

Full-Time Public Enemy

Chapter 16: Chapter 16 The Messy Old Man (Part 1)

Chen Gu was studying "Endless Realm." The game was highly playable. Although it revolved around war, it didn't force everyone to constantly battle. If you had other talents, you could take on other roles, like logistics, public relations, or transportation.

Upon entering the game, each player would receive an initial "private army" of 3,000 soldiers, usually of a single military branch.

This private army could suffer casualties in battle but could also earn promotions with increased battle experience.

If players wanted more soldiers or to develop a more comprehensive array of troop types, they could, of course, achieve this slowly through warfare. But... wasn't it tempting to just pay for an instant, massive upgrade?

Who could resist spending money to advance quickly instead of slowly leveling up on their own?

And "Endless Realm" had a special battlefield that was its biggest feature: the Endless Starfield.

When Chen Gu discovered the existence of the Endless Starfield, his heart tightened slightly. *Isn't this the Endless Realm itself?*

Just then, the small horn icon in the lower-left corner started jumping again, persistent. Chen Gu opened it. Another "friend request," this time from a player named [Adorning War Paint in the Mirror].

So annoying. Chen Gu casually declined and continued studying the game.

The adversaries in the Endless Starfield were various entities from the Endless Realm: Morphfiends, Anomalies, Sinspawn, and Evil Gods. Their abilities and danger levels were ranked from low to high.

Only players could enter the Endless Starfield; their private armies couldn't join the battles there. "Endless Realm" held an annual server-wide account ranking, and battle results from the Endless Starfield contributed a whopping 65% to this ranking!

The game operators are encouraging all players to participate in the Endless Starfield battles as much as possible, Chen Gu speculated. Why is that? To nurture and select individuals with potential as Professionals?

The little horn icon popped up again, this time with even more vigor, practically bouncing with enthusiasm.

Chen Gu opened it. Another series of over twenty requests from [Adorning War Paint in the Mirror].

Get lost!

Chen Gu rejected them without hesitation. He had almost finished researching the Endless Starfield and wanted to check it out, but discovered his player level was still too low!

Aren't I an honored player? Why so many restrictions? This game... these mechanics are so unreasonable!

Chen Gu muttered a complaint and delved into the "Endless Realm" leveling system. He then realized the battle between him and Zhao Zhenhuai had been categorized as a practice challenge, which awarded no experience points. [Idol Actor] was still a pitiful, level-zero newbie.

The rank required to enter the Endless Starfield was "Sergeant."

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Bai Xianya was fuming. *Rejected again?!*

The total number of rejections she had faced in her entire life didn't add up to today's count. She was a girl with a secret technique: a slight pout of her lips and a widening of her big, innocent eyes were usually enough to make anyone incapable of refusing her.

But [Idol Actor] wasn't giving her any chance to even show her face, let alone use her technique.

Absurd!

Bai Yunpeng chuckled. "Our little princess's charm isn't working, huh? Here, give me the account. For this kind of thing, it's all about the execution."

Bai Xianya, still fuming, handed her account to her uncle. As Bai Yunpeng began to work his magic, her eyelids twitched, and she reached out to snatch the account back. "Uncle, you can't do this! My lifelong reputation..."

In an instant, Bai Yunpeng had changed her game name to [Idol Actor's Number One Fangirl]!

Bai Xianya wanted to delete her account on the spot. *What kind of awful name is this? So embarrassing!*

Bai Yunpeng glared at her. "Just watch, it'll definitely go through. Back in the day, I used to conquer 'Endless Realm' with moves like this. Thanks to my super skills, I befriended many different types of female players..."

"Hello, Auntie..."

Bai Yunpeng hastily returned the account. "Here, take it, take it! Always tattling. Later, I'll tell your dad I know several fine young men who are perfect matches for you. I'll arrange four blind dates for you every weekend!"

"I—I'll go cry to Grandpa!"

Bai Yunpeng was completely out of options. When Bai Xianya got her account back, she saw her uncle had already sent seven or eight friend requests with messages like:

"Boss, please approve! I won't be clingy."

"Sweet-voiced, gentle little fangirl here, please open the door."

"I'll join your battles, chat, help you rank up, and even give shoulder and leg massages—full service!"

"Thirty hot private pics in exchange for approval..."

Bai Xianya looked like she was about to explode. She glared fiercely at her uncle. Bai Yunpeng gave a sheepish smile. "It's sure to work..."

Before he could finish, a series of DINGS sounded from the game as all the friend requests were rejected with a single click!

"Ahem..." Bai Yunpeng was puzzled. *This doesn't make sense. Could [Idol Actor] be gay?*

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Chen Gu rejected them all with a single click, sneering. *A "little fangirl," huh? More like some gross old dude. Such a low-level trick.*

Then Chen Gu entered a battlefield. The system automatically matched him with an opponent: a sergeant named [Silentwood]. Private army of 9,000, well-structured troop deployment, and excellent equipment—Emperor Chen could tell at a glance this was a pay-to-win player.

As soon as their armies entered the battlefield, Chen Gu realized his chat system had exploded.

Lines of flashing text scrolled rapidly across the battlefield sky. Before one sentence could fade, the next was already surging forth:

"It's really [Idol Actor]! Oh my god, oh my god, I'm gonna die! Honey, come look, I'm battling [Idol Actor]!"

"Hahaha, I'm recording this battle! I can brag about this fight for the rest of my life!"

"Idol, please go easy on me, okay? I spent a ton of Starshields to reach Sergeant..."

"Can I be your disciple? I want to learn strategic command from you!"

"Name your price!"

"Ahhh, I don't mean any disrespect, please don't misunderstand! I'm just too excited..."

"Master, can we be friends?"

"I can introduce you to pretty girls! If you're not into those, I know plenty of cute guys too. And if you don't mind an old timer like me, well, I'm also available... *blush*..."

Chen Gu didn't respond. He marshaled his troops and, in just two minutes, used the "Pillar Shatters" tactic to eliminate the enemy commander and secure victory.

Before exiting the battlefield, [Silentwood] yelled one last time, "Such awesome tactics! Such brutal moves! I love it, I love it!"

Chen Gu glanced at his rank. The battle concluded, experience was tallied, and sure enough, he had been promoted to Lance Corporal.

The little horn icon in the bottom-left corner was still bouncing persistently. Chen Gu was genuinely annoyed now, ready to blacklist the guy.

But when he opened it, the friend request was from [Silentwood]. This guy seemed a bit flaky, but his message was dead serious: "Master, add me as a friend. I've got connections; we can make money together in the game."

Chen Gu was a proud man, with a billion to his name, but being a Professional was resource-intensive; he couldn't just sit back and deplete his fortune. So, he chose to accept.

Sure enough, right after that friend request, there was another.

[Adorning War Paint in the Mirror]—the name had been changed back.

Bai Xianya made one last attempt, though without much hope, simply messaging, "Please approve. I have important matters to discuss."

After being thoroughly pranked by her own uncle, Bai Xianya was ready to delete her account and start over.

Chapter 17: Chapter 17 The Messy Old Man (Part 2)

When Chen Gu saw "Important Matters to Discuss," he subconsciously thought, *There's money to be made*, and thus accepted the request without much thought, knowing that if it was a scam, he would just delete it.

As Bai Xianya heard the pleasant DING-DONG sound from the game, blue glowing text flashed: [Idol Actor] has accepted your friend request. She rubbed her eyes vigorously, thinking she had misread it.

Did he really accept it?!

But Bai Xianya calmed down. This was a basic quality an excellent staff officer should possess—to remain calm, especially at critical moments.

She analyzed seriously why her request had been accepted this time.

She determined that [Idol Actor] probably hadn't seen the requests sent before this login. He had likely rejected them en masse along with the multitude of other friend requests.

From this behavior, it could be inferred that this [Idol Actor] was a person who seemed affable on the outside but was actually hard to approach. This matched the previous judgment she and her uncle had made: he was either a tactically astute but perpetually frustrated old man or a deeply hidden professional.

Both types of people possessed extremely proud hearts, which was why they exhibited such characteristics.

Bai Xianya abandoned the rational analysis of a staff officer and decided with a woman's intuition: *This must be a wily old man*.

Her uncle's previous attempts to "probe" the man had been ruthlessly rejected. In contrast, her own plain request was accepted. This indicated that the man disliked excessive formalities. So, she decided to get straight to the point.

"Hello, [Idol Actor]. I am from the General Staff of the Central Operations Room of the Confederation military."

He replied quickly, "How can you prove it?"

Bai Xianya replied calmly, "You can choose any military base, and I'll order them to conduct an exercise."

Chen Gu casually searched on the interstellar network and then replied to her, "[Delta III] planet, Ogu City, six fighter jets, and four large anti-air Mechas, within ten minutes."

Bai Xianya immediately agreed, "Okay."

An exercise of this scale didn't require a Marshal's authority; her own was sufficient for approval.

Then, Bai Xianya quickly issued another command: "AI, screen all suspicious targets around Ogu City matching the subject's profile."

BEEP. The AI began screening.

A few minutes later, Chen Gu watched a live stream where an announcer was saying, "Friends, don't miss today's match; it's definitely going to be thrilling, one of the top ten behemoth battles of the year..."

"The match starts in two hours, but let's take a look outside the arena first. Ogu City is one of the earliest human-developed colonial stars, with many points of interest. If you have time, you can come here for a visit..."

The live stream showed a massive metal arena in the background, with throngs of spectators arriving for the match. In the sky above, six large fighter jets streaked past, followed by four heavy aerial combat Mechas, their thrusters emitting a thunderous roar.

Chen Gu closed the live stream with a smile and then sent a message to Bai Xianya, "I saw it. Have you found me yet?"

Bai Xianya curled her lip. *He really was a crafty old man, seeing through my intentions at a glance.*

She didn't feel any sense of defeat. He was a master tactician; if he couldn't see through such a minor ploy, that would have been the real issue.

"Do you believe me now?"

"I believe."

"On behalf of the Central Operations Room, I hope to collaborate with you. We know you are willing to contribute to the entire human race and have demonstrated the

'Skypillar Tilt Tactic' against the Alien Insect Race. However, there are still many issues, and we need your guidance."

Chen Gu was stunned. *Alien Insect Race? What's that got to do with me? I just wanted to put Zhao Zhenhuai in his place. But since you all think my actions are "highly meaningful," then... I might as well establish the persona of this wise and profound grandmaster.*

"What do you want from me?"

Bai Xianya continued, "We want to set up a research institute dedicated to studying various tactics against the Alien Insect Race. The first project is to thoroughly perfect the Skypillar Tilt Tactic, and we hope you can lead this research institute."

"Please rest assured, regardless of your past experiences, the Central Operations Room's offer is made with utmost sincerity."

Chen Gu, in his gaming pod, touched his chin, nearly unable to resist asking directly, "What kind of offer?" *Good thing he stopped himself in time. No, I'm supposed to be playing a "wise and profound" old enigma right now; being overtly interested in money doesn't fit the persona.*

"I can't show up in person. Give me some time to think about it."

"Alright, how long do you need to consider..." Bai Xianya hadn't finished speaking when the other party's avatar went dark.

BANG! Bai Xianya smacked the table forcefully, grinding her teeth and cursing, "That insufferable old man, utterly graceless!" Still, the mission was finally making progress, so she was reasonably satisfied. Then she remembered how her uncle's prank had nearly made her explode with anger, and a mischievous, fox-like grin touched her lips.

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Bai Yunpeng suddenly received a phone call. He picked it up respectfully and dutifully, "Dad."

The old man's tone was none too pleasant, "Get your ass back here right now!"

Bai Yunpeng's face immediately fell. "That girl... she really holds a grudge. Her uncle was just joking..."

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In the Principal's office of Lubei Middle School, a small meeting was being held.

The Dean of Studies sternly denounced Chen Gu. "Such a student is a blight on our school! He's rough, barbaric, and utterly uncultured. We must enforce school rules and discipline, expel him immediately, and report this to other schools!"

Teacher Dai glared indignantly at the Dean of Studies. *Not only expel the student but also get other schools to reject him? Is this something a teacher should even do?*

"Let's not even talk about this incident,' Teacher Dai argued. 'In the first place, Chen Gu did nothing wrong. It was a sparring exchange, and Chen Gu had never participated in such an event before. He didn't know his own strength. How can we blame him if his opponent got hurt while wearing protective gear?'"

"And even if he was at fault, we are teachers! What are teachers for? Isn't it our duty to point out when students make mistakes and guide them onto the correct path?"

"You talk about expulsion and notifying other schools so casually! You would ruin a student's life, forcing him out into society where he might eventually turn to crime and never become a good person."

"I don't care about any of that,' the Dean of Studies retorted curtly. 'I only know that if this student isn't punished, I won't be able to enforce school regulations with the other students!'"

Teacher Dai pressed, exasperated, "Which school rule did he violate?"

The Dean of Studies didn't argue further and turned to the Principal. "If this student isn't punished, then I can't continue as Dean of Studies!"

The old Principal, a man in his sixties with graying hair, looked somewhat weary. He had been dozing in his office chair during the meeting. Startled by the question, he jerked his head up, rubbed his eyes, and yawned. His gaze swept around the room before landing on an elderly teacher who had been sitting quietly to one side throughout the meeting.

"Mr. Xu, what are your thoughts?' he asked, deftly passing the buck.

Chapter 18: Chapter 18: Preliminary Training Phase Two

The tactical class instructor, Mr. Xu, was actually qualified to attend such a meeting.

Mr. Xu was still dressed in his coarse tweed suit, the image of an old gentleman, but when he spoke, he lacked any semblance of grace. "A bunch of idiots! Babbling on and on without touching on the crux of the matter."

Teacher Dai did not lose his temper, and the Head of Education was scolded along with him, yet they dared not speak out. Mr. Xu had a special status. Even the principal

handled buck-passing skillfully, knowing that those without "real power" couldn't bear such heavy responsibility.

Mr. Xu paid no mind to others' feelings, leisurely packed his tobacco pipe, lit it, and began to smoke. The Head of Education coughed repeatedly to show his discontent but dared not stop him.

"Did all of you watch the video of the combat exchange?" Mr. Xu finally said. "Chen Gu overwhelmed Zhao Junzhi in a messy brawl. Even if the school's protective gear is substandard, you can see how strong Chen Gu is!

"This is a fine seedling who should be nurtured carefully. With dedicated cultivation, our school could produce a top scorer admitted to the Tiangong Military Division next year!"

The principal's eyes lit up. "Mr. Xu is right! You truly live up to your reputation as a venerable senior enjoying special allowances from the Ministry of Education, seeing right through to the essence of the problem..."

Mr. Xu ignored his colorful flattery, took his pipe, and rose to leave. The Head of Education, having just stood up to argue with Teacher Dai, happened to be between Mr. Xu and the door. Mr. Xu unceremoniously blew a puff of smoke at him. "Out of my way!"

The Head of Education pinched his nose and stepped aside.

The "disciplinary meeting" thus concluded anticlimactically. After exiting, the Head of Education thought for a moment and sent a message to Zhao Zhenhuai with only eight characters: Tried my utmost, to no avail.

Zhao Zhenhuai glanced at it and closed it without reaction. *He had already expected this outcome. The Lightning version of the Xuanwu III had already indicated Chen Gu's background was not simple.*

Zhao Zhenhuai had originally planned to have his friends at the police station "visit" Chen Gu and give him a warning under the guise of an investigation. But now, it seemed such petty tactics were completely unnecessary and would only be embarrassing.

The aide-de-camp rushed in, his expression inexplicably excited. "Colonel, guess what I just found?"

Zhao Zhenhuai rubbed his temples. "I hope it's good news."

"Take a look." The aide-de-camp proudly displayed a series of documents before Zhao Zhenhuai. Upon seeing them, the colonel couldn't help but show surprise, then laughed strangely. "So it was Chen Jieye's father, hahaha!"

The aide-de-camp added, "We could leak his identity. Although Chen Gu's sentence has been served, this matter from forty years ago could still ruin his reputation, and it would greatly implicate Chen Jieye!"

However, Zhao Zhenhuai pondered for a moment, then wagged his finger at his aide-de-camp. "That's not wise. If it weren't for the previous... 'Infernal' incident, Chen Jieye would be far behind me, and we could certainly kick him while he's down.

"But now, our situation isn't too good either. If we release this news at this time, our superiors will definitely know I did it, and they don't approve of such tactics involving family members."

The aide-de-camp stiffened. *Everyone had family, and those above enjoyed watching their subordinates compete to determine the most capable. But such tactics were indeed foolish and would lose points.*

The aide-de-camp quickly apologized. "I got too carried away. Then... Colonel, how should we best utilize this weapon?"

Zhao Zhenhuai smiled inscrutably. "Think of a way to leak this through some channel not obviously connected to us. Get the news to Valkyrie Aviloya."

The aide-de-camp caught on, his thumb shooting up in praise. "Brilliant, truly brilliant!" After saying this, he practically swelled with pride, as if he'd gained thirty pounds and suddenly become fluent in some obscure foreign tongue.

He immediately said, "Rest assured, Colonel, I'll get right on it."

The aide-de-camp left. Zhao Zhenhuai no longer bothered with Chen Gu. *After all, it was just kids' stuff.* His eyebrows then furrowed gradually as he began to worry about himself.

Heartless 'Idol Actor'! Zhao Zhenhuai cursed inwardly. *If it weren't for that bastard, his situation would be very favorable. How could he have ended up in such a predicament?*

Zhao Zhenhuai had already received news that the decision had effectively been made to give up on both him and Chen Jieye, transferring them to local government positions.

"SIGH..." Zhao Zhenhuai heaved a sigh. *This was the reality in the military. The status of soldiers had greatly improved, attracting many talented individuals to enlist. Military academies, both large and small, were popular choices in the college entrance exams every year, and the Tiangong Military Division was the institution with the highest admission scores in the entire Confederation. New, outstanding talents were constantly emerging. If Zhao Zhenhuai and Chen Jieye couldn't satisfy their superiors, they would naturally be replaced by these up-and-coming geniuses. But civilian positions also*

varied greatly. This time, it was truly a choice that would decide the rest of his life. He had to strategize carefully!

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The next morning, Chen Gu proceeded with his usual pre-training as a Star Battle Instructor. The intense training over the past week had left him increasingly astonished by the physical capabilities of the original body; he had already completed the first phase of the entire pre-training program!

According to Griffin Wester's memories, the full pre-training was divided into three phases. After completing the first phase, one's physical capabilities would be triple that of an ordinary person!

In the history of the "Blue Blood Ruffian," its Star Battle Instructors typically completed this phase in a relatively short time, roughly between ten days and three weeks.

But such results were based on the extensive use of special medications.

Chen Gu had not only refrained from using any enhancement drugs but had also completed the phase in just over a week. From this point alone, his potential was higher than all the Star Battle Instructors of the "Blue Blood Ruffian."

This morning, Chen Gu began his second phase of training, which was more demanding and even more arduous. Yet, Chen Gu persevered, directly resulting in his food intake dramatically increasing—he was now eating double what he had before.

As Chen Gu ate, he began to doubt himself. Why am I improving so fast? Could it be that I'm naturally suited to become a Star Battle Instructor? Just charge ahead recklessly? Have I actually chosen the wrong profession? Am I best suited to be a stunt double? No, no! I am destined to become an award-winning actor! And since that's the case, I can portray a stunt double too. My logic is self-consistent, no problem there!

The bodyguards still drove the Lightning version of the Xuanwu III to pick up Chen Gu. On the way, the bodyguards were diligent and extremely alert. Chen Gu meditated in the car, contemplating matters related to Professionals.

As far as he could see, completing the pre-training wouldn't be difficult. The physical enhancement drugs he had searched for on the interstellar network might not even need to be purchased.

However, there was a major hurdle to becoming a Professional: the generator.

This device was crafted from the remains of super-lifeforms, using hyper-materials as catalysts, and each activation required nearly the entire electrical energy of a planet.

From the memories of Milna Katerina and Griffin Wester, such devices were exceedingly rare. Yet, if Chen Gu wanted to become a Professional, he had to enter a generator.

This gave Chen Gu a headache. What should he do? Where could he find a generator, and which organization would be willing to spend so much to cultivate him?

Chapter 19: Chapter 19 My Grandson is Quite Spirited

Should I ask that old fool Ossosa?

Legend had it that idiots were a type of psionic being, capable of mind-to-mind communication across vast distances like the Star Sea. Just as Chen Gu was thinking of Ossosa, he received a call from him.

"Are you free tonight? I want to take my wife and kids out for dinner with you."

Chen Gu agreed, feeling a bit of warmth in his heart.

After hanging up, his car arrived at the school gates. Chen Gu got out and entered Lubei Middle School. He had thought he would face some punishment from the school for injuring Zhao Junzhi, but to his surprise, everything was calm. Classes were proceeding as usual, and Mr. Dai, his homeroom teacher, hadn't come looking for him.

Even when he encountered the head of discipline, the man just pretended not to see him and walked away, head held high.

The last class of the morning was physics. After class, Mr. Dai called Chen Gu over. "Work hard; your future is in your own hands!"

Mr. Dai walked away enigmatically. With his hands behind his back and his head tilted slightly upwards at a forty-five-degree angle, he gazed at the sky, feeling increasingly like a distinguished teacher.

Chen Gu was utterly confused, but his stomach was loudly protesting, so he dashed to the cafeteria with lightning speed. This was already the fourth time in just over a week that Chen Gu had transferred money into his "meal card." While others topped it up once for three months' worth of meals, Chen Gu... couldn't make it last three days.

Chen Zili tiptoed around Chen Gu, the epitome of "as well-behaved as a grandson," which perfectly described him at that moment.

Fortunately, he noticed that his grandfather didn't seem to have the mind to bother with him. However, his observation led to a startling realization: *Good heavens, Grandpa, you eat way too much!*

Chen Gu understood the principle of keeping a low profile. Each time he went to a food stall, he only took about half more food than an average person, appearing merely as a young man with a large appetite.

However, Chen Zili noticed that he polished off his plate in nearly five minutes and then went back for another serving. By the time the other students were nearly finished eating and the cafeteria was about to stop serving, he went and polished off a full ten servings in one go!

This guy... he definitely can't be an ordinary person, Chen Zili muttered to himself.

Throughout the afternoon, Chen Zili was conflicted. *It looked like his own grandfather might be a powerful backer, but he was the one who had ruined his father's future. If I rush to cling to this 'thigh' now, will Father break my legs?*

He spent the whole afternoon preoccupied with "legs," his mind elsewhere. As a result, one of his lackeys quietly told him, "Brother Li, Liu Shichan is looking for you..."

Chen Zili blurted out, "Great legs..."

Liu Shichan and her group of close girlfriends' expressions all changed. Today, Liu Shichan was wearing her school uniform skirt, which showcased her impressively long, straight, and pale legs, with white knee-high socks adorning her calves.

She knew plenty of boys and girls were sneaking glances at her legs along the way, but Chen Zili was the first one bold enough to make such a lewd comment out loud.

Heh, we people of the martial world certainly admire someone as gutsy as you!

With a fake smile masking her displeasure, Liu Shichan said, "Classmate Chen Zili, I'm really looking forward to our next competitive exchange!"

Then she spun around forcefully and stormed off, so angry she forgot her original reason for finding Chen Zili.

Chen Zili stood there, stunned. After a moment, he let out a wail: *Grandpa, you've doomed me!*

His lackeys looked at him with genuine admiration. "Brother Li is a real man! He even dares to tease Big Sis Liu!"

Dull thudding sounds came from the side. Looking closely, Chen Zili was banging his head against a concrete pillar.

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During the afternoon physical arts class, after Teacher Zhou led everyone on a warm-up run, she assigned individual training tasks. Then, she abruptly pulled Chen Gu aside just as he was about to join the main group to exercise.

"Don't go," Teacher Zhou said, a kind, aunt-like smile on her face. "From now on, you'll train with me individually."

Teacher Zhou pointed to a corner of the training field known as the "Military Corner."

At that moment, four students were training intensely there; all of them were military arts students from Lubei Middle School.

In this era, the status of soldiers had greatly increased, and the entrance scores for military academies were very high. Correspondingly, the former "sports-track students" had become "military arts students."

However, because their academic scores weren't high, their physical fitness had to be far superior to that of ordinary students to qualify for a military academy based on physical arts alone.

These students were the future "brave generals."

The school had purchased more formidable and expensive training equipment for them. Military arts students also had their own circle, and ordinary students always kept a respectful distance from these muscular fellows. Even the previous Zhao Junzhi wouldn't dare enter the Military Corner without good reason.

Stepping in and training with them was seen as a challenge to all military arts students.

Think about it. Their only path to higher education is through their physical arts scores. You're an ordinary student, with much better academic scores than them, yet you want to train alongside them. What is that, if not a provocation?

"Teacher Zhou..." Chen Gu's micro-expressions were perfectly controlled as he displayed a complex look of alarm, apprehension, and resistance. "Perhaps it's better not to."

Undoubtedly, he was putting on an act again, signaling to those military arts students: *It's not that I want to go over; I'm being forced.*

Sure enough, the four military arts students, while flexing their well-developed biceps to push up heavy barbells, shot them unfriendly glares.

Teacher Zhou chuckled and shook her head. "You, young man, don't act like an old man afraid to stick your neck out."

This is a school, so don't worry so much. The teachers are here; you have nothing to fear."

Chen Gu was very reluctant but was pulled over by Teacher Zhou nonetheless.

The students of Class Nine were initially stunned, then they quickly understood. After yesterday's incident, everyone had been secretly speculating: *This transfer student must be naturally super-strong.*

Some children from "exceptionally privileged" backgrounds were injected with expensive drugs from a young age, making their physical constitution far superior to that of ordinary people, but Chen Gu was clearly not one of them.

It was precisely because there were many "monsters" in this era that Chen Gu, despite keeping a low profile, wasn't actually worried about so-called exposure. *At my current level, I don't stand out at all, which is good.*

"Senior Ouyang," Teacher Zhou called out to a physical arts teacher who was supervising the military arts students' training. "This is Chen Gu."

Teacher Zhou and he were graduates from the same university; Teacher Ouyang was two years her senior.

Her senior, arms folded, turned around. Only then did Chen Gu see he was wearing a loose, sleeveless shirt, revealing that both his arms were entirely mechanical prosthetics—the components were thick and heavy, roughly polished, with a distinctly utilitarian style.

There was a scar as wide as a finger on his face, the metallic filling within it visible, making his whole appearance seem fierce and intimidating.

Yet such a person, when smiling, had a kind and warm demeanor.

"Chen Gu, is it? The principal has told me about you. You're a promising seedling. Don't worry, leave him to me; I'll be sure to train him well."

Teacher Ouyang had a whistle hanging around his neck. He blew it once, gathering the military arts students. "Come and meet someone. From now on, you'll be training together. His name is..."

Chapter 20: Chapter Twenty: Idol (Part One)

"Chen Gu, huh? Know him." Among the military fitness students, a big guy laughed maliciously. Zhao Ergou, with his brawny face, looked almost delicate in comparison.

He stepped forward on his own, extending his hand to Chen Gu with seeming enthusiasm. "I'm Darkray, nice to meet you."

Chen Gu shook hands with him and, sure enough, the other guy started applying pressure! Such a big hunk, his face plastered with smiles, yet his palm was like an iron pincer, exerting enough force to crush the bones in an average person's hand.

Chen Gu cocked his head, looking at him. *So even you muscle-bound types know how to hide a dagger behind a smile.*

Discretely pinching back, Darkray's face suddenly changed, his muscles distorting. After completing the first phase of the pre-training for "Star Battle Instructor," Chen Gu's physical strength was already three times that of an ordinary person. Putting a military fitness student who hadn't even entered the military academy in his place was a piece of cake.

The two men released their grip. Chen Gu was without a scratch, but Darkray kept his hand hidden behind him, trembling continuously.

"Wel-welcome," Darkray stammered. The students from Class Nine, who had been watching from a distance, were disappointed that a fight hadn't broken out. They sighed and returned to their own training, no longer paying attention to the commotion.

Teacher Ouyang, however, saw through it. A smile flickered across his face, and then he clapped his hands. "Alright, let's test Chen Gu first."

The various training equipment in the Military Corner was high-end, including a gravity training room.

At this moment, Chen Gu understood the meaning of Teacher Dai's cryptic words from lunchtime: the school clearly had high hopes for him and was ready to focus on his development.

Chen Gu wasn't ostentatious by nature. *Like a minor actor new to a film crew, his first reaction was naturally to lay low. But after getting to know the ropes... if a minor actor doesn't show his worth, when will he ever become a movie star?*

But such displays also require a certain balance. For instance, now was an opportunity, but one shouldn't be so showy as to become annoying.

Chen Gu felt he had managed quite well. Having deterred Darkray, the other military fitness students clearly lost any desire to challenge him.

After a series of training tests, the whistle in Teacher Ouyang's mouth had practically fallen out.

Darkray inhaled sharply. *They could become military fitness students, of course, possessing qualities far exceeding ordinary people. Compared to their peers from the same grade, all their metrics were about one and a half times higher.*

But what about Chen Gu? Without any enhanced training, just from a test, his indicators were already twice those of an average student!

"Monster!"

Another military fitness student quietly approached and asked, "Darkray, should we teach him a lesson after school?"

Darkray shook his head lightly. "Are you stupid? He's got the strength to aim for the Tiangong Military Division; we're not even on the same level. He could be a future alumnus of the Tiangong Military Division, and that would greatly benefit us. Stop overthinking it and focus on building a good relationship with him now while we can."

Teacher Zhou, at the side, slapped his thigh. "Chen Gu, you sure kept yourself well-hidden! With me, your physical combat scores were so mediocre, but with Senior Brother Ouyang, you don't hold back. Are you looking down on me, Old Zhou?"

Chen Gu gave a sheepish grin; this he really couldn't explain. Since Teacher Zhou was calling himself "Old Zhou," he obviously wasn't truly angry. Teacher Ouyang was so pleased he clapped his junior brother on the shoulder. "Leave him to me. If he doesn't get into the Tiangong Military Division next year, I'll call *you* Senior Brother!"

As a minor actor, one must also know when to seize opportunities, and the Military Corner was just such an opportunity. Training with Teacher Zhou every afternoon was of no help to Chen Gu, but the Military Corner was different.

Teacher Ouyang called Darkray over. "Today... you guys take Chen Gu and get him acquainted with the equipment. Just practice casually, and make sure not to get injured. I'm going to properly study up and develop the most scientific training regimen for Chen Gu."

Darkray was envious. *Out of the sixteen military fitness students at Lubei Middle School, only three had been fortunate enough for Teacher Ouyang to personally devote time to creating personalized training plans for them.*

He, Darkray, was one of them—but that was only after his old man had pestered Teacher Ouyang with drinks for six straight months. His dad had nearly developed a duodenal perforation from all the drinking before Teacher Ouyang reluctantly worked out a plan.

But this guy... Teacher Ouyang was eagerly setting up a training plan for him the moment he arrived...

In the subsequent training, Chen Gu remained constantly on guard. He was wary that these guys might try some dirty trick on him. Surprisingly, however, despite Darkray's long face—looking like a wife who'd been wronged—he didn't resort to any petty maneuvers. In fact, Darkray explained the use of the equipment and the important points very thoroughly.

At the end of the school day, Darkray unexpectedly invited Chen Gu with enthusiasm. "Wanna grab dinner together? We'll be training together in the future, so we should look out for each other."

Since he was willing to extend a goodwill gesture, Chen Gu wouldn't decline, but tonight was not possible; he already had plans with Ossosa.

"I've got plans tonight, but how about this—tomorrow night, I'll treat all the classmates to dinner, sound good?"

Darkray laughed. "Deal, it's agreed!"

Military fitness students have a heavy training load, and the school provided them with a shower room. On the way there together, Chen Gu received a call from Ossosa. The roguish old man was always boisterous with Chen Gu. "Same place, the Sunset Restaurant, same old spot! Hurry up, don't keep my dear wife and the most beautiful little princess on earth waiting!"

"What's your damn hurry?" Chen Gu retorted. "You're bringing your 'daughter-in-law' to meet *me*, her 'father'? Of course, I need to prepare! As an elder, I can't be impolite!"

"Screw you!" Ossosa shot back. "Eat if you want, don't come if you don't!"

The two hung up the phone, still bickering. Darkray, who had overheard, graciously made way. "Since you're in a hurry, you go shower first."

With only two shower stalls available, Chen Gu didn't stand on ceremony. Men shower quickly; he finished in five minutes. A car and bodyguards were waiting outside the school, and he quickly headed to the Sunset Restaurant.

After Darkray and the others had showered, a military fitness student, drying his hair with a towel, suddenly received a message on his private account. DING! A look of surprise spread across his face as he read it. He threw the towel aside. "Quick, quick! Someone spotted Man Suling at the Taigu Skyscraper! If we head over now, we might even catch a glimpse of our idol!"

Darkray and the others didn't bother drying off completely. Hollering loudly, they quickly put on their clothes and dashed out.

"Hurry up and call a cab!"

"Stop rushing me! It's already been called. This is all your fault for being so fussy. Your dad wanted to buy you a car, but no, you had to be all considerate about 'family difficulties' and refuse it..."

"I regret that a hundred thousand times over now!"