom-made by Qin Tian at a high cost, later regularly nurtured by the power of [Divine Weapon Emperor] at the Demon Suppression Abyss, Ironwood Star, and on the return journey.

Though not as high-level as Shadowstrike or Black Frost, in the eyes of the Barbarians, these were treasures that only the chiefs of large tribes could possess.

As soon as the weapons were unveiled, a strong aura of bloodthirsty energy surged forth — the aura of slaying countless living beings and experiencing real combat.

The new Barbarians instantly opened their eyes wide, breathing heavily, their eyes filled with shock and unconcealed eagerness — such impressive equipment, and everyone had several pieces?

This human is too generous!

"How about it, our weapons aren't bad, right?" Terreda's voice carried a sense of boasting, along with temptation, "As long as you join, everyone will get the same equipment in the future!"

This sentence completely broke down the last barrier in Mu Ya's heart.

He gritted his teeth as if resolving something, looking up at Terreda, "I want to see how powerful the potion you mentioned is. If it really can make me stronger, I'll lead the Winter Tribe people to follow that human!"

If it weren't for Terreda and the other "own people" testifying in person, even if the humans offered heavenly conditions, he would never have compromised — but the Qi and blood emanating from Terreda and the others, the serenity on their faces, and the shocking equipment just now made it impossible for him to remain stubborn.

These people now seemed not to be abused, not lacking food and drink, but essentially they were still "detained", without freedom, and no future.

For revenge, for the clan to truly rise, he could only take a gamble, trusting these fellow tribesmen in front of him.

Seeing this, Terreda immediately turned to Feng Mochuan — he knew that only Feng Mochuan, in charge of logistics, was in possession of such precious potions.

Feng Mochuan walked out of his private flying device with a smile, holding a crystal potion bottle in hand, "I anticipated this, so I was prepared."

In the bottle, the fiery red potion resembled congealed lava, glistening fiercely under the sun, seemingly radiating the rampant energy contained within.

Terreda took the potion and handed it to Mu Ya, his tone becoming serious, "This is it. After consuming it, your body will be greatly enhanced; Qi and blood, strength will all soar. But I must make it clear to you, while consuming it, you'll endure unimaginable pain — the stronger your strength, the more intense the pain. If you can't withstand it, you'll die."

Mu Ya took the potion bottle, feeling the faint heat from the bottle against his fingertips, he looked up and asked, "When you took the potion, did anyone not make it through?"

Terreda shook his head, a look of pride on his face, "None of our first batch of brothers was cowards, we all got through!"

"Then the warriors of our Winter Tribe will absolutely not be inferior!" Mu Ya clenched the potion bottle tightly, his voice filled with a do-or-die determination, his eyes glinting with the desire to become stronger — he wanted to rise again, bringing his clansmen with this newfound power.

Bang—

The cork was pulled out with force by Mu Ya, and the aroma of the potion carrying a burning sensation spread instantly.

Without a moment's hesitation, he tilted his head and gulped down the fiery red potion — the spicy liquid slid down his throat like swallowing a ball of scorching magma, burning down his esophagus, igniting even his internal organs.

"Ugh—ah!"

In just three seconds, the intense pain erupted violently.

Mu Ya dropped to his knees abruptly, pressing his hands firmly against his chest, his knuckles turning white from the pressure.

The potion rampaged through his body as if countless small knives were tearing at his tendons and crushing his flesh, even the bone marrow seemed to be boiling. His entire body trembled uncontrollably, each tremor aggravating sharp pain, the veins on his forehead bulging prominently like winding green snakes crawling across his cheeks, even the blood vessels on his neck pulsated violently, seemingly about to burst through his skin at any moment.

Large beads of sweat rolled down his face, leaving small wet spots as they fell to the ground, and in just a moment, he was drenched in sweat, his consciousness gradually blurring amidst the agony, vivid scenes of his clansmen's tragic deaths flashed before his eyes — burning tribes, cries of loved ones, the vicious smiles of invaders... these scenes pierced into his mind like needles, abruptly solidifying his nearly dissipating will.

"I... can't die..."

Mu Ya bit down hard until his teeth crushed, blood flavor spreading in his mouth, he roared with all his strength, his voice hoarse like a torn gong, "I want to get stronger... to kill those invaders... to bring my people home..."

This hatred and obsession became his sole support against the pain.

He bit hard on his lip, enduring the pain tearing him apart repeatedly, the surrounding Barbarian warriors held their breath, eyes fixed on Mu Ya, with worry, tension, and unconcealable anticipation.

No one knew how long it took, but when Mu Ya was about to be devoured by pain, the rampaging potion in his body finally began to settle.

The burning pain gradually subsided, replaced by an indescribable warmth spreading through his limbs and bones.

"Hmm..."

Mu Ya let out a low moan, slowly lifting his head, the pain in his eyes had vanished, replaced by clarity and shock — he could clearly feel a vast power awakening within him, each breath could mobilize more Qi and blood, the explosive power contained in his muscles was at least several times stronger than before!

He suddenly stood up, instinctively activating the Qi and blood within him — boom!

A thick pillar of Qi and blood shot skyward, accompanied by a violent aura, causing the surrounding air to vibrate, even the distant trees were bent by this aura.

"This... this is..."

The new Barbarians widened their eyes, breathing became rapid, their eyes filled with a hard-to-suppress longing — they had seen the excruciating pain earlier, but the power Mu Ya exhibited now made them unbearably eager.

Mu Ya clenched his fist, feeling the surging power inside him, his face showing the joy of narrowly escaping disaster. He turned to look at Terreda, taking a deep breath, his tone firm:

"You weren't lying to me, I — will join."

Chapter 459: Past Heroics, Night Demon's Rules

In the luxuriously decorated private room, the crystal chandelier sheds a warm yellow light, illuminating the table full of enticing dishes. The sound of clinking glasses and laughter among the soldiers intertwined, creating a lively and harmonious atmosphere.

"General Qin, I toast to you with this cup!" A middle-aged man with a square face approached with his wine glass, his voice resonant like a bell. He was Major General Xin from Silver Gray Star's Second Military District.

Qin Tian quickly stood up, deliberately lowering the rim of his glass a half-inch below the other's, with a gentle smile on his face: "General Xin, you're too kind. It should be me toasting you instead."

With a crisp "ding," the two raised their heads and drank the wine in their glasses in one go.

All present were high-ranking officials from the Second Military District, with the lowest rank being Major General, and the highest being Lieutenant General Chai Rong.

Ever since they learned that Qin Tian was not only a newly promoted Major General but also a battle hero holding the Imperial Glory Medal, everyone looked at him with sincere respect.

At that moment, Qin Tian's smart wristwatch gently vibrated twice, and a brief message popped up on the screen.

He glanced at it, and an involuntary trace of a faint smile appeared in his eyes—Terreda did not disappoint him.

All 362 new Barbarian Warriors were willing to submit, and none backed down amidst the pain caused by the Superman Potion.

Now their physical strength has skyrocketed, and the leader of the Barbarians, Mu Ya, whose power was not much weaker than Terreda before entering the Demon Suppression Abyss; the other warriors had all broken through to Tier Two.

Counting the people Terreda originally brought out, the total number of Barbarian Warriors under his command now exceeds five hundred—in the Military Department's roster, five hundred may merely be an unremarkable battalion-level unit, but as a private army, this Barbarian Race team with everyone above Tier Two, some reaching the peak of Tier Five, is an undeniably formidable force anywhere.

"General Qin looks cheerful, could it be that good news is happening at home?" Teng Shaohai, who stood beside him, teased with sharp eyes and a smile.

Qin Tian put away his wristwatch, speaking lightly: "It is indeed a piece of good news."

He did not elaborate on the private army matter, instead shifting the topic, raising his glass to everyone, "Chief of Staff Teng, dear officers, thank you for the hospitality tonight, let me toast you all."

"General Qin, that's too formal!" Lieutenant General Chai Rong stood up, raising his glass straight, "You are a battle hero emerging from Silver Gray Star, it's our Second Military District's honor to welcome you! Come, everyone, let's jointly toast General Qin—toast our battle hero! Cheers!"

"Cheers!"

All the officers echoed unanimously, the crisp sounds of clinking glasses rising one after another, everyone drinking the wine in their glasses in one go, the atmosphere in the room becoming even more heated.

At this moment, a slightly gray-haired Major General carried his wine glass, walked somewhat bashfully to Qin Tian's side: "General Qin, in a way we are also schoolmates, as I am also a graduate of the Eagle Military Academy, though I left thirty years ago."

"Oh? Then I must call you senior alumnus." Qin Tian turned slightly, smiling sincerely.

"I dare not accept, I dare not!" The Major General waved his hands urgently, for Qin Tian, young yet already a Major General holding the Imperial Glory Medal, while he had to toil for decades to become a Major General, wouldn't dare act the part of a "senior alumnus" in front of Qin Tian.

He paused, as if he had made up his mind, lowering his voice: "General Qin, there is something I have always wanted to verify with you. A year ago, during the Evil God Sacrifice incident on Silver Gray Star, was it you who secretly disrupted one of the Blood Sea Arrays?"

With these words, the noisy private room suddenly fell silent.

The Silver Gray Star Evil God Sacrifice event was a shadow in everyone's heart—at that time, if all four arrays had been activated, the entire continent with its billions of people would have been used as offerings, with souls and flesh extracted to worship the Evil God.

If not for one of the arrays being destroyed in advance, causing the entire sacrificial ceremony to collapse, the current Silver Gray Star would have already been a living hell, and they and their families would have become sustenance for the Evil God.

Upon hearing Shen Zhong's words, could the hero who saved the whole planet be none other than Qin Tian standing before them?

Qin Tian's eyebrow raised slightly, with a hint of doubt in his tone: "I recall this matter being top-secret in the Military Department, known only by my direct leader and several highest-ranking officers. How did Director Shen deduce this?"

These words seemed a question but were in fact an acknowledgment.

The room instantly erupted, everyone visibly shaken, their gaze at Qin Tian full of shock and excitement.

"My heavens! It turns out the hero who saved Silver Gray Star back then was General Qin!"

"General Qin, I have to toast you with three glasses! If it weren't for you, my family and I wouldn't be here now!"

"General Qin, how come you have never mentioned this? You are truly a nameless hero!"

Everyone rose, previously they respected Qin Tian for his rank and military achievements, but now, this respect was laden with deep gratitude.

A meritorious hero who saved billions of people should be famed across the Star Realm, yet General Qin steadfastly kept the secret, and even after that, charged into the Demon Realm within the Demon Suppression Abyss, earning the Imperial Glory Medal through sheer strength.

This modesty and responsibility commands more respect than any military feat.

"There's no need for that, everyone." Qin Tian quickly raised his hand, signaling everyone to sit down, speaking sincerely, "It was by chance that I discovered that array, and destroying the sacrifice was a collective effort, not solely my accomplishment."

"General Qin, you are too modest." Shen Zhong looked at him, his eyes full of admiration, "Since you asked how I figured it out, I'll tell everyone—on that day I was on a flying device heading to a subordinate's station for an inspection, then suddenly received an urgent order from the Military Department saying the Evil God Sacrifice had erupted, instructing me to return for combat preparation. But on the way back, another secret order arrived, directing me to immediately go to Mingxin Military Hospital to vacate a special care ward, sealing off all information, prohibiting anyone from approaching."

#### Chapter 460: Stories of Heroes and Night Demon's Rules (Part 2)

He paused, as if recalling the scene at the time: "I arranged the guards according to orders, and not long after, I saw General Yan Qing supporting you—at that time, your face was as pale as paper, too weak to even walk steadily, and there was a chilling aura about you. Coupling this with the timing of the Evil God Sacrifice outbreak, I had a vague suspicion. Later, I heard that an officer destroyed the Blood Sea Array, but no one knew who it was. I increasingly felt that the young man back then was you."

After hearing this, the room became even quieter—anyone could tell that Qin Tian must have been severely injured after destroying the array back then, yet he had never mentioned this sacrifice to anyone.

"General Qin, on behalf of all the citizens of Silver Gray Star, I thank you for risking your life to protect us!" Major General Chai Rong was the first to stand straight, giving Qin Tian a standard military salute, as solemn as if attending a ceremony.

Seeing this, the other officers also raised their hands in salute, their gazes solemn and fervent.

Qin Tian no longer declined and similarly raised his hand in return, his voice steady and powerful: "Protecting the people is the duty of a soldier. I only did what I was supposed to do. But I accept everyone's gratitude. Let us strive together in the future to safeguard the tranquility of Silver Gray Star."

"Strive together!"

Cheers erupted once again, pushing the atmosphere of the banquet to a new climax.

Qin Tian clearly felt that everyone's attitude towards him had changed—from perhaps considering him as a "new star of the Military Department" to now where the warmth was full of genuine acceptance and closeness.

This was undoubtedly a good thing for him—Silver Gray Star was his stronghold, and maintaining good relations with the Second Military District would smooth the future overseas ventures and escorts of Lingfeng Trading Company.

After everyone had eaten and drunk to their fill, the banquet gradually came to an end. Amidst the warm farewells from the officers, Qin Tian boarded a military flying device, heading towards his residence.

As soon as he landed, he saw Feng Mochuan and Li Qi already standing at the door waiting.

...

"Boss, our bloodline...!"

As soon as Feng Mochuan followed Qin Tian into the living room, he couldn't contain his excitement and quickly stepped forward to ask—the question having been on his mind for a long time.

About a month ago, while resting in his bedroom, his bloodline suddenly boiled without warning, followed by a transformation from head to toe: a surge in power, heightened senses, and new Night Demon abilities awakened.

This feeling was all too familiar to him, a sign of bloodline evolution!

Previously, his Night Demon's Blood could rival the Silver Bloodline, but now after evolution, his strength had undergone earth-shaking changes, and even he felt confident enough to challenge a strong being of the Golden Bloodline.

But the more this happened, the more curious he became: his bloodline had reached such a level, so how strong should the bloodline of his boss, the source, be?

Could it be the legendary Holy Blood?

Just as this thought emerged, he suppressed it—The Nine Great Holy Bloods of the Empire had been passed down for thousands of years, with no new additions. No matter how extraordinary his boss was, it was impossible to break this ironclad rule.

Even so, his boss's bloodline was undoubtedly top-tier within the Golden Bloodline, just a step away from the Nine Great Holy Bloods.

"I had a small opportunity in the Demon Suppression Abyss, and my bloodline evolved." Qin Tian sat on the sofa, took a sip of tea from the table, and said in a nonchalant tone, "How's the adaptation to the new bloodline abilities?"

"Adapted! Very adapted!" Feng Mochuan nodded emphatically, his eyes full of excitement—in a short period, he had thoroughly grasped the new abilities, with speed, power, perception, and control over Dark Spiritual Energy multiplying several times, elevating his strength to a whole new level.

But after the excitement, there was inevitably some frustration, having immense divine power but nowhere to use it, spending days in the office looking at account books or drinking and socializing with merchants, feeling like his body was rusting.

Qin Tian sensed his thoughts through the subtle connection of the bloodline, and couldn't help but chuckle: "Don't rush, once Lingfeng Trading is fully on track, you'll have plenty of chances for combat."

"Boss, are you serious?" Feng Mochuan's eyes instantly brightened, stepping half a step closer, his tone full of anticipation.

"Of course." Qin Tian put down his teacup, his gaze turning deep.

If he just wanted to be a rich man, why bother forming The Shadow Division and the Barbarian Warband?

The cosmos is vast, and his goal has never been to just hold onto a company—With the system, he aims to become the supreme strong and also a local lord.

Lingfeng Trading is just his "money pouch," providing supplies for future battles; When the time is ripe, he will undoubtedly lead his forces to expand territories in the Star Sea, by then, there's plenty of opportunities for the Night Demon King, Feng Mochuan, to wield his power.

"But, Old Mo, I must remind you of something." Qin Tian's tone shifted, becoming serious, "Your Hurricane Mercenary Corps is not like Li Qi's Shadow Division. Shadow Division are all professional assassins, cautious, and don't usually interact much with the outside world; the secret of the Night Demon Bloodline is not easily leaked. But the people under you are mostly former mercenary brothers, straightforward, interacting more with the outside world, and may not be able to keep the secret."

He paused, his tone carrying a bit of gravity: "You should know how much the Empire, both publicly and privately, resists the Vampire Bloodline. I don't want the Night Demon Bloodline to suffer the same fate one day."

Though spoken implicitly, Feng Mochuan instantly understood—the old comrades of the Hurricane Mercenary Corps, some of whom he had now turned into Night Demons.

Those people are heavy on loyalty, and if their family or friends found out and begged them to turn into Night Demons, they might agree out of a sense of obligation, causing the Night Demon Bloodline to spread like an uncontrolled virus.

By then, once detected by the outside world, troubles would continuously arise, potentially even bringing about a disastrous fate.

"Boss, I understand!" Feng Mochuan immediately stood straight, his tone firm, "I will set a strict rule, no one is allowed to share the Night Demon's Blood! Anyone who violates..."

Before he could finish, the silent Li Qi suddenly spoke, his voice calm but with an undeniable chill: "Violators, I will personally eliminate."

Feng Mochuan's heart trembled, instinctively looking at Li Qi—he knew Li Qi's nature too well, this was not a threat, if such a thing happened, Li Qi would certainly act without hesitation, showing no mercy.

"Alright, I'm just giving a reminder, no need to be so tense." Qin Tian patted Feng Mochuan's shoulder, his tone softening, "Those who are both loyal and capable can definitely be granted the Night Demon's Blood—I even support you to personally transform them, so their bloodline level can reach Silver directly, better aiding you in your tasks."

"Thank you, Boss!" Feng Mochuan instantly breathed a sigh of relief, a smile reappearing on his face—the Night Demon's Blood not only boosts the subordinates' strength but is also the best bond for ensuring loyalty. If this route were completely cut off, it would indeed be quite a pity.

Seeing him relax, Qin Tian added: "Be choosy with the candidates, better to choose fewer than wrong ones. After all, once the bloodline spreads, it can't be reclaimed."

"Yes, Boss!"

Feng Mochuan nodded emphatically.

"Li Qi, how is everything on your side?" Qin Tian turned to Li Qi.

Li Qi: "Boss, currently more than half of the Shadow Division's members have successfully integrated into the Shadow Moon Tower, and with the help of Xie Yue, my Night Demon Apostles have transformed 146 elite assassins into Night Demons, including 17 Tier Five and the rest are all Tier Three and Tier Four assassins."

"Good, well done."

Qin Tian smiled and nodded, Shadow Moon Tower is one of the top intelligence and assassin organizations in the Azure Wood Star Realm, led by a master at the peak of Tier Seven, with ten Tier Six

killers under them, a total membership exceeding 3000, intelligence points covering the entire Azure Wood Star Realm and extending into the three surrounding Star Realms.

The Shadow Division wanted to develop to the level of Shadow Moon Tower, just setting up intelligence points would take at least eight to ten years, if not longer, but now, he had a better method.

That is to gradually absorb the strength of the Shadow Moon Tower, stealthily turning those elite assassins and leaders into Night Demons, quietly letting the Shadow Division swallow the entire Shadow Moon Tower, achieving a substitution without notice.

Lingfeng Trading Company and The Shadow Division have both entered the right track, with Feng Mochuan and Li Qi around, he didn't need to worry too much.

His next focus was on properly disciplining some "not very docile" Barbarians.