

I CAN CONTROL RESOURCES

Chapter 91: When I Get Ruthless, I Even Hit Myself

THUD! Gao Neng cursed as he tumbled to the ground, but with his Defense Power increased by 70%, he wasn't seriously injured.

However, Chen Bai was already charging at him again.

Moreover, this time, it wasn't just his gauntlets that had jets of heat emanating from them; the iron armor covering his body was also faintly glowing red.

His speed had at least doubled compared to before.

His power...

...was unknown!

"Gao Neng, don't hold back anymore! Show me your true strength!" Chen Bai shouted as he leaped into the air, aiming a punch straight for Gao Neng's face.

"Nothing more to see! This *is* my true strength!" Gao Neng yelled, rolling on the ground to dodge the punch aimed at his face.

BAM!

A rock right behind him was shattered by the blow.

"Is that so? I don't believe you!" Chen Bai said, shaking his gauntlets.

A chill ran down Gao Neng's spine. 'If that punch had landed on my face... I'd be disfigured, if not dead!' As the thought flashed through his mind, he scrambled to his feet and bolted. The power gap was just too great.

Once he started using his energy, Chen Bai was like a completely different person.

Moreover, Gao Neng noticed another problem.

Chen Bai was now using proper fighting techniques.

If the Chen Bai from before had been stubbornly trading blows fist-for-fist with Gao Neng out of pride, the Chen Bai now was a true combat elite.

Every punch he threw tore through the air with a whistle.

'Where can I run...'

'Where the hell can I possibly run?'

"Lieutenant Chen, I think it's better for people to trust each other!" Gao Neng shouted, feeling truly desperate. The island was only so big; continuing to run was clearly not a solution.

Besides, his speed was now a notch below Chen Bai's; he couldn't get away.

Most importantly, he only had two minutes left! If he couldn't take down Chen Bai in two minutes, the mission would definitely be a failure!

'Wait a minute!'

'The element I converted to was... copper!'

'That's right, I'm copper!'

'I'm resistant to electricity!'

'Maybe I can run into the lightning zone?!'

Gao Neng's gaze shifted to the area not far away. The lightning zone was steadily shrinking. In the darkness, bolts of lightning streaked across the night sky, accompanied by booming thunder.

'Time to risk it all!' With that thought, Gao Neng stopped hesitating. He dove headfirst into the lake and then swam rapidly toward the lightning zone.

"Trying to run? Gao Neng, you can't escape!" Chen Bai immediately gave chase, but he soon realized something was wrong. Gao Neng was heading straight for the lightning zone.

'Is this kid trying to kill himself?'

'If he commits suicide, it would save me the trouble... Wait, the Major's orders were to force out his true strength!'

'I can't let him kill himself!'

Chen Bai hesitated for a moment, then resumed the chase. His swimming speed increased, with his two gauntlets constantly spewing hot steam, making him look like a jet ski on the lake's surface.

'Fuck! Is this the legendary steam engine in action?!' Gao Neng thought, swimming for his life.

Swimming downstream, holding his breath, diving deep, staying submerged...

Gao Neng used every delaying tactic he could think of in one go.

Closer!

Five meters, four, three, two...

"Nowhere to run!" Finally, Chen Bai caught up and slammed a punch into Gao Neng's back.

Gao Neng was sent plunging deeper into the water by the blow.

However, at that very moment, the lightning zone finally arrived.

CRACK-BOOM!

A bolt of lightning struck down.

Gao Neng shot out of the water and grabbed onto Chen Bai.

"Are you insane?!"

The lightning missed, striking the water beside them.

But Chen Bai's face flushed. Gao Neng was clearly trying to take them both down together. 'I'm a Lieutenant using my energy! How can I die here?'

"Lieutenant Chen, do you dare compete with me to see who's more resistant to electricity?!" Gao Neng ignored him, holding onto Chen Bai in a death grip as he shouted.

"What..."

CRACK-BOOM!

A second bolt of lightning struck down.

This one successfully hit them both.

The strike nearly twisted Gao Neng's mouth sideways. 'Double the pain... it really hurts!' Even though he could now resist 50% of the lightning damage, he couldn't block out the pain.

Chen Bai was also struck, and smoke rose from his body.

"You... You bastard!" Chen Bai gritted his teeth. The lightning bolt felt like it had nearly shattered his bones. But just as Gao Neng had challenged, he couldn't lose a competition of who was more resistant to electricity.

CRACK-BOOM!

Just then, a third bolt of lightning descended.

It struck them both.

Gao Neng instantly felt the world spin, and his vision started to go white.

Meanwhile, Chen Bai was trembling all over; he was clearly more heavily injured.

'I can't lose! Take this! Copper Head Skill!' Seeing that Chen Bai was about to collapse, Gao Neng ignored his dizziness, gritted his teeth, and slammed his head into Chen Bai's forehead.

'It's a life-or-death struggle, who's afraid of whom?!

Chen Bai wanted to dodge, but they were too close. The headbutt was unavoidable. He could only lament internally, 'It's good to be young!'

DONG!

Sparks flew.

Both of them staggered from the impact.

Gao Neng already felt like his body wasn't his own, but his powerful willpower told him it wasn't over. He had to take Chen Bai down to complete the mission.

'Once isn't enough!'

'Then...'

'Do it again!'

Gao Neng headbutted him again.

DONG!

"Again!"

DONG!

Gao Neng lost count of how many times he'd slammed his head forward. It was only when his vision had nearly faded to black that he finally felt the body he was holding go limp.

SPLASH.

Both of them, completely exhausted, sank to the bottom of the lake at almost the same time.

「On the shore.」

He Haifan, Mao Shan, and the others were completely stunned.

What kind of suicidal fighting style was that?

It was just too insane!

"Did they both die?!"

"They must have... they both sank..."

"..."

The students were shocked, but also felt it was a pity for Gao Neng. If Gao Neng had truly been able to defeat an energy-wielding Chen Bai, what a magnificent sight that would have been.

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「In the military training base.」

Li Qingping, Xue Jingjing, and the others also wore looks of shock.

Gao Neng took down the energy-wielding Chen Bai, but died in the process?! He actually managed to take him down with him?

This result had already exceeded their expectations. After all, Chen Bai was clearly a tier above Gao Neng in terms of strength. To achieve something like this was truly impressive.

Just as they were thinking this...

...a figure suddenly burst out of the water on the screen with a SPLASH.

"Gao Neng!"

"He's still alive? After being struck by lightning twice? And headbutting him so many times... He... he's actually still alive? And he even swam out of the lightning zone?!"

At this, Li Qingping, Xue Jingjing, and the others shot straight to their feet.

It wasn't just them. In another room, Shen Ning'Er's eyes were wide as she stared, stunned, at the figure emerging from the lake.

"Gao Neng won?" Shen Ning'Er seemed to murmur to herself. Then, a smile actually flashed across her lips. "Not bad... he's a real piece of work! Hmm, when he gets out, should I take him to the research institute for dissection? Or maybe just extract some bone marrow, brain cells... Heh heh, now that's a question worth exploring!"

I Can Control Resources

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SPLASH!

In the Virtual Battlefield.

A figure burst from the lake's surface, dragging someone by the foot. Since most of the person's body was still submerged, the scene didn't draw much attention at first.

"It's Gao Neng!"

"He's still alive? My God, he's actually still alive?!"

"Look, that leg looks like Lieutenant Chen's... Wait a minute, did Lieutenant Chen pass out? Oh my god, am I seeing things? Gao Neng took down Lieutenant Chen?!"

The students on the small island stared, their mouths agape.

He Haifan, Mao Shan, and the others were just as pale. They watched Gao Neng drag Chen Bai out of the lake and onto the shore, their hearts a maelstrom of complicated feelings.

'Should we go fight him?'

'Can we even win?'

Gao Neng ignored the students on the island. He dragged Chen Bai onto the island from a different spot, then pulled out a thorny vine he had hidden behind a rock.

"What a thick thorny vine!"

"What... what is he planning to do?"

"Don't tell me he's going to... to whip... Lieutenant Chen?!"

The students were aghast.

The thorny vine in Gao Neng's hand was incredibly thick—at least a fist and a half in diameter—and covered in sharp, long thorns.

CRACK!

As the students watched in shock, Gao Neng brought the thorny vine down with practiced ease.

"AHH!!" The already unconscious Chen Bai was jolted awake by the pain, his eyes flying open.

'Damn, that really stings!'

Chen Bai's face was ashen. He struggled to get up and continue his desperate fight with Gao Neng.

But Gao Neng gave him no such chance. He pounced, furiously whipping him with the thorny vine.

CRACK! CRACK! CRACK!

"Gao Neng, you... you just... wait!" Chen Bai watched his health bar bottom out and let out an indignant cry before his body vanished on the spot.

The other students who witnessed this were too stunned to speak.

'So domineering!'

'So cruel!'

'He really dared to whip him?!'

'Isn't he afraid that Lieutenant Chen will kill him after they leave the Virtual Battlefield?'

Just as the students were thinking this, they noticed something seemed off about Gao Neng. He was swaying, dry-heaving nonstop, and looked like he could collapse at any moment.

"Gao Neng is spent!"

"Quick, now's our chance!"

He Haifan and Mao Shan exchanged a quick glance, then both gritted their teeth and charged toward Gao Neng almost simultaneously.

"He Haifan and Mao Shan are trying to take advantage of his weakness!"

"Third High, with me!"

"Stop them!"

The students from Third High immediately gave chase.

However, He Haifan and Mao Shan were incredibly fast. In a flash, they were in front of Gao Neng, throwing punches from the left and right simultaneously.

BANG!

BANG!

He Haifan and Mao Shan went flying.

Gao Neng, on the other hand, had struck a pose from the first routine of the national primary and middle school calisthenics program: 'Stretching'.

"That pose?!"

"Gao Neng really is the little yellow duck!"

"Does that mean... we've been hunting Gao Neng this whole time?!"

The students were once again stunned by the familiar pose.

But Gao Neng paid them no mind, calling out the rhythm to himself, "One, two, three, four. Two, two, three, four. Three, two, three, four. Four, two, three, four. Again..."

Soon, the haze in Gao Neng's eyes cleared, replaced by clarity.

'It really can expel all negative statuses!' Gao Neng marveled inwardly. 'Aside from being utterly humiliating, this skill is truly invincible.'

After performing a few more routines,

Gao Neng's condition had already recovered by a third.

That was more than enough.

"Just now, were you two trying to ambush me?" Gao Neng's gaze fell on He Haifan and Mao Shan, who were standing dumbfounded to the side.

"So what if we were? This is a combat assessment. The top scorer becomes the champion. You can't blame us for taking advantage of your weakness!" Seeing Mao Shan remain silent, He Haifan hesitated for a moment before stepping forward to speak.

"I've been wondering about something. During the theory exam, who was it that put phosphorus powder on my clothes... I think I know now," Gao Neng said.

"What do you know?" He Haifan's brow furrowed.

"The things parents do for their children... I never thought He Lin would stoop to doing it himself! Principal He, your son here has some nerve, at least he dares to own up to what he does. But you, his father, you're hiding your head in your shell, too scared to admit it. Are you a turtle?!" Gao Neng ignored He Haifan and suddenly shouted.

"Gao Neng, what nonsense are you spouting? My dad would never do something like that!" He Haifan's fists clenched, and he charged forward.

Gao Neng didn't hold back, knocking He Haifan to the ground with a single kick.

Then, he raised the thorny vine in his hand.

"What are you doing?!" He Haifan cried out in alarm.

"Whipping you, what else? Your old man framed me, so I'll give you a few lashes. That's not too much to ask, is it?" As Gao Neng spoke, the thorny vine had already struck He Haifan across the face.

CRACK!

He Haifan immediately let out a blood-curdling scream.

"Does it hurt?" Gao Neng chuckled.

"Gao Neng, I'll kill you... How dare you whip me with this thing!"

"I even dared to whip Chen Bai. What makes you think I wouldn't whip you?" Gao Neng's actions, of course, had a purpose. He was creating a cover, concealing his true reason for whipping Chen Bai.

"AHH!!" He Haifan screamed again.

CRACK! CRACK! CRACK!

After a storm of lashes, He Haifan finally vanished on the spot, full of indignation.

"Mao Shan, you're next," Gao Neng said, looking up.

"I... I didn't frame you! And my... my dad isn't a principal either!" Mao Shan flinched and immediately backed away, eyeing the thorny vine in Gao Neng's hand.

'The pain is doubled!'

'If he really hits me with that thing, the pain will be unbearable!'

"What does that have to do with anything? You're all getting whipped anyway!" Gao Neng wasted no more words. He lunged, tackling Mao Shan to the ground, then raised the thorny vine and started whipping.

"Ah... It hurts so much, let me go!"

"No!"

"You demon, you're a demon! Ah... The pain is killing me!" Mao Shan shrieked, but it was no use. In the end, he too could only die, filled with indignation.

Just then, Gao Neng patted the dust from his pants.

"Now, it's your turn!"

"Us? But we're from Third High... Third High!"

"The assessment is almost over, why bother with that now? You're all going to be eliminated anyway. Isn't it better to be eliminated by me than by someone else, right?" Gao Neng grinned brightly.

"That... actually makes... some sense." The Third High students exchanged glances, then gritted their teeth. "Well... can you not use that thing to whip us?"

"Nope. Everyone gets treated the same!" Gao Neng shook his head.

"Ah... Run!"

"Don't run! Everyone has to die! The sooner you die, the sooner you can reincarnate, my dear classmates!" Gao Neng shouted as he charged, no longer caring if they were from Third High, Second High, or First High. He just grabbed one and started whipping furiously.

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"AHHH... Don't whip me, I want to kill myself!"

"Stay away, Gao Neng, I'm begging you... I'm a guy, don't be so rough!"

The screams were endless.

The small island was instantly plunged into a bloody reign of terror.

Chapter 93: Alliance Scientific Experiment Research Institute

...

At the military training base.

The principal of the Second High School couldn't bear to watch any longer and shut off the screen.

Li Qingping didn't say a word.

Xue Jingjing also remained silent.

However, everyone's gazes were subtly fixed on He Lin, the principal of the First High School.

"You believe him? I, He Lin, have dedicated decades of my life to the First High. Do you really think I would harm a student for my own selfish gain...?" He Lin's brows furrowed, his eyes darting about.

"The theory exam's home ground was the First High, so you had 'favorable terrain.' As for 'opportune timing,' if Gao Neng failed, your school was almost guaranteed to produce the top scorer. And for 'popular support'... would any student from the First High dare to go against your wishes, Principal He?" While the others kept quiet, Xue Jingjing spoke without a trace of fear.

"I can't be bothered to waste my breath on you!" He Lin snapped, flicking his sleeves as he stood up. He then turned and walked toward the door.

But he quickly retreated.

Because a person was now standing in the doorway, dressed in a black military uniform, with a head of beautiful long hair and a pair of bright eyes.

Shen Ning'Er!

"Principal He, why was the surveillance camera at the entrance of the First High School broken?" Shen Ning'Er slowly walked into the room, her gaze fixed on He Lin's face.

"How should I know! You think I broke it on purpose?" He Lin's face flushed slightly.

"I just find the timing a bit of a coincidence. It just so happened to break on the day of the exam. As the principal of the First High, don't you think you owe us a reasonable explanation?" Shen Ning'Er continued to ask in a calm tone.

"Perhaps the electrician took the day off. I'll ask the school's logistics department about this. Once I have an answer, I will naturally provide an explanation!" He Lin gritted his teeth.

"No need to trouble yourself. The Military Department has always been cautious in its affairs. We happened to consider this possibility. As a precaution, we... inconveniently... installed a new surveillance camera across the street from the First High. Would Principal He care to take a look with us?" Shen Ning'Er waved her hand dismissively and, at the same time, pulled out a storage device.

"Major Shen, what... what are you trying to say?" The color drained from He Lin's face.

"Principal He, don't tell me you have a guilty conscience?"

"Guilty conscience? Heh, why would I have a guilty conscience? And what do I have to feel guilty about!"

"At the entrance of the First High, while Gao Neng wasn't paying attention, you had someone put phosphorus powder in his pocket. It's crystal clear on the video. Are you really not the least bit guilty?"

"Major Shen, I hope the Military Department can operate based on evidence. It's not impossible that a jealous student framed him. Based on this alone, you have no reason to assume I was the one who ordered it!"

"Did I say it was a student from the First High who planted it?" Shen Ning'Er's tone suddenly sharpened.

"Didn't you just..." He Lin got that far and then abruptly shut his mouth.

"Men, take Principal He to the interrogation room! I trust the Military Department's methods can make Principal He talk!" Shen Ning'Er wasted no more words and simply waved her hand.

"I am the principal of the First High! How dare you!" He Lin's face was livid with rage.

But the two soldiers completely ignored his fury. They rushed in immediately, grabbed He Lin's arms from his left and right, and pinned them behind his back.

"The Forgotten Land is to be reorganized. Purging the three major powers is imperative. Therefore, your faction, He Lin, the last of them, is naturally no exception," Shen Ning'Er said coolly.

"So you knew all along. If you knew, why make your move only now?" He Lin's expression shifted, his fists clenching and unclenching. Finally, he let out a soft sigh.

"The Military Department operates on evidence. We had evidence to arrest Tang De and to kill Wang Ju. But we had nothing on you, He Lin, because you never showed your face in any official capacity. This was the perfect opportunity. I trust you have no problem with me... using it, do you, Principal He?" Shen Ning'Er explained.

"I understand! In that case, I have nothing more to say. I just want to ask one last thing: when the Military Department acts, are families implicated? Haifan and Haiyang both know nothing about my affairs! I hope..."

"Rest assured, Principal He!" Shen Ning'Er cut him off directly. "The Military Department doesn't make a habit of implicating family. Besides, I don't really care whether your two sons know about your business or not. It's not like I, Shen Ning'Er, am afraid of them seeking revenge. If they want revenge... they'll need the strength to back it up!"

After saying her piece, Shen Ning'Er left.

The two soldiers kept He Lin held fast between them.

He Lin stared blankly at Shen Ning'Er's departing figure for a moment, then a smile touched his lips. "She really is arrogant. But... she's earned the right to be."

"Old He, we follow different paths, so we cannot walk together. Though we've known each other for over a decade, we won't be seeing you off this time," the principal of the Second High School said.

"No need to trouble yourselves!" He Lin nodded. Then, his gaze fell on Li Qingping and Xue Jingjing. "Old Li, you don't have a partner, do you? I think Principal Xue is quite a catch. You should consider it!"

"Get lost!" Li Qingping cursed immediately.

"A dog's mouth can't spit out ivory!" Xue Jingjing cursed as well.

"Hahaha... I, He Lin, haven't asked for much in this life. I only wanted to survive! A pity... I was outmaneuvered by a single move! But I'm no worse off than any of you here. At least my two sons will both enter the Military University. They still have a bright future ahead of them. And you? You have nothing! Dedication? Dedication, my ass! Hahaha..." After speaking, He Lin strode away.

"..."

Silence filled the room.

In a cruel world, is it really wrong to do what it takes to survive?

No one could answer that question.

Li Qingping waited until He Lin's back had disappeared, then subconsciously glanced at Xue Jingjing beside him.

"What are you looking at? This old lady has high standards! You think I'd just hand over my million-dollar fortune to a wretched old man like you without three houses and two cars? Are you still dreaming?!" Xue Jingjing snapped.

"..." Li Qingping was speechless.

"Jingjing, I have three houses and two cars..." the principal of the Second High School said leisurely.

"You? Too ugly!" Xue Jingjing shot the principal a look, then stood up and left. "That bastard Gao Neng, picking on my girls' school because we have no one to stand up for us, is that it? Does he really think he's all that just because he's handsome!"

...

「In the Virtual Battlefield.」

After Gao Neng eliminated the last student, he finally received a system notification.

"DING! Congratulations, Host, for completing 'The Arrogant Loner.' You have received one Primary Treasure Chest."

'Only two missions left!' This time, Gao Neng didn't check the fourth mission. Instead, he immediately ran to the lakeside and began doing calisthenics to recover his stamina.

The moment his stamina was fully restored, he swallowed two Bone Marrow Cleansing Pills in one gulp.

Gao Neng was well aware of the consequences of revealing his strength this time. An explosive power of over 2,000 points was simply impossible to achieve for someone who had only broken the third human limit.

'I have to break through to the Fourth Human Limit.'

'Otherwise...'

'I won't be able to bluff my way through this!'

With two Bone Marrow Cleansing Pills down the hatch, his Vitality and Energy values rose rapidly.

Vitality: 463

Energy: 239

...

Vitality: 485

Energy: 245

...

"Host's Vitality has reached the 500-point limit. Initiate breakthrough?"

"Break through!"

'Fuck... It hurts so much! Double the pain... like needles...' The moment he started breaking through, Gao Neng felt as if every bone in his body was about to crack.

「Five minutes later.」

Gao Neng washed himself clean in the lake, then walked through the gate that had appeared on the small island, a look of delight on his face.

'Awesome, I can really break through!'

'So awesome!'

'Huh?'

'There's even a welcoming party at the exit...'

"Lieutenant Chen, long time no see... How've you been feeling?" Gao Neng was about to run the second he finished speaking, but he quickly discovered there was no escape.

Because behind Chen Bai...

...stood nine other Examiners in military uniforms, their faces grim.

"Gao Neng, let's stop beating around the bush. Why don't you take a guess... whether you'll be walking out of here alive today?" Chen Bai sneered at Gao Neng.

"I'm guessing I can," Gao Neng said confidently.

"Oh? Quite confident, are we? Then tell me, why should we let you go?" Chen Bai didn't make a move right away, just stared at Gao Neng.

"Because I'm a genius! A super genius who has broken the Fourth Human Limit! The Alliance is definitely going to want to cultivate me as a priority talent, right?" Gao Neng beamed.

"You really broke through the Fourth Human Limit?" A flash of astonishment crossed Chen Bai's eyes. He had already suspected it, but hearing it confirmed was another matter entirely.

"Of course!" Gao Neng affirmed.

"Then why was your explosive power only just over 700 points during the last physical fitness test?"

"I was being low-key! Lieutenant Chen, you must not be aware of the situation in the Forgotten Land. It's a very dark place. A super genius like me—handsome, and having broken the Fourth Human Limit—if I didn't know how to lie low, wouldn't I have been killed by jealous haters long ago?" Gao Neng had already prepared his excuse.

"Then why aren't you being low-key now?"

"Things are different now! I'm about to enter the Military University. Once I'm in the City of Hope, I'll be safe! There won't be any more dark forces to worry about. Wouldn't you agree?"

"Safe once you're in the City of Hope? Hahaha..." Chen Bai suddenly burst out laughing.

The other nine Examiners also started laughing, their expressions unsettling. Every one of them looked at Gao Neng with a kind of profound pity.

"The City of Hope... isn't safe?" Gao Neng sensed that something was wrong.

"Heh, you'll find out when you get there. Alright, enough nonsense. Major Shen and Dr. Lan want to see you. Come with me." After speaking, Chen Bai turned to lead the way.

"Shen Ning'Er? Dr. Lan... which Dr. Lan?" Gao Neng was startled. He'd had a feeling Shen Ning'Er would want to see him, but who was this Dr. Lan?

"Dr. Lan from the Alliance Science and Experimentation Institute, of course. She's... hmm, very interested in you!" Chen Bai glanced back, sizing up Gao Neng with a serious expression, but the smile playing on his lips grew even more unsettling.

'The Alliance Science and Experimentation Institute...' Gao Neng's face darkened. 'Are they going to fucking dissect me for research?'

(I keep hearing people say my Chapters are short? I can't stand for that! How about a 3,000-character Chapter to change your mind! Please vote with recommendation tickets!)

Chapter 94: Limb Dissection or 50,000 a Time

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Gao Neng wanted to run.

But where could he run?

This was a military training base, surrounded by walls on all four sides. Most importantly, ten Examiners, including Chen Bai, were staring at him like scorned lovers.

"It's just some research, right? No problem! I was born a person of the Alliance, and I'll die a ghost of the Alliance! I'll shine brightly for the Alliance, dedicating

my entire life to it. Even if you cut open my head and suck out my bone marrow, I won't even bat an eye!" Gao Neng shouted before striding forward to follow them.

"..."

Chen Bai and the other nine Examiners stared blankly at Gao Neng.

In that instant, the resentment in their eyes grew even stronger. 'Were we, the elites of the Military Department, really defeated by this punk?'

'What a disgrace!'

Gao Neng didn't know what Chen Bai and the others were thinking. He was just busy giving himself a pep talk in his head. 'I'm a genius. Geniuses don't get dissected. At most, a genius might lose a leg... No, not even a leg!'

"Get in," Chen Bai said, pushing open a metal door.

"Can I go use the restroom first?" Gao Neng glanced at the heavy metal door, feeling more and more that something was wrong. 'Once this door closes, there'll be nowhere to run, will there?'

"Stop wasting time!" Chen Bai kicked Gao Neng inside, and then, with a SLAM, shut the metal door.

...

BAM!

Gao Neng flew into the room in a graceful arc.

The room was huge and filled with all sorts of equipment: test tubes, scalpels, defibrillators, and... a few pristine white skeletons and several skulls.

'Looks like...'

'They don't seem to be human.'

Gao Neng's butt didn't actually hurt, but his heart, liver, spleen, lungs, and kidneys certainly did.

'Are they really going to dissect me?'

'It can't be!'

'What happened to the special treatment for the Alliance's super geniuses?'

"You're here." Shen Ning'Er, who had been sitting on the sofa, stood up. She glanced at Gao Neng, then pointed to a middle-aged woman in scrubs sitting beside her. "Let me introduce you. This is Dr. Lan, an expert from the Alliance Science Laboratory who specializes in limb dissection research!"

"Limb dissection research?" Sweat immediately beaded on Gao Neng's forehead.

"You're Gao Neng, correct? I hear there's a little something wrong with your body?" Dr. Lan stood up, adjusting her glasses as her eyes brazenly scanned Gao Neng up and down.

Gao Neng instantly felt as if he had been seen through completely.

'That gaze is too predatory.'

It wasn't the way one looks at a normal person at all. It was more like she was looking at a corpse on an operating table.

"No, there's nothing wrong with me!" Gao Neng immediately denied it.

"Heh heh... Everyone with a problem says that," Dr. Lan said with a self-satisfied smile.

"..." Gao Neng was instantly hit with a sense of familiarity.

'Could this Dr. Lan be a relative of that Wang ChaCha fellow?'

He remembered Wang ChaCha saying something similar when he was giving Tang Weiwei a psychiatric evaluation. 'Are all the doctors in the Military Department like this?'

"Student Gao Neng, relax. No need to be so nervous. I'm just rather interested in your body," Dr. Lan said with a smile, seeing his expression. She walked over to him and squeezed his arm. "Muscle tissue over 90 percent, very fast blood circulation... If I'm not mistaken, you've broken the Fourth Human Limit!"

"So you really did break through?" A smile touched the corners of Shen Ning'Er's lips. She then gestured for Gao Neng to sit down. "So, tell me. How did you go from the second breakthrough to the fourth in just a few days?"

"Actually, I'm just really low-key. I already told Lieutenant Chen earlier. The truth is, I broke through the Fourth Human Limit a long time ago. I just didn't mention it!

You remember what happened at the underground factory, right?

When I knocked you out... oh, no, wait! After you fainted, didn't I save you? You have no idea how dangerous the situation was back then. It was me against a hundred people.

You probably remember that I killed all of them later, right? That's because I had already broken the Fourth Human Limit. That's how I was able to kill them!" Gao Neng said quickly.

"Heh heh..." Shen Ning'Er just smiled without replying, sipping her tea.

"And I was the one who killed that Night Elf, all by myself. You can't fake something like that, can you? If I hadn't broken through to the fourth limit, how could I possibly have killed it?" Gao Neng added.

"Heh heh." Shen Ning'Er still just smiled, saying nothing.

Meanwhile, Dr. Lan continued to circle Gao Neng.

Cold sweat trickled down Gao Neng's back.

'This Shen Ning'Er isn't easy to fool, is she?'

Gritting his teeth, Gao Neng had no choice but to play his final card. "I've made contributions to the Alliance! I saved your life, helped you take down Wang Ju's forces, and then helped you topple Tang De's forces! Not long ago, I even killed a Dark Elf! I remember you wanted to take the elf's corpse for research!

I didn't stop you!

I am utterly selfless!

I am devoted to the public good!

I am someone who has shed blood for the Alliance, and I'll shed even more in the future! My whole life is one of dedication! It's not too much for an outstanding young man like me to ask for a little respect and human rights, is it?!"

"It's not too much. Respect and human rights, you have those. However, it seems the Alliance has already given you rewards for all those contributions you mentioned, hasn't it?" Shen Ning'Er finally spoke, but the smile on her face only deepened.

"No, there's one reward that hasn't been given out yet!"

"Oh? Which one is that?"

"He Lin! Principal He Lin of First High! I just reported him! You should hurry and arrest him. He's definitely up to something. That counts as another contribution, right?"

"You're that certain He Lin is involved?"

"Of course I'm certain. I've thought it over carefully. During the theory exam, the only ones who came to take a photo with me were students from the Girls' High School and a few from First High. Li Caicai from the Girls' High was the most promising among them, but she wouldn't try to harm me... Besides her, the only one left with the most suspicion was He Haifan from First High."

"Mm, go on."

"I've observed him. That He Haifan fellow, although his character isn't great, he's at least bold enough to admit to what he's done. Most importantly, he's a bit blindly self-confident. How would someone so confident in themselves resort to sabotage against an opponent before an exam? Therefore, the one who tried to screw me over can only be He Lin!"

"Heh heh, your intelligence is at least a passing grade. So, what you're saying is... you don't want the reward for this contribution?" Shen Ning'Er gave Gao Neng a half-smile.

"Of course I don't! Making contributions to the Alliance is the lifelong goal of every ambitious young person! How could I possibly covet a reward from the Alliance!" Gao Neng declared righteously.

"Is that so... I had actually already applied to have another major merit recorded for you, with a reward of fifty thousand Alliance Coins. Are you sure you don't want it?" Shen Ning'Er said, feigning regret.

"I don't!" Gao Neng replied without a moment's hesitation.

'Trying to tempt me with just fifty thousand?'

'Am I the kind of person who's short fifty thousand coins?'

'Yes, I am!'

'But I can't give in now. Still... why tempt me with fifty thousand? Last time I killed a Dark Elf, I only got five thousand, didn't I?'

'How did it become fifty thousand this time?!'

"Alright, since you're so resolute, I must respect your decision. Dr. Lan, draw his blood," Shen Ning'Er said, giving Gao Neng a surprised look. Finally, she nodded emphatically.

"Draw my blood? Didn't you say you weren't going to research me?" Gao Neng subconsciously took a step back.

"The research still has to be done. It's just drawing a little blood for a test. Gao Neng, I hope you'll cooperate with this," Shen Ning'Er said seriously.

"Just drawing blood? Well, I can cooperate with that... Wait. The 'research' you mentioned earlier was just drawing blood?" Gao Neng suddenly felt that something wasn't quite right.

"That's right. What else did you think it was?" Shen Ning'Er asked with a matter-of-fact expression.

By this point, Dr. Lan had already finished drawing the blood. Chuckling, she took the small vial and began her analysis.

"..." Gao Neng was speechless.

'This is the so-called 'research'?''

'Wasn't she supposed to be some kind of limb dissection expert?'

"If there's nothing else, you can go," Shen Ning'Er said with a wave of her hand, dismissing him.

"I can go now? Wait... Major Shen, I really did risk my life to contribute to the Alliance! I identified He Lin! That fifty-thousand-coin reward..."

"What fifty thousand coins?"

"You just said it! For identifying He Lin, a reward of fifty thousand coins?"

"Did I say that? Oh... I did. I remember now. But didn't you just say you didn't want it?" Shen Ning'Er looked at Gao Neng, feigning confusion.

"Well... actually, I could take it. You see, although I'm a selfless person who never covets rewards, the Military Department is my home, and its development depends on everyone. Right now, I am 'everyone'! To help our home, the Military Department, develop even better, I must bear this burden and accept this reward to improve my own strength!"

"Is that so? But you're not part of the Military Department yet. What's to be done?"

"I can be, starting now!"

"I see..." Shen Ning'Er nodded, then her gaze shifted back to Dr. Lan. "Dr. Lan, our people in the Military Department are all very brave. Is one vial of blood enough? Should we draw another? Or maybe cut off a few pieces of flesh? We might discover something new."

"Wonderful! Since he's with the Military Department, that makes things much easier!" Dr. Lan said, her face lighting up with excitement.

"Wait, I'm actually still a student! The Military Department is my goal, but I don't think I'm mature enough yet. I need to temper myself a bit more! Right, you two carry on with your research. Research well! I'll be going now!" Gao Neng's expression changed instantly. He turned and fled. If he stayed any longer, he might really lose a chunk of flesh.

...

「Gao Neng left.」

Dr. Lan had already taken out an instrument and started recording her findings.

"Doctor, is there anything unusual?" Shen Ning'Er picked up her teacup again and took a small sip.

"Yes!" Dr. Lan's face was slightly flushed, as if she had discovered a new continent. "Gao Neng's blood contains a special kind of energy, and its activity level is extremely high. I can't determine what this energy is just yet, but his blood is truly special!"

"Special..." The teacup in Shen Ning'Er's hand trembled slightly. She took a deep breath and asked again, "Is he one of the foreign races?"

"Foreign race?" Dr. Lan was taken aback for a moment, then she laughed. "What are you thinking? He's human. His blood just contains some unknown energy. You could call it a mutation. Speaking of which... don't you have a mutation yourself?"

"As long as he isn't a foreign race, it's fine." Shen Ning'Er asked no more questions. She simply picked up her walkie-talkie. "Chen Bai, give Gao Neng fifty thousand Alliance Coins. Also, give him my number. Tell him to call this number if he needs anything. Fifty thousand per call!"

"Fifty thousand per call?!" Chen Bai, holding the walkie-talkie, was completely floored.

(Hey, don't give me a hard time, brothers! Search your conscience and tell me, are my Chapters short? Usually, before a novel goes premium, Chapters are much shorter, okay? By writing longer Chapters like this, I'm burning through my stockpile. Look, this Chapter is extra long again. Two Chapters today, and that's a lot of words! That's equivalent to losing a whole Chapter's worth of updates for when the book goes premium! For an author who's about to go premium, this is absolutely full of sincerity! All I'm asking for now are some free recommendation votes. That's not too much, is it?)

Chapter 95: The Man in Control

...

The results of the combat assessment were announced, and there weren't many surprises.

With 73 kills, Gao Neng was firmly in first place on the leaderboard. The second-place student, He Haifan, only had a score of 25, leaving him in the dust by a wide margin.

And with that, the top scorer of this year's college entrance exams in the Forgotten Land was decided.

Li Qingping was thrilled, his face flushed red.

Xue Jingjing, on the other hand, was staring intently at Gao Neng, because out of those 73 kills, nearly 30 were students from her Girls' High School.

"Gao Neng is so amazing!"

"He's so handsome!"

"I love you, Gao Neng!"

Just as she was thinking this, the Girls' High students behind her started screaming, each one more ecstatic than the next—even more excited than the students from Third High.

Xue Jingjing's expression immediately turned rather peculiar. The assessment results only announced the number of kills, not who was killed by whom, right?

'So, these students from the Girls' High really think Chen Bai was the one who eliminated them?'

'This blame...'

'Letting Chen Bai carry it... doesn't seem so bad.'

Xue Jingjing didn't expose the truth, and Li Qingping certainly wasn't going to say anything. The principals of Fourth High and Second High, of course, wouldn't be bored enough to get involved either. After all, it had nothing to do with them.

As for the others in the know, He Haifan was currently preoccupied with his own worries. Mao Shan considered dropping a hint, but he didn't want to be the one to stick his neck out, so he only told Lv Guoyuan from Second High about it.

The moment Lv Guoyuan heard this, he jumped to his feet.

He immediately found Li Caicai and vividly recounted everything Mao Shan had told him.

And then...

He got beaten up!

That's right. He was mobbed by Li Caicai and dozens of other students from the Girls' High. The reason was simple: trying to slander Gao Neng like that?

Not a chance!

"Beat him to death!"

"Yeah, a scumbag like him deserves to be beaten to death!"

"Lv Guoyuan, seriously, I, Li Caicai, look down on you!"

Led by Li Caicai, Lv Guoyuan's face was beaten to a pulp. He felt truly wronged.

The other students who knew the truth instantly shut their mouths.

The fury of the Girls' High students!

'Can't afford to provoke them, can't afford to provoke them...'

But why? Gao Neng was clearly the one who eliminated them, so why didn't anyone believe it? Was it just because he was handsome?

Is Gao Neng handsome?

Yes, he's exceptionally handsome!

However, Gao Neng wasn't as excited as one might imagine. He was calm—as calm as the legendary Stabilizing Needle planted deep in the East Sea, completely unperturbed.

'Top scorer?'

'Such a normal outcome. What's there to be surprised about?'

Right now, he was only interested in money.

Because he was broke.

Fifty thousand Alliance Coins had just slipped through his fingers after a few words. He was fuming. If he weren't sure he'd lose, he would've pinned Shen Ning'Er to the ground and given her a harsh injection.

Just as he was thinking this, he saw Chen Bai running over, holding a pile of cash.

"Whoa, that's a lot of money!"

"That must be tens of thousands of Alliance Coins!"

"Don't tell me they're giving us compensation for emotional distress?"

The students exclaimed.

Chen Bai, however, went straight to Gao Neng and placed fifty thousand Alliance Coins in front of him. "This is a reward from the Military Department for student Gao Neng!"

"A reward?!"

"Fifty thousand Alliance Coins!"

"..."

The students were stunned once again.

"Fifty thousand Alliance Coins?" Gao Neng was starting to understand. 'Shen Ning'Er actually had a change of heart? She gave the fifty thousand Alliance Coins back to me? This is a pleasant surprise.'

Just as he was thinking this, Chen Bai began his announcement.

"These fifty thousand Alliance Coins are being awarded in the form of a special scholarship. From now on, every year in the Forgotten Land, the Military Department will issue rewards to outstanding students!

We hope this encourages all of you to work even harder!

As long as you put in the effort, the Military Department's rewards will only get bigger, not smaller!"

"That's awesome!"

The students were moved.

Gao Neng, however, was a little speechless. 'Are they using my achievement to build up the Military Department's reputation? This isn't a scholarship, it's reward money from the report I filed! Language truly is an art—just one little word changes the whole nature of the thing.'

Gao Neng didn't mind too much, though.

'As long as I get the money!'

As he was thinking, Chen Bai slipped a note into his hand.

"If you need anything, give this number a call. Fifty thousand Alliance Coins for one 'service'!" After saying this, Chen Bai winked at Gao Neng and turned to leave.

"'Service'? Fifty thousand for one time? Wait... Lieutenant Chen, what kind of service?" Gao Neng was a bit baffled. He wanted to ask for clarification, but Chen Bai was already walking away.

'Is he crazy?!'

'You're the one who needs a 'service''

'Does he really think that just because I'm a high school student, I don't know anything?'

Gao Neng cursed under his breath, then folded the note with the phone number and tucked it away. After all, Chen Bai had gone out of his way to deliver it; he couldn't just disrespect the guy's gesture completely.

...

After the combat assessment results were announced, the Military Department began to organize the students' departure.

「Outside the military base.」

Night had gradually fallen.

As usual, the bus stopped at Third High School.

By the time Gao Neng got home, it was already past eleven at night. As always, Xu Zilan was dozing off, slumped over the table.

What was different from usual was the silver cat next to her.

Gao Xiaomeng had been dozing with her eyes half-closed, but she opened them slightly when she saw Gao Neng enter, then went right back to sleep.

"Mom, I'm home." Gao Neng ignored the sleeping Gao Xiaomeng. He was curious about her, but with Xu Zilan present, he naturally wouldn't ask.

'But Gao Xiaomeng has been sleeping for several days now. Is she still not fully awake?'

"You must be hungry. Go ahead and eat." Xu Zilan nodded, then took the dishes from the table into the kitchen.

"Mom, aren't you going to ask about my exam results?"

"The combat assessment was never your strong suit. It's okay if you didn't do well. I won't blame you," Xu Zilan replied casually.

"But, Mom... I did great! I got a perfect score on the theory portion—full marks in all four subjects! And I had 73 kills in the combat assessment. I'm this year's top scorer for the Forgotten Land's college entrance exam! Really, Mom... we'll be able to leave this place soon!" Gao Neng shouted at the figure shrouded in cooking fumes.

"..." The figure in the kitchen seemed to tremble for a moment. There was no reply, but the sound of her stir-frying seemed to quicken imperceptibly.

Gao Neng understood Xu Zilan's astonishment.

He didn't say anything more, turning his gaze to Gao Xiaomeng instead.

"Gao Xiaomeng, is there something you forgot to tell me?"

"Meow..." Gao Xiaomeng opened her eyes again. Her two deep blue eyes glanced at Gao Neng, and then, with a WHOOSH, she leaped out the window.

"Where are you going?" Gao Neng wanted to give chase, but Gao Xiaomeng was too fast. After jumping out the window, she vanished into the dark of the night.

"Huh? Where's Gao Xiaomeng? She was just here a moment ago." Xu Zilan seemed to have composed herself. When she came out with the reheated food, she noticed Gao Xiaomeng was gone.

"She went out. Probably to play, I guess," was all Gao Neng could say.

"That can't be right. While you were away these past two days, Gao Xiaomeng stayed with me the whole time. Did you bully her?" Xu Zilan chided.

"How could I bully her... she's... Never mind. Mom, you haven't eaten either, have you?"

"I've already eaten. You go ahead. I'm going to bed."

"Okay." Gao Neng didn't press the issue. This had become a habit; after all, Xu Zilan had to wake up extremely early every day. Without enough sleep, it would be difficult for her to get through her workday.

But just as Xu Zilan pushed her bedroom door open and was about to step inside, she suddenly stopped.

"Little Neng, I bought some baijiu. It's in the cabinet. It's my way of congratulating you. You can have a little. Also... I'm really, really happy!"

"Mom..."

"Mm, I'm going to sleep now." After saying that, Xu Zilan closed the door.

"There's even alcohol? That's right... I'm about to be a university student! A student at the Alliance Military University! This is great, I can drink now!" Gao Neng smiled, ran to the cabinet, and opened it.

Sure enough, there was half a bottle of baijiu inside.

It wasn't a particularly expensive brand, but Gao Neng was genuinely happy. Because Xu Zilan had prepared it for him in advance, and that was more than enough.

He opened the bottle.

Then he found a cup to drink from.

Gao Neng took a small sip. It burned a little, and he quickly ate a bite of food to chase it.

"So this is what alcohol tastes like?" As Gao Neng continued to drink, he made a silent vow. As soon as he submitted his university application and the acceptance letters came out, he would go to the City of Hope and rent an apartment.

He had to leave the Forgotten Land!

He had to get out of this place. It was too dangerous!

Gao Neng spent about forty minutes on his meal. After he finished eating and took a shower, he finally lay down on his bed.

'Oh, right. I've already completed the third mission. Next up is the fourth one!' Gao Neng thought as he opened his mission panel.

"Ultimate Mission 4/5: The Man Who Controls the Overall Situation (Complete 'The Man Who Controls the Overall Situation' and you will have a 100% chance to receive one Middle-Level Treasure Chest)."

(Let's gooo, keep those recommendation tickets coming!)

Chapter 96: Energy Warrior Breakthrough?

'Finally, another Middle-Level Treasure Chest!' Gao Neng was very much looking forward to the Soul Tempering Pill that he had a chance of getting from the chest.

Right now, Spiritual Power was arguably his greatest weapon.

'It's just that my current Spiritual Power can only be used for scouting. I wonder what would happen if it got even stronger?'

"Mission Description: You are the man who controls it all. A simple physical enhancement is no longer enough for you. You must control more! Increase your strength! Make the world tremble before you! Remember: you must grasp with both hands, and both hands must be strong!"

"Mission Completion Condition: Break through and become an Energy Warrior."

"The fourth mission is to become an Energy Warrior?!" Gao Neng was genuinely surprised this time. Of course, he also felt like cursing someone out.

'Everyone wants to become an Energy Warrior.'

'I want to, too!'

'But the key question is, how?'

The books didn't say how, and he'd already asked Li Qingping before. Li Qingping's answer had been that once he had the chance to attend the Military University, he would naturally find out.

But he hadn't even submitted his university applications yet.

'If I have to wait until I get into the Military University, that'll be at least two months from now, right?'

'Does that mean I can't complete this mission for another two months?'

'Hmm, that's possible.' Gao Neng thought it wasn't out of the question. But if so, it meant he'd have to wait two months for the system to evolve.

'Wait a minute.'

'Couldn't I just go ask Li Qingping again?'

'Before, I only had a chance of getting into the Military University, but now it's practically a sure thing. Li Qingping might be willing to tell me a few things now.'

With this thought in mind, Gao Neng closed his eyes and went to sleep.

After two days of exams, it would be a lie to say he wasn't completely exhausted.

...

A night passed.

When he woke up the next morning, Gao Xiaomeng was already back. As usual, she was asleep on his bed, curled into a ball and looking rather exhausted.

Gao Neng gave Gao Xiaomeng a few pets.

She didn't stir.

He stopped petting her, had breakfast, and left some food for Xiaomeng. Then, he called Li Qingping to set up a meeting and headed straight out the door.

When Gao Neng arrived at Li Qingping's home, the man himself was on his balcony planting flowers. A smile involuntarily spread across Li Qingping's face when he saw Gao Neng.

"Gao Neng, you called so early. What's on your mind?" Li Qingping wasn't one for pleasantries and got straight to the point; he didn't figure Gao Neng was there to bring him gifts.

"Yes, Principal," Gao Neng nodded. "I came today to ask how one breaks through to become an Energy Warrior."

"You want to break through?" Li Qingping was stunned for a moment, but then his expression softened. "Well, you have indeed reached the threshold for a breakthrough."

"So you're willing to tell me, Principal?" Gao Neng asked, a hint of anticipation in his voice.

"Of course. I didn't tell you before because you hadn't reached this stage. But now, even if I keep quiet, you'd find out eventually anyway," Li Qingping said with a nod.

"So how do I break through?"

"First, let me tell you the story of the birth of the first human Energy Warrior." As a principal, Li Qingping preferred to explain things by telling stories.

"Okay." Gao Neng wasn't in a rush and settled in to listen attentively.

"It was really something of a coincidence, actually. It happened in the early years of the Great Cataclysm, when the world was struck by a massive disaster. An unknown 'energy' appeared all across the globe."

"Magnetic Piles?"

"Oh? You know about those? Well, since you know about the Magnetic Piles, I can save some breath. It's so much easier teaching a fast learner. AHEM... I'll continue. The appearance of the Magnetic Piles led humanity to discover many strange phenomena. We made huge leaps forward, especially in the study of space!"

"Mm." Gao Neng nodded. He'd had similar suspicions himself.

"The appearance of the Magnetic Piles seemed to grant the world a new civilization and new opportunities. But at the same time, their appearance was followed by the descent of alien races. Their power was beyond human imagination; even our technology was not enough to destroy them. That was the origin of the Great Cataclysm."

"..." Gao Neng remained silent.

"I won't go into the details of the war, but it dealt a massive blow to the world. Natural disasters struck, and even the world's original seven continents were altered, eventually forming the world we know today. Great numbers of humanity's Warriors and elites were trapped and killed in the fighting..."

Li Qingping paused for a moment before continuing, "But some survived. And the very first human Energy Warrior was one of them! His squad was trapped in an 'unknown energy region' for a whole month, but they all managed to escape in the end. Do you know why?"

"Because they mastered the power of that energy?" Gao Neng replied.

"Correct. It was the power of energy. But in the beginning, this power was called the 'Source,' and people who mastered it were called 'Ability Users.'"

"Ability Users?"

"Yes, Ability Users! When these people returned to the human world, they caused a massive sensation. Their incredible power garnered the full attention of humanity's leadership. After several years of research, humans finally mastered this power on their own, and more and more Ability Users began to appear."

"So, the term 'Energy Warrior' is actually a compound of two words with different origins?"

"You could say that. 'Source' means origin—the origin of all things in the world, including matter, space, elements, and so on. The Ability Users who mastered the 'Source' came to be called 'Source Energy Warriors' or 'Energy Warriors.' It's just that 'Energy Warrior' rolls off the tongue a bit better. So, after a hundred years, everyone just started calling them 'Energy Warriors.'" Li Qingping smiled, tacitly agreeing with Gao Neng's theory.

"..." Gao Neng was a little speechless.

'This was really the first time I'd heard this origin story for the term "Energy Warrior." Isn't that a bit too random, though? An "Ability User" who mastered the "Source" just gets called an "Energy Warrior"?'

'So if this power wasn't called "Source," but "Might" instead? Would they be called "Energy Mighters"?'

"Feeling suddenly enlightened? My knowledge is quite profound, wouldn't you say?" Seeing Gao Neng lost in thought, Li Qingping chuckled and picked up his cup for a sip of water.

"But Principal, it seems you've gone off-topic. You haven't gotten to the main point yet," Gao Neng reminded him.

"PFFT!" Li Qingping was so exasperated he sprayed a mouthful of water. "I'm giving you a history lesson! Explaining the fundamentals! How is that going off-topic?"

"But I asked how to become an Energy Warrior."

"AHEM... Didn't I just cover that? Fine, it's actually very simple. I just said that the first Energy Warriors were trapped in an 'unknown energy region,' correct?"

"Yes."

"Right. When they came out, they discovered they had mastered the power of the 'Source.' Therefore, as long as you can master the power of the 'Source,' you can become an Energy Warrior."

"And then?"

"That's it. I've explained it very clearly."

"But I'm not clear at all. At the very least, you have to tell me *how* to master the power of the 'Source,' right?" 'This is ridiculous,' Gao Neng thought bitterly. 'No wonder he's just the principal of a third-rate school in the Forgotten Land.'

"Oh, that? Simple. You just have to condense a 'Source Core' inside your body. Actually, there's an easier-to-understand term for it these days. Because the Source Core has the power to attract everything, like a giant magnet, it's also called a 'Magnetic Core.' You should get it now, right?"

"Understood... So how do I condense a 'Magnetic Core'?" Gao Neng didn't really feel like nodding, but he humored Li Qingping anyway.

"For that, you need a special environment. Just like with the first Energy Warrior, you have to be in a space similar to that 'unknown energy region' to condense a Magnetic Core. And creating a space like that requires special equipment and some special energy materials."

"Energy materials? Equipment? Can I buy them?"

"You can, but they're expensive. Normally, for one person to break through, the energy materials alone will cost at least 500,000. The equipment you need is called an 'Isolation Pod.' If I remember correctly, using one costs 100,000 per session," Li Qingping replied.

I Can Control Resources

"That expensive?!" Even though Gao Neng was somewhat prepared, the absurd price still stunned him.

Six hundred thousand for the breakthrough fee!

And that was the minimum!

'How much do I have right now? A grand total of fifty thousand Alliance Coins?'

"There's no way around it. Energy materials are just too expensive." Seeing the look on Gao Neng's face, Li Qingping knew the boy was broke. But this was reality. "If you're set on breaking through now, I can help with the arrangements. As for the money... I can't help much. Although I'm a principal, I'm... well, I'm an honest man, you know? So I haven't saved much over the years. The most I can lend you for now is fifty thousand."

Money isn't everything.

But you can't do anything without it.

Wang Ju's personal strength was mediocre, but he was able to recruit Energy Warriors to die for him. When it came down to it, it was all because he had money.

It was the same for Tang De and He Lin. To increase their strength, they had to desperately earn money, which naturally meant their hands couldn't stay clean.

"Heh." Gao Neng gave a slight laugh but said nothing.

"Gao Neng, honestly, if I were you, I'd choose to wait a little while before breaking through," Li Qingping said, seeing Gao Neng's predicament.

"Wait?" Gao Neng didn't quite understand.

"Yes. Once you get to the City of Hope and enroll in a Military University, you'll have the chance to access many more things. You can actually gather energy materials yourself. It took me two years to collect my own," Li Qingping explained. "And if I remember correctly, the better Military Universities usually offer their students access to the isolation chambers at half price."

"Two years to gather the energy materials?"

"And that's considered fast. Becoming an Energy Warrior isn't so easy. The Forgotten Land has a population of over ten million, but how many Energy Warriors are there? Fewer than a hundred. And I'm one of them!"

"Thank you, Principal!" Gao Neng didn't ask any more questions. He had learned what he needed to know: if you had money, you could break through. 'But I don't have any money, do I?'

Just as he was about to leave, Gao Neng caught sight of a red car parked not far away. A familiar figure moved inside, and he stopped in his tracks.

"Is there something else?" Li Qingping asked, confused.

"Principal, there's a reason you're single," Gao Neng said seriously.

"What reason?" Li Qingping froze for a moment.

"Because you're not direct enough. You just fumble around the edges and never get to the important part!" With that, Gao Neng turned and walked away.

"'Fumble around the edges... never get to the important part?'" Li Qingping was dazed for a moment, but he quickly understood. "You little brat, you're getting cocky, aren't you? Tell me, how am I just 'fumbling'?"

"You're all talk. If Principal Xue were standing in front of you, would you dare say that? I bet you don't even have the guts to ask her to a movie," Gao Neng retorted without turning his head.

"You get that old broad over here and see if I dare! Let me tell you, kid, you're still green compared to me. You don't understand the adult world. Who watches movies? I go straight to getting a room!" Li Qingping yelled at the top of his lungs, no longer caring about his image. Gao Neng had graduated anyway.

CLICK!

A woman got out of the red car.

She wore black-framed glasses and a long white dress. Her long, jet-black hair fell to her shoulders, and a playful smile graced the corner of her lips.

Li Qingping was speechless.

'That brat Gao Neng... he set me up?!'

"Gao Neng, come visit the girls' high school when you have time! My students really like you, and so do I!" Xue Jingjing clearly emphasized the last three words.

"Haha, I'll be sure to visit, for sure!" Gao Neng laughed awkwardly and bolted.

But after running for two hundred meters, he once again fell deep into thought.

'I have to wait two months to get into the Military University, and I still have to gather the energy materials myself... Am I going to be like Li Qingping and take several years to break through?'

'Money!'

Gao Neng once again felt the importance of money. 'This world is so harsh. Can't it just give a poor guy a break?'

'Besides, if I can't break through... it'll be hard to complete the fourth mission anytime soon.'

'Wait a minute.'

'Don't I have a piece of Mid-Grade Magnetic Crystal Ore?'

'The Melon Rind System appraised it at around 380,000 Alliance Coins, didn't it? If so, then I actually have 430,000, right?'

'But that's still not enough, is it?'

"Melon Rind System, are there any missions that pay money?" Gao Neng asked aloud.

There was no response.

'The Melon Rind System isn't giving out missions at a critical time like this?'

'Where should I go? Home... seems pointless. School's out. Should I find a place to practice with broadcast calisthenics? But I've already broken through the Fourth Human Limit. Can I really reach a fifth breakthrough just by doing those exercises?' Gao Neng shook his head, abandoning the idea of going home to do broadcast calisthenics.

'So boring.'

'Empty, lonely, cold...'

Gao Neng stuffed his hands in his pockets and wandered the streets with his head down. But soon, he remembered something. 'Didn't Chen Bai give me a phone number?'

'He said to call if I needed anything. A service for fifty thousand a pop!'

'Should I call and get the service once?'

"Fifty thousand per session... so expensive!" Gao Neng frowned. Still, he had a nagging feeling that there was something strange about this whole thing.

'If you told me Chen Bai was running some kind of... service... I wouldn't actually believe it.'

'I'll just give it a try!'

'Anyway, a phone call doesn't cost much. I'll see what kind of service it is first. If it's not worth it, I'll just hang up.'

After a moment's hesitation, Gao Neng took out his phone and dialed the number on the slip of paper.

The call connected quickly.

"You're up early... What do you want?" A languid female voice came from the other end.

Gao Neng jumped.

'Damn, it really is a woman?'

'What kind of person does that Lieutenant, Chen Bai, think I am?'

"What kind of services do you offer?" Gao Neng took a deep breath. Having knocked around the Forgotten Land, even if he hadn't experienced **this** personally, he wasn't so nervous that he couldn't speak.

"Services?" The voice on the other end paused for a beat, but then seemed to understand. "Well, that depends on what kind of service you want. We're full-service here, we have everything!"

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP.

Gao Neng hung up immediately.

'What the hell!'

'It's actually a service line?'

'That old pervert, Chen Bai!'

'I'm definitely going to find a chance to report him. I'll report him to Shen Ning'Er...'

'Wait!'

'That voice... sounds a little familiar, doesn't it?'

'It sounds like...'

'Shen Ning'Er!'

...

On the other end of the line.

Shen Ning'Er stared at the disconnected call on her phone and doubled over with laughter, her fair face flushed a lovely pink, as vibrant as a spring breeze.

Then, the phone rang again.

Shen Ning'Er immediately composed herself and answered the call.

"Have you decided what service you want?"

"Yes, I want the full package!" Gao Neng's voice quickly came through the phone.

"The full package? That's a bit pricey... It's at least fifty thousand per session!" Shen Ning'Er said, struggling to stifle her laughter.

"Deal!" Gao Neng replied readily.

"Alright. A car will be at your house to pick you up in thirty minutes. But you'd better give your family a heads-up. You might not be able to come back for a while. That's all." After saying her piece, Shen Ning'Er hung up without giving Gao Neng a chance to reply.

'Fifty thousand? Is it possible Shen Ning'Er is just messing with me?' Gao Neng hesitated. He had a feeling this wouldn't be so straightforward, but he couldn't put his finger on what was wrong.

'Forget it!'

'In for a penny, in for a pound!'

'Anyway, this fifty thousand came from Shen Ning'Er in the first place. If I lose it, I lose it. I'll take the gamble. Maybe I'll even break through?'

Chapter 98: Collision of the Transaction

Gao Neng didn't go straight home. Instead, he first went to find Xu Zilan at her workplace and briefly told her he had to go on a trip.

His excuse was that he was going traveling with some classmates.

Xu Zilan didn't ask too many questions, only reminding him to be careful.

When he got back home, the car meant to pick him up hadn't arrived yet. Gao Xiaomeng was still in bed, looking drowsy and half-asleep.

Gao Neng nudged Gao Xiaomeng a few times.

"What do you want?" Gao Xiaomeng glanced at Gao Neng lazily.

"I'm going to be away for a while. I need you to help look after my mom. If anything happens to her, I swear I won't let you off easy. Got it?" Gao Neng said, his tone completely serious.

"Oh... got it." Surprisingly, Gao Xiaomeng didn't argue. She just closed her eyes and went back to sleep. It seemed the toll from that other day had been severe indeed.

Gao Neng furrowed his brows.

He felt Gao Xiaomeng had been a bit strange for the past couple of days. He'd honestly feel more relieved if she had jumped up to start a fight, he had pinned her down and given her a sound thrashing, and she had finally been forced to submit. That he would have found reassuring.

But this current behavior...

'Forget it!'

All he could do now was hope Gao Xiaomeng would be reliable for once.

Gao Neng didn't dwell on it, because he could already hear a car pulling up to the door.

As expected, the person who came to pick him up was Chen Bai.

Gao Neng quickly packed a few things and got in the car.

Chen Bai didn't waste words, either. He floored it, and about half an hour later, they arrived at their destination: the very same military training base Gao Neng had been to for his college entrance exam.

"This place again?" Gao Neng wasn't actually surprised, but he feigned it anyway.

"Where else would it be? A hotel?" Chen Bai tilted his head back, Gao Neng's reaction finally allowing him to reclaim a sliver of confidence.

"Heh heh." Gao Neng gave a dry laugh.

Once Chen Bai found his confidence, his attitude warmed up a bit. At least he was no longer wearing that dead-fish expression, instead making some small talk with Gao Neng about whether he'd gotten his family affairs in order.

Soon, under Chen Bai's lead, Gao Neng met Shen Ning'Er.

Shen Ning'Er seemed to have just finished training. Her workout clothes were covered in a fine sheen of sweat, her face was flushed, and she exuded a vibrant, youthful energy.

A daring thought popped into Gao Neng's head.

However, when his gaze unintentionally swept over the numbers on a nearby training machine, he temporarily shelved that thought.

'Shen Ning'Er is doing this on purpose, isn't she?'

'What a coincidence, for her to be in the middle of physical training right when I arrive.'

"Where's the money?" Shen Ning'Er was remarkably direct. Her very first words were about payment.

"Pay up before the service has even started?" Gao Neng was cautious. He always felt like he was one misstep away from falling into a trap when dealing with Shen Ning'Er.

"No money, no service," Shen Ning'Er continued, wiping the sweat from her face with a towel.

"Can you really help me break through?" Gao Neng stopped beating around the bush.

"I can," Shen Ning'Er affirmed.

"Then... fine." Gao Neng gritted his teeth. Since he had a definite answer, spending fifty thousand Alliance Coins was still worth it.

Gao Neng quickly took out the money.

Chen Bai took the money and walked right out, closing the door behind him.

This made Gao Neng's heart tighten. He had a feeling... he'd just walked into a trap. He just couldn't figure out what kind of trap it was yet.

"So, can I start my breakthrough now...? Where's the isolation pod? Are all the energy materials ready?" Gao Neng asked again.

"I had everything prepared before you even arrived. I'm going to take a shower first. There's a contract on the table. Take a look, and if there are no problems, sign it." After saying this, Shen Ning'Er walked into the shower room.

"A contract? What contract...?" Gao Neng glanced at the table. There really was a contract there.

After a moment's hesitation, Gao Neng picked up the contract and took a look.

That one look...

...was all it took for his world to turn dark.

Because, at the very top of the contract, were written two words...

Slave Contract!

A literal Slave Contract!

Shen Ning'Er didn't even bother to hide her nefarious intentions, brazenly writing those two words right on the contract, which was followed by a long string of clauses.

The part that made Gao Neng want to curse the most was a number also indicated on it.

Two million Alliance Coins!

This was the price for selling himself...

'Freaking hell, am I only worth two million Alliance Coins?'

Wait.

'The key question is, why would I sign this kind of unequal treaty?'

"I'm not signing!" Gao Neng yelled. He had to protest. This was fraud! This was coercion! He, Gao Neng, was not that kind of person. He wouldn't sign it even if it killed him.

"Then I'll have Chen Bai escort you back," Shen Ning'Er's voice came from the shower room.

"Fine! Give me back my fifty thousand Alliance Coins!"

CREAK.

The sound of water stopped.

Soon, Shen Ning'Er walked out of the shower room, changed. Her hair was still dripping wet, and she was once again wearing a black military uniform.

"The full service has already been rendered. How can I give a refund?" Shen Ning'Er smiled and sat down on the sofa.

"What 'full service'? When did I ever receive any service!" Gao Neng was furious.

"I gave you a chance just now. A man and a woman, alone in a room. Then, an eighteen-year-old girl takes a shower right in front of you. The invitation couldn't have been more obvious, could it? You're the one who didn't come in. Is that my fault?" Shen Ning'Er said with a perfectly calm expression.

"..." Gao Neng was speechless.

'That counts?'

'So, I should have just boldly rushed in? And gotten you pregnant so you'd be taking maternity leave next year?'

'Bullshit!'

'You freaking showed off your physical training right in front of me. How could I possibly dare to rush in?!'

"Alright, the service has been rendered. Let's formally discuss the contract now," Shen Ning'Er said with a faint smile.

"There's nothing to discuss. I'm not signing!" Gao Neng wasn't falling for it.

"Really not signing?"

"Not signing!"

"Alright then. We'll switch to a different contract." As she spoke, Shen Ning'Er quickly pulled a second contract from under the table and tossed it in front of Gao Neng.

"..." Gao Neng was stunned speechless for a moment.

'You can do that?'

He thought Shen Ning'Er would definitely play hardball and threaten him by having Chen Bai send him away, or at least try to persuade him. He never expected her to just switch out the contract.

After being stunned for two seconds, Gao Neng once again picked up the contract on the table.

"Investment Proposal?"

"That's right. I, Shen Ning'Er, will personally invest two million in you to buy fifty-one percent of your shares. I can demand dividends from you every year," Shen Ning'Er explained casually.

"How is that any different from the slave contract?" Gao Neng was at a loss for words.

"Of course there's a difference. One is selling your body, the other is an investment. They're very different."

"What if I don't choose either?"

"Then I have a third contract here. A one-time buyout contract. Want to see it?" After saying this, Shen Ning'Er fished out yet another contract from the table.

Gao Neng didn't even look this time.

'Only an idiot would sign any of these contracts.'

"Still not signing?" Shen Ning'Er asked again.

"Not signing!" Gao Neng refused sternly.

"Then you tell me, why should I spend two million Alliance Coins on you to help you break through? If I'm spending this money, I should get some benefit out of it, right?" Shen Ning'Er took a sip of tea, seeming completely unsurprised.

"Two million? Wasn't it five hundred thousand?"

"Did Li Qingping tell you that?"

"Yes!"

"The price he quoted doesn't apply to you. Generally speaking, for one Human Limit breakthrough, the body can absorb about five hundred thousand worth of energy materials. For two, it can reach a million. For three, one and a half million. You can do the math for four," Shen Ning'Er explained.

"There's a rule like that? I don't believe it!" Gao Neng, naturally, was unconvinced.

"Believe it or not, it's up to you. You can calculate the time yourself. Someone breaking through one Human Limit stays in the isolation pod for about a week, while someone with the Fourth Human Limit will basically stay for about a month.

Besides, the higher one's hidden talents, the greater the need for energy materials. Do you think the consumption for both would be the same?"

"The higher the hidden talents, the greater the need for energy materials?" Gao Neng quickly latched onto the key point.

"Of course. If I remember correctly, you have eight hidden talents above 80%, right? So, two million can only be considered the cost price. Therefore, you have to at least give me a reason to invest in you, don't you?"

"Any reason will do?"

"Yes, any reason will do!" Shen Ning'Er nodded.

"..." Gao Neng didn't speak immediately. Instead, he subconsciously glanced at his own hidden talents.

Hidden Talents: Iron 100%, Copper 100%, Tin 100%, Silver 100%, Gold 100%, Phosphorus 100%, Sulfur 100%, Silicon 100%...

'Just how much in energy materials will this take?'

'If Shen Ning'Er is telling the truth, then for me to successfully break through, the cost of the energy materials will be astronomical!'

'Am I really going to sign a slave contract?'

'Impossible. How can a dignified man sell himself?'

'Absolutely not signing!'

"Have you thought of anything? You have a total of three chances to persuade me. If all three fail, then besides signing a contract, I really can't think of any other way," Shen Ning'Er made no effort to hide her scheming, her smile exceptionally brilliant as she looked at Gao Neng.

Gao Neng took a serious look at Shen Ning'Er.

His subconscious told him not to believe Shen Ning'Er's nonsense. This whole story about astronomical energy material consumption was probably just something she made up.

But for some reason...

He also felt that Shen Ning'Er wasn't lying.

So, that brought up the question.

What kind of reason could possibly convince Shen Ning'Er to spare no expense and invest an astronomical sum in materials for him?

"I'm handsome. Does that count as a reason?" Gao Neng gritted his teeth and threw a Hail Mary.

"It counts, but that reason only works under the condition that you belong to me. So, if you sign the slave contract, that reason becomes valid," Shen Ning'Er nodded very seriously.

"..." Gao Neng was speechless.

'She kind of has a point!'

'But aren't we just back where we started?'

"You still have two more chances, you know. I, Shen Ning'Er, have always been fair and just. As long as you can truly convince me, I will definitely help you break through, and I won't even charge you a single cent, you know." Shen Ning'Er leaned back leisurely on the sofa, looking completely confident.

(It's the last day of 2018! Here's one more Chapter for you all. Wishing everyone a Happy New Year in advance!)

Chapter 99: I Am the Truly Invincible

Gao Neng looked at Shen Ning'Er and couldn't help but fall into deep thought.

'If an unanswerable reason like being handsome can't persuade her, what other reason could be more powerful?'

"Does saving your life count? Your life should be worth more than two million, right?" Gao Neng's eyes lit up. He felt that Shen Ning'Er couldn't possibly refute this reason.

As the saying goes, a drop of kindness should be repaid with a gushing spring.

Especially when it came to a life-saving benefactor.

'Right?'

"Hmm, that's a good reason. My life is certainly worth more than two million; my life is priceless. But since it's priceless, it can't be measured in money. So, if you insist on using that reason, I can consider having someone beat you half to death first, then stepping in to save you. That would make us even," Shen Ning'Er said, her smile growing more and more smug.

"That move... is so very Shen Ning'Er!" Gao Neng ground out through clenched teeth.

'She's just bullying me because she has the upper hand!'

'Who would even think of beating me half to death just to save me again?'

'I guess only a vixen like Shen Ning'Er could come up with something like that.'

"You have one last chance. If you choose to give up now, I can consider revising the investment agreement slightly. I'll only buy 49% of your shares, and you'll still be very free." While smiling, Shen Ning'Er pushed the contract toward Gao Neng again.

"No, I refuse!" Gao Neng didn't even have to think about it. 'I might sell my soul, but I'll never sell my body. Shen Ning'Er is obviously just trying to provoke me!'

Wait a minute.

'If the normal methods don't work...'

'...could I try to provoke Shen Ning'Er?'

'But Shen Ning'Er isn't easy to provoke, is she?'

Gao Neng truly felt it would be difficult. Shen Ning'Er's intelligence was too high, at least not much lower than his own. When dealing with someone like her, the slightest misstep would land him in a trap.

'What should I do?'

'I only have one last chance. No more stalling. I have to nail it on the first try!'

Gao Neng's brow furrowed tightly.

Shen Ning'Er, however, had no intention of disturbing Gao Neng. She casually sipped her tea, but the smile on her lips grew ever more brilliant and radiant.

It was a powerful confidence that radiated from within.

The confidence of having everything under control!

As Gao Neng watched Shen Ning'Er's confident expression, his mission suddenly flashed through his mind.

'The man who controls the whole situation!'

'That's right. I'm the one who's supposed to be in control here.'

'Could it be... the system's mission is for me to convince Shen Ning'Er?!' At this thought, Gao Neng subconsciously glanced at the mission description.

"Mission Description: You are the man who controls the whole situation. A simple increase in physical fitness can no longer satisfy your needs. You must control more, enhance your strength, and make the world tremble before you. Remember, you have to grasp with both hands, and both hands must be firm!"

"Grasp with both hands, and both hands must be firm?" Gao Neng's gaze slowly drifted downward, landing on Shen Ning'Er's perfect figure, outlined by her black military uniform.

"..."

'What am I thinking!'

'If I actually pounced on her, I'd probably be beaten to death!'

Gao Neng averted his gaze and fell into thought once more. He felt the meaning of "grasp with both hands, and both hands must be firm" couldn't be that shallow.

'Grasp with both hands? And they have to be firm...'

'Does it mean I should take two paths?'

'Or maybe two ways of thinking? That I should consider the problem from another angle?'

'Another angle?'

'Does it want me to consider the problem from Shen Ning'Er's perspective?'

Wait!

'I think I get it now!'

SWOOSH!

In a single stride, Gao Neng was in front of Shen Ning'Er. Then, under her watchful gaze, he ripped the contracts on the table to shreds.

"Oh? Are you giving up on your breakthrough?" Shen Ning'Er showed no sign of stopping him.

"Give up? The strong don't know the meaning of giving up! Besides, I don't need to give up, because you will definitely help me break through. Therefore, these contracts no longer have any value." Gao Neng casually tossed the shredded contracts in front of Shen Ning'Er.

"And your reason?" Shen Ning'Er picked up her cup again and took a sip of tea.

"Don't you want to see how strong I'll be after I break through?" A smile touched the corner of Gao Neng's mouth. "Or should I say, don't you want to see if I'll be stronger than you after I break through?"

"Stronger than me? Is that even possible?" Shen Ning'Er was extremely confident.

"A person who grew up in the Forgotten Land managed to achieve the Fourth Human Limit. Is that possible? And I haven't just broken through the Fourth Human Limit; I also have eight hidden talents over 80%. Is something like that possible?" Gao Neng chose to be forceful, his voice naturally rising.

"And what does that prove?" Shen Ning'Er's tone was still calm, but she didn't take another sip of tea. Instead, she looked at Gao Neng seriously.

"If talent isn't enough to explain everything, what about the time I knocked you out at the Dream Toy Factory? If that hadn't actually happened, would you have thought it possible?" Seeing her reaction, Gao Neng understood.

His guess was right.

Shen Ning'Er was incredibly confident. This confidence was deep-rooted, truly coming from her heart, and it kept her in a constant state of "invincibility."

The strong are invincible!

This wasn't some kind of arrogant, blind confidence.

It was real, genuine power!

Because only someone who had killed countless enemies, dominated their peers, defeated everyone their age, and rarely met a worthy opponent could possess this kind of confidence.

An eighteen-year-old Alliance Major... how could Shen Ning'Er not be confident?

This confidence kept Shen Ning'Er's aura at its peak, allowing her to easily reach her own limits and even kill opponents who surpassed her in rank.

But there are two sides to every coin.

Just as a classic song from the pre-Cataclysm world sang, being invincible is also a kind of loneliness.

Shen Ning'Er's invincibility made her heart yearn for a rival—an opponent who could make her feel even a sliver of a threat, or who might possibly defeat her.

And what Gao Neng needed to do now was...

...make Shen Ning'Er believe in that possibility!

"Nothing is impossible! It's like how I killed a Dark Elf and defeated Lieutenant Chen on the battlefield. If I told people these things, would anyone believe it? No! But they are all facts!" Gao Neng's voice grew more and more impassioned.

"Aren't you a genius, Shen Ning'Er?"

But does your genius have nothing to do with your background?! If you were placed in the Forgotten Land, could you have broken through the Fourth Human Limit by the age of eighteen?

Or, could you have achieved the rank of Major by eighteen? Could you still stand there and claim to be unrivaled?!"

"So, you think you can defeat me?" Shen Ning'Er's gaze finally sharpened.

"Hmph, I only can't beat you *now*. But what about after I break through? A genius from the Forgotten Land isn't necessarily worse than a super genius from the City of Hope. If one year isn't enough, then it'll be two. In three years at most, I, Gao Neng, will defeat you, Shen Ning'Er, fair and square!" Gao Neng declared with certainty.

"Defeat me in three years? Hahaha... What gives you that confidence? Just because you broke through the Fourth Human Limit?!" Upon hearing this, the aura around Shen Ning'Er suddenly changed. "Gao Neng, I might as well tell you, I also broke through the fourth limit. And I have ten hidden talents over 80%, eight of which are over 90%!

Most importantly, my brain development is at 100%. This means my control over my body is stronger than anyone else's. I can exert 150% of my own strength. On top of that, I possess Spiritual Power that is impossible for others of my rank to have. I am destined to become the Alliance's War God!

You want to defeat me? On what grounds do you think you can defeat me?!"

"On what grounds?! On the grounds that I have Spiritual Power too!!! Your brain development is 100%? Let me tell you, my bone marrow, muscles, and blood have all reached grand completion! My control over my body is even stronger than yours! I can exert 200% of my own strength! I'm the one who's truly invincible!" Gao Neng didn't back down an inch, unleashing his Spiritual Power.

'So we're just bragging now?'

'In that department, he, Gao Neng, considered himself second to none!'

Besides, when it came to confidence, he was in no way inferior to Shen Ning'Er. Because his talent was 100% maxed out. Once he broke through and became an Energy Warrior, who in this world could possibly stand against him?!

(Gao Neng: Going on sale at midnight! To all my brothers and sisters, please contribute to the rise of Chinese culture! Because only your subscriptions can support a great and handsome author to go further and further on the path of literary creation!)

Chapter 100: Became a "Prospective Son-in-Law

"You can be more invincible than me?!" Shen Ning'Er leaned forward.

"I **am** invincible!" Gao Neng didn't back down, meeting her challenge head-on.

"..."

Time seemed to stop in that moment.

The auras of both were incredibly powerful, clashing head-on.

Their Spiritual Power collided in the air. Unconsciously, their bodies drew closer and closer, until their faces were nearly touching.

"You really do have Spiritual Power! I sensed it back at the underground factory, but I couldn't confirm it!" Shen Ning'Er's eyes were bright.

"Well, now you've confirmed it! I can release my Spiritual Power and perceive my surroundings with perfect clarity!" Gao Neng didn't hide it. The truth about his Spiritual Power was bound to come out sooner or later.

"Very well, then. I'll be waiting! You said it yourself: in three years, if you can't beat me, I'll beat you to death!"

"And what if I win?!"

"Then I, Shen Ning'Er, will give you a *real* full service package!" After saying her piece, she didn't spare Gao Neng another glance and walked straight out the door.

'A real full service package? Is she trying to latch onto me?' Gao Neng's expression was strange. 'If I'd known, I would have proposed a five-year plan. The odds would've been better.'

He didn't dwell on it, though.

'Who cares? We'll see in three years. Maybe in three years, I'll have become a War God myself.'

...

「At the military training base, in the physical aptitude training room.」

Shen Ning'Er stared intently at the training machine before her. Her aura was at its peak, Spiritual Power enveloping her fist, causing the very air around her to tremble.

BOOM!

She slammed a fist into the training machine.

The machine shuddered violently.

A terrifying number instantly appeared on its display.

Explosive Force: 20188

Standing guard behind Shen Ning'Er, Chen Bai's face went slack. He stared at the number on the training machine, momentarily stunned.

But he quickly recovered.

"Major, you... you had a breakthrough?!"

"Mm, go make the arrangements. Gao Neng is still waiting. I'll cover the cost of the energy materials for his breakthrough!" Shen Ning'Er nodded, retracting her externalized Spiritual Power.

"Yes, ma'am!" Chen Bai nodded and immediately withdrew.

Shen Ning'Er, however, threw another punch.

Another strike.

The number on the training machine refreshed.

Explosive Force: 20866

"Full mastery over marrow, muscle, and blood? Able to exert 200% of his strength? What a load of crap!" Shen Ning'Er gritted her teeth and threw another punch. "But the Spiritual Power is real, even if it's much weaker than mine... And

they did detect an unknown energy in his blood. Hmph! I'd like to see just how strong you can possibly be!"

...

「In the room.」

Gao Neng had no idea what was happening outside.

He was waiting.

He believed his reasoning had been enough to persuade Shen Ning'Er.

And as he expected, it wasn't long before Chen Bai appeared before him, though the look in the lieutenant's eyes was clearly a bit strange.

"What in the world did you do to Major Shen?" Chen Bai was truly shocked. He knew that Shen Ning'Er had been stuck at her current stage for some time.

But in just this short a time, Shen Ning'Er had actually achieved a breakthrough?

And most importantly, she had actually given Gao Neng the energy materials for his breakthrough. This was not at all in line with her usual way of doing things.

'What kind of dirty trick did this kid pull?'

"Nothing much. Just did her once," Gao Neng said with a nonchalant expression. 'I paid the 50,000 service fee. Can't exactly say I did nothing, right?'

'Would I even be a man then?'

A man's got to have some pride.

Gao Neng thought nothing of it.

But Chen Bai's eyes went wide. He truly wanted to slap Gao Neng to death.

'This guy's got some real nerve!'

'To openly slander Shen Ning'Er's reputation in front of an Alliance officer... Isn't he afraid that if someone overheard, he'd be beaten to death?'

"Ahem... Gao Neng, there's something I think I need to remind you about. Do you know Major Shen's true identity?" Chen Bai felt he really had to give Gao Neng a heads-up. Otherwise, if Gao Neng actually went to the City of Hope and started spouting this nonsense, getting beaten to death would be a light punishment.

"Sure I do. She's an Alliance Major." Of course Gao Neng knew that.

"Major Shen is more than just a simple Alliance Major... You... you really don't know that the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Military Department is also named Shen?" Chen Bai was a bit speechless.

"I know now. Is there a problem?" Gao Neng's face was calm.

"If you say there's no problem... then I guess there's no problem." Chen Bai froze, then immediately wanted to slap himself. 'Was I really just being nosy?'

'So this guy knew all along!'

'What a badass!'

'Wait a minute...'

'If this guy really knew Shen Ning'Er's identity, there's no way he'd dare to spout such nonsense. Which means... what he said just now might actually be true?!'

'This guy really... did *that* with Major Shen?'

'Holy shit!'

'Doesn't that mean this guy is basically a "Prince Consort-in-waiting"?!'

"Lieutenant Chen, if there are no other issues, can I go to the isolation pod for my breakthrough now?" Gao Neng prompted, seeing Chen Bai just standing there motionless.

"Ah? Of course! I'm here to take you for your breakthrough!" Chen Bai immediately snapped out of it, his tone unconsciously shifting to use a respectful form of address with Gao Neng.

'Huh? He's pretty sharp... Does he know I'll be invincible after my breakthrough, so this Chen fellow is trying to suck up to me in advance? Mm, not bad perception!' Gao Neng was slightly surprised, but quickly dismissed it.

His entire mind was now focused on his breakthrough.

In truth, he hadn't quite caught the full meaning of what Chen Bai had said earlier.

However, after Chen Bai led him out of the room and he felt a cool breeze, he suddenly felt that something about what Chen Bai said had been off.

'What did Chen Bai say just now?'

'The Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Military Department... is also named Shen?'

'What does that mean?'

'Why would Chen Bai deliberately remind me that the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Military Department is also named Shen?'

'Wait!'

'Deputy Commander-in-Chief!'

'Is Shen Ning'Er's father or grandfather the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Military Department?!

'Does it have to be so dramatic?'

'This is going to be the death of me...'

"Um... Lieutenant Chen, what I said earlier was just a joke, you believe me, right?" Gao Neng wasn't a coward; he just believed a man should know when to stand firm and when to yield.

"What words?" Chen Bai was a perceptive man and instantly understood Gao Neng's meaning. "Don't worry, I didn't hear a thing!"

"..." Gao Neng was speechless.

'This Chen Bai... he didn't actually believe me, did he?'

'What is he thinking!'

'It was only ten or twenty minutes. That's not nearly enough time! After all, I'm someone who can use 'Lifeform Transformation'!'

Just as he was thinking this, Chen Bai had already led him to a room.

It was a room filled with all sorts of instruments and surveillance monitors of various sizes. In addition, inside a glass enclosure, there were five huge isolation pods.

The isolation pods were built in an oval shape, looking somewhat like eggs.

But they were much larger than eggs.

They were a full four meters tall and nearly three meters wide, with various metal pipes of unknown material running across them, in addition to some buttons.

This was Gao Neng's first time seeing an isolation pod. Curiosity and excitement drove all other thoughts from his mind.

Just then, a familiar figure appeared before Gao Neng. It was the same Dr. Lan that Shen Ning'Er had introduced him to earlier.

"Well now, it's Gao Neng, isn't it? We meet again!" Dr. Lan was very enthusiastic, her eyes constantly scanning Gao Neng up and down.

"..." Gao Neng immediately had that feeling of being seen right through again.

"Hello, Dr. Lan. I've brought Gao Neng for a physical examination. If there are no issues, he will enter an isolation pod to undergo his breakthrough!" Chen Bai seemed very respectful toward Dr. Lan.

"Excellent. In that case, let's just do the physical inside the isolation pod," Dr. Lan nodded, then walked right up to Gao Neng. "Take off your clothes."

"Take off my clothes?" Gao Neng was startled.

"Of course you have to take off your clothes. Do you need my help?" Dr. Lan said with a smile.

"Gao Neng, hurry up and get changed. You have to wear a special isolation suit to enter the pod. The changing room is right over there. We'll look after your clothes for you," Chen Bai explained.

"Understood." Gao Neng said no more and went into the adjacent changing room.

Inside were several sets of brand-new clothes.

They were made of a black material that felt very breathable to the touch. They looked similar to military uniforms, but there was no place to attach a rank insignia, and there wasn't a single piece of metal on the entire outfit.

Gao Neng found an isolation suit that fit, changed into it, and came back out.

The door to the glass enclosure was already open.

Chen Bai gestured for Gao Neng to follow him inside.

Gao Neng didn't hesitate much. Since he was already here, he figured he'd just let them take the lead. He followed Chen Bai's instructions and got into an isolation pod inside the glass enclosure.

Chen Bai then helped by pressing various buttons on the outside of the pod, after which the pod's glass door closed.

The world before Gao Neng's eyes instantly transformed into a starry sky.

The sky had a moon and stars, each one twinkling with brilliant light. It felt as if he were floating in outer space.

Most importantly, he couldn't hear a single sound.

Chen Bai had disappeared.

He couldn't hear any outside sounds at all.

'The soundproofing is really good.'

'From what Shen Ning'Er said, the breakthrough process is quite long. Breaking one human limit takes about a week, two takes two weeks, and four would take at least a month.'

'A whole month...'

'Half of my wonderful summer vacation will be gone just like that.'

'Wait.'

'Did I forget something?'

'If I have to stay in here for a month, how am I supposed to submit my college application?'

"Wait, I haven't submitted my college application yet! Chen Bai, are you out there? If you can hear me, let me out! I'll come back for the breakthrough after I submit my application! Hey! Hey! Hey!" Gao Neng frantically pounded on the isolation pod.

...

「Outside the glass enclosure.」

Chen Bai watched Gao Neng struggling inside the isolation pod. He couldn't understand what Gao Neng was trying to do, so he could only turn his gaze to Dr. Lan.

"Gao Neng's mood seems a bit off? He was fine just a moment ago. Should we open the pod?"

"This is normal. You can't hear outside sounds in the pod, you can only see the starry sky. Many people can't adapt right away and develop a sense of anxiety. We have a solution for this. A little jolt of electricity is all it takes." After speaking, Dr. Lan pressed a button in front of her marked with a lightning bolt symbol.

ZZZT!

A sound of electric current buzzed.

The inside of the isolation pod fell silent.

"See? All better now, right? Don't you worry. Leave everything to us. We're professionals!" Dr. Lan gave Chen Bai a slight smile.