

Full Time 231

Chapter 231 - Please, Tie Yourself Up

Strange... Has Desire herself given up?

Has she finally become conscious of her strength and no longer bothers to quarrel with a minor character like me?

This was but a self-deprecating remark. Chen Gu understood very well that the process in between must have been extremely complex. Desire must have had some reason to suddenly give up on him.

However, he could not find the reason, as he was fully engaged in resisting and suppressing the mutation, to the extent that he had not even seen what Desire had done.

This mysterious expanse of void began to rapidly recede, like the tide in the darkness. Chen Gu trembled all over and slowly opened his eyes to find himself within the generator.

All the materials he had prepared were already used up, and even the entire generator seemed somewhat more worn and aged.

It was a second-hand item to begin with, and Chen Gu worried for a moment: He had no idea how much longer it could be used.

He pressed the intercom and said to the outside, "I've finished the advancement, open the door."

But after waiting a while, those two iron doors didn't budge an inch. Chen Gu felt it strange and asked again, "Open the door, will you?"

What he couldn't see was that on the outside, they were on high alert!

Gong Shuxu was an old man who looked to be over sixty years old. In this era, people's lifespans could easily reach two hundred years, so sixty was truly 'in one's prime.' He was only called an old man out of habit from the olden days.

At the Sixth Energy Level, with a serious face, he waved his hand, commanding his twelve executioners to quickly step forward and surround the entire generator.

This time he had brought with him elites of the Third Energy Level. These individuals were battle-hardened and significantly stronger than the average Third Energy Level person.

Then, Gong Shuxu said to the Fourth Energy Level individual behind him, "You follow me. If there's any unexpected event, we'll join forces and execute Chen Gu!"

"Yes!"

The director had already handed over command. Along with the chief, he stood to the side, anxiously watching the generator. They had already given up hope. How could there be no 'unexpected events'? That was Desire, after all!

Gong Shuxu used an encrypted channel to contact the fleet in the Star Sea and received a response, "The Close Range Attack Ship has reached the designated position. The military has granted authority; you may command directly."

With everything ready, Gong Shuxu didn't dare to be careless. He took a deep breath before saying to the chief, "Talk to him, ask about the situation."

"Alright, alright..." the chief stuttered in agreement, then pressed the intercom. "Comrade Little Chen, are you alright?"

"I'm fine," Chen Gu replied. "There was a bit of an unexpected event. It was a close call; I almost couldn't make it back."

Having encountered numerous twists and turns in the Endless Realm, Chen Gu was full of grievances and eager to vent to someone. He spoke rapidly, "You have no idea what I've been through! I was just advancing to the Second Energy Level. Others at this stage, with a bit of luck, might just stroll around the Endless Realm, possibly without even encountering a single demonic figure.

"But when it came to me, I warded off a demonic figure, then a strange creature appeared. I drove away the strange creature, and then Desire arrived..."

Gong Shuxu immediately said, "Ask specifically about Desire!"

The chief promptly said, "We've monitored it all. How did you repel Desire?"

"I didn't repel Desire," Chen Gu laughed. "You think too highly of me. That was Desire! I'm just at the Second Energy Level; how could I have the ability to do that—she gave up on her own."

The people outside looked at each other. That sounded hardly credible! It seemed very much like a host contaminated by Desire, a wolf in grandmother's clothing trying to trick Little Red Riding Hood into opening the door!

Traces of power like lightning flashed through Gong Shuxu's eyes, and everyone felt that the entire space was completely enveloped by some kind of force field!

Every move they made was actually under the control of Gong Shuxu, who was at the Sixth Energy Level. This included individuals at the Fourth Energy Level, all of whom were utterly powerless to fight back.

They could only move if Gong Shuxu permitted it.

The chief suddenly felt as if he had become a "marionette." His eyes showed signs of surprise as he tried to look at Gong Shuxu, but he was unable to control his own movements.

Gong Shuxu was gravely serious, so much so that he didn't even have time to consider others' feelings as he took over everything with an absolutely dominant stance.

The chief, under Gong Shuxu's manipulation, began to inquire, "So Desire just let you go?"

Chen Gu answered truthfully, "I'm also curious. When I drove away the demonic figures and strange creatures before, it was, after all, through my own efforts. But when facing Desire, I used all my strength to fight against the pollution she brought and had no energy left to confront her."

"What's strange is that when I recovered, Desire was gone!"

How could Gong Shuxu believe that?

"Just like that?"

Chen Gu was also puzzled. "It's strange indeed. Could it be that these beings from the Endless Realm finally respected their status and let me off just like that?"

Of course, Gong Shuxu still refused to believe it. He said, "Chen Gu, since this involves Desire, we must be cautious. Are you willing to wear the 'Containment Collar'?"

Without any hesitation, Chen Gu responded, "I can." Then he asked, "But what I encountered was Desire. If there really is a problem, can the 'Containment Collar' hold her?"

"This is special equipment brought from headquarters," Gong Shuxu said calmly, "unlike the usual 'Containment Collars'."

"Fine," said Chen Gu, "bring it in."

Gong Shuxu waved his hand, and from among his twelve executioners, a Quantum Wizard stepped forward, cradling a box in both hands. His body "ignited" with a pale blue, illusory flame of power, and with a forward thrust of his hands, the box was sent inside the generator through Quantum Teleportation.

Chen Gu opened the box and indeed found this 'Containment Collar' to be different from those he had seen before.

The most common 'Containment Collars' are like handcuffs, able to restrain those at lower Energy Levels.

Some more advanced ones are considered "strategic materials" in ordinary branch bureaus. They are larger and truly resemble ancient shackles, being a heavy metal plate that can lock both hands and the neck. These collars exert strong suppression on high Energy Level professionals and powerful Mutants. Once locked, individuals are unable to resist and are at the mercy of others.

The 'Containment Collar' in this box was equipped rather "luxuriously." Not only was its metal plate larger and heavier than usual, but there were also chains. These connected upwards to shackles for the feet and downwards to a helmet that covered the head!

Seeing the appearance of this thing, Chen Gu joked with Gong Shuxu outside, "With it made like this, why not make it into the shape of a coffin-cage and just encase someone inside?"

Unexpectedly, Gong Shuxu, this great master, didn't have a humor bone in his body. Hearing Chen Gu's words, he became very anxious. So he really isn't willing to put on the 'Containment Collar'...?

Chen Gu knew right away. I shouldn't joke around; this guy is on edge and might 'humanely' destroy me.

He quickly said, "I'll wear it, I'll wear it! I'll put it on right away."

Chapter 232 - Guiding in the Dark

CLACK, CLACK, CLACK...

Chen Gu quickly locked himself up. Actually, I also really want to figure out if I'm truly being stalked by a Lust Fiend.

That creature's disappearance was indeed somewhat unreasonable.

"All set," he called out.

Gong Shuxu let out a sigh of relief. As a Sixth Energy Level powerhouse, he wouldn't be afraid or so cautious if he were to face a Lust Fiend alone in the Endless Realm during his advancement. But it was completely different in the real world. A slight misstep could result in catastrophic loss of life!

He checked the surveillance and saw that Chen Gu had indeed "fully suited up." He maintained control over everyone present but made them appear "free." Then, he had the "Director" press the button to activate the mechanism.

HISS—

The airtight door opened with the accompanying sound of chains. Chen Gu walked out and asked, "Hurry up with the check. This thing is quite uncomfortable to wear."

It wasn't heavy; Chen Gu had already reached the Second Energy Level, so the weight didn't affect him. It was just that the chains were a bit of a nuisance.

"Of course," the Director quickly agreed. A complete set of detection equipment was on hand. The Bureau of Mystic Security was very thorough in its checks for contamination. After the researchers had been busy for a few hours, Gong Shuxu finally breathed a sigh of relief. Safe. No contamination.

He withdrew his ability. Everyone present looked completely normal on the outside. Even the ordinary researchers, unaware they had been controlled, subconsciously believed they had wanted to act that way all along.

As for the professionals, like the branch chief or the Fourth Energy Level experts, they were deeply shaken. So this is a Sixth Energy Level Psychological Spy?! Their abilities are unimaginable!

A profession not originally adept at direct combat could, at high energy levels, exert the power of psyche manipulation to such a terrifying degree!

Chen Gu was unaware of everything happening secretly around him. Gong Shuxu stepped out, no longer concealing himself, and said, "Chen Gu, let me introduce myself. I am Gong Shuxu, a First-Level Inspector from the Main Bureau and a Sixth Energy Level Psychological Spy. I am in charge of your comprehensive review this time."

Chen Gu was stunned at first, then he understood. "Is it because the Lust Fiend appeared?"

Gong Shuxu nodded. "It's good that you understand. I trust you can appreciate that we cannot immediately remove the 'security shackles' from you. We will need to isolate you for a period."

Chen Gu showed a helpless expression. "Alright, I understand."

I was actually observing Gong Shuxu in secret. This was the highest-level powerhouse I'd encountered since arriving in this era, even more powerful than the figures in the three sets of memories I possessed, considering their Energy Levels.

However, each of those three memories showed that professionals had their own distinct strengths.

Griffin Wester excelled more in his battlefield command capabilities.

Derek Kun Shen's focus was on scientific research rather than the development of professionals.

Milna Katerina... could be considered to have died young. She should have gone further on the path of the Nuclear Explosion Nun; the Atomic Holy Church had planned for her to reach at least the Seventh Energy Level.

Gong Shuxu nodded. It's good that Chen Gu is willing to cooperate.

With a wave of his hand, four Punishment Enforcers stepped forward and took Chen Gu to the branch's most secure cell.

The Punishment Force was a special mobile unit of the Bureau of Mystic Security. Its members were former criminals, now freelancers, who underwent rigorous reconditioning and training by the Bureau. They then joined the Punishment Force to participate in operations and atone for their crimes. They were formidable in strength and had "hidden" restraints within their bodies, compelling them to absolutely obey their superiors' commands. Otherwise, they would die instantly. Thus, the Punishment Force's combat capabilities were terrifyingly formidable and highly trusted.

After Chen Gu entered the prison cell, all his accounts were temporarily closed. This made Chen Jixian, on Empire River Star, somewhat anxious.

Chen Gu had been on Witch Star for quite some time. By all accounts, there should have been news about his advancement by now. However, his several inquiries were all met with an "Insufficient Permissions" error.

Chen Jixian knew something had gone wrong.

But if it was just a failed advancement, they would declare it openly. Why the "Insufficient Permissions" error? His general's battlefield intuition told him that something major had likely happened during the advancement process.

If that were the case, Qing Ruyan was the only person in the entire branch who might know the details.

It's impossible for me to ask Qing Ruyan myself. After all, I'm the "proud orphan" who personally showed him the door. How could I take the initiative to inquire about his well-being?

Chen Jixian called Mei Lixue over. After asking about a few unimportant work matters, he inquired, "How is Marcus, the leader of Special Service Team Five, doing?"

Marcus was Mei Lixue's former subordinate. She immediately looked worried and replied, "So far, so good. There are still no signs of mutation, and we're working hard to eliminate the latent threats in his body."

"Good. Team Five can't collapse."

"Yes! Rest assured, Director, we will definitely save Marcus!"

After Mei Lixue left the director's office, just as Chen Jixian had anticipated, she remembered Chen Gu, another "pillar" of Special Service Team Five.

Mei Lixue had previously been preoccupied with Marcus's situation. Only when she thought of Chen Gu did she suddenly realize, That kid has been gone for several days. He should be back by now.

She dialed Chen Gu's comm-link, but couldn't get through. Then, she sent a message via the Bureau of Mystic Security's secure channel, but the message failed to send!

A sense of dread struck Mei Lixue's heart. Could it be? With Marcus not yet rescued, have we lost Chen Gu as well...?

She immediately used her authority to check the results of Chen Gu's advancement ceremony. With a buzz, a large red box popped up on her personal interface: INSUFFICIENT PERMISSIONS!

Mei Lixue hurriedly returned to Chen Jixian's office. "Director, I don't have sufficient permissions. Could you help me check..." She explained Chen Gu's situation. When Chen Jixian pretended to check for the first time, he also received an "INSUFFICIENT PERMISSIONS" message.

Mei Lixue truly panicked. "How can this be?"

Chen Jixian didn't need to prompt her further. Mei Lixue rushed out, exclaiming, "I'm going to ask Qing Ruyan what's going on!"

Chen Jixian waited for the results of Mei Lixue's inquiry. About ten minutes later, Mei Lixue returned, looking dispirited. "Qing Ruyan also lacks the permissions, Director... That kid is really in big trouble this time!"

Chen Jixian's eyelids snapped open, his eyes flashing with a fierce light! The sudden burst of pressure from a high-Energy Level practitioner nearly knocked Mei Lixue off her feet.

...

These past few days, Chen Gu had been living a life of ease—eating and sleeping—much like a well-kept... domestic pig.

Witch Star had secretly entered a state of combat readiness. In the Star Sea, an entire fleet was stationed, unbeknownst to the general populace.

Only the interstellar trading vessels, subjected to extremely strict security checks when entering and leaving the planet, gave their crews a vague sense that something was amiss...

Chapter 233 [Nuclear Fusion Ray Eyes] & [Radiation Field]

Chen Gu, having nothing pressing to attend to, began to seriously study his profession. After advancing to the Second Energy Level, he could at least exert the power of the Third Energy Level by using the memories from "The Past of 400 People."

This was a huge upgrade. The Third Energy Level was a watershed; the number of professionals below it was relatively higher, and those above were much rarer. Moreover, the power of their skills became greatly magnified, to the extent that some professionals could accomplish feats such as "fighting hundreds with one" and "becoming an army of one."

Chen Gu had once asked Qing Ruyan if those beings in the "Divine Realm" truly considered themselves "gods." In fact, high-Energy Level professionals, like Queen of Freedom Mi Xiaoli, could truly reach a level of devastating might when unleashing their trump skills at full power. Most of the deities from ancient legends, aside from the Creator God, might not even compare to professionals at the Ninth Power Level.

During this advancement, due to the use of numerous rare materials, Chen Gu also obtained two additional gains.

The first was a special skill, "Nuclear Fusion Ray Eyes," likely derived from the energy-concentrating internal organs of "Nucleara." When used, his eyes could emit intensely powerful thermal rays, hot enough to effortlessly melt steel and pierce through the armor of Mechas, tanks, and even battleships!

Qing Ruyan's information was accurate. The "Nucleara" hunted by the Queen of Freedom was extraordinary.

The second gain was the mutation of the "Radiation Scouring" skill, evolving into the more powerful "Radiation Field."

This skill limited Chen Gu's radiation range to fifty meters at the Second Energy Level. However, within this area, all his professional abilities were greatly enhanced, approaching the strength of the Third Energy Level.

But this wasn't the most significant effect of the "Radiation Field." Within its range, Chen Gu could even sense everything through "Mind Belief"! This meant that as long as Chen Gu activated his "Radiation Field," he had a complete grasp of everything occurring within fifty meters. Consequently, in battle, there were hardly any tactics that could elude Chen Gu—true control of the entire field.

Of course, if the opponent's Energy Level was much higher than Chen Gu's, they could suppress this ability with their grade advantage. But no matter what, this skill was still extremely heaven-defying.

After thinking for a while, apart from using numerous precious materials, the mutation of "Radiation Scouring" might also be due to his battle with Juglans in the underworld. Under the ability "Electrolight Operator," he had been too passive. This was an "evolution" of his own.

With such remarkable gains, Chen Gu was eager to return to Empire River Star to achieve great success and earn a substantial amount of merit points to offset his advancement costs.

However, it wasn't until half a month later that Gong Shuxu, a Sixth Energy Level powerhouse, personally removed the "Safety Shackle" for him, saying apologetically, "You've been inconvenienced during this time. You should understand this wasn't directed at you personally."

Chen Gu nodded. "Of course, I understand."

He moved his body a bit as he asked, "So now, am I free?"

Gong Shuxu smiled. "Of course, you can return to Empire River Star whenever you like."

Chen Gu left the branch office and returned to his hotel. He found that all the snacks he had brought for Qing Ruyan had gone bad—he would have to go buy a fresh batch.

When Chen Gu set off for the snack street, Chen Jixian could no longer hold back. He had always been hiding behind the scenes, using various hints and guidance to get Mei Lixue and Qing Ruyan to inquire for information from the Director-General. But after more than half a month with no progress, his patience had completely run out.

With his hands clasped behind his back, he paced back and forth in his office, his expression grave, unconsciously quickening his steps. Then, with a sudden upward flick of his eyelids, BEEP, he initiated a video call to Director-General Aviloya.

Before the call connected, however, he received another video call request. He paused, surprised—it was Chen Gu! He quickly canceled the call to Aviloya, deliberately waited a moment, and then accepted Chen Gu's call.

His eyes widened with surprise to see it was really Chen Gu and not someone using Chen Gu's account to deliver bad news. He lowered his eyelids slightly and said, "Hmm?"

Behind Chen Gu was the snack street. He was holding a bamboo skewer pierced with a row of fish balls. "There's a lot of delicious food here," he said. "I'm planning to buy some for my granddaughter... Oh, oh, oh, and I also have a grandson. I want to bring some back for them. They should be in class right now, so I can only call you to ask what they like to eat."

Chen Gu deliberately emphasized "can only." I'm not calling you just to report I'm safe, you know.

Chen Jixian responded indifferently, "They... like to eat everything."

Chen Gu imagined little Chen Qingyu with her cheeks puffed out like a hamster, chewing blissfully, and couldn't help but smile.

As for Chen Zili... not important.

"Alright then, I'll look around and buy something..." Chen Gu was ready to hang up, but Chen Jixian saw a stall selling egg rolls in the background, and his mouth started to water.

When he was a child, he was very fond of these kinds of street foods. Back then on Empire River Star, these "unhealthy" handmade snacks were still available. Whenever his eyes lingered on them for even a moment, his grandfather would notice and buy him a whole bunch. Later, those kinds of snack stalls disappeared, and later still, his grandfather was gone too.

He coughed and said, "I just remembered, Qing Yu really likes egg rolls."

Chen Gu turned to look. "Okay, I'll buy some more."

KLICK. The video call ended. Chen Jixian was still reminiscing about the crispy, sweet, and aromatic taste of the egg rolls from his childhood when suddenly the BEEP BEEP BEEP of an incoming call interrupted his thoughts—it was Aviloya's video call. Chen Jixian felt a headache coming on. How am I going to explain this to the Director-General?

He took a quiet breath and answered the call, "Director-General, I am preparing to apply for the Sixth Energy Level advancement ceremony!"

Aviloya revealed a relieved smile. "You've finally come around."

I haven't come around at all. It's just that I couldn't think of any other excuse.

If Chen Gu had heard, he would have criticized this child for being dishonest, because Chen Jixian had initially told him he was only at the Second Energy Level.

Chen Gu packed up a large load of snacks and then contacted the local branch office to confirm his return flight for the next day. The branch director connected him to an assistant, who promised to book the flight for him and send him the details.

"I'm finally going back," Chen Gu said, stretching languidly in his hotel room. After being away for more than half a month, he was starting to miss everything on Empire River Star.

Suddenly, a strange communication number came through—it was an internal account from the Bureau of Mystic Security.

Chen Gu was a bit puzzled as he answered the call. The person on the other end got straight to the point, "Chen Gu, this is Gong Shuxu."

Chapter 234 The Giant Bubble Fly

"Hello." Chen Gu respectfully greeted the Sixth Energy Level expert.

Gong Shuxu said, "I hear you want to return to Empire River Star? I've spoken to the military. Tomorrow, they happen to have a transport ship pulling out and can take you along."

"Okay, thank you."

Gong Shuxu offered his help proactively, probably because the great expert felt somewhat embarrassed for having virtually 'confined' me for half a month—it was a gesture of goodwill.

However, after hanging up, Chen Gu suddenly remembered that after his last instatement, it seemed he had also returned on a military spacecraft arranged by Qing Ruyan.

"It seems I have an affinity with the military, huh."

Thinking back to the huge turmoil that accompanied his instatement ceremony in Zhaojieze City, Chen Gu exhaled heavily. "Thankfully, this time, while there were tense moments, it concluded without any major incident, unlike the uproar during my instatement."

...

Early the next day, an officer came to pick up Chen Gu. They boarded a landing craft to enter the Star Sea. The transport ship, ready to withdraw to the rear, was also preparing for departure as various equipment needing repairs was loaded onto it.

Chen Gu was settled in a private cabin. Compared to his return from Zhaojieze City, his accommodations were much better this time. It seems the prestige of a Sixth Energy Level super expert carries more weight than Qing Ruyan's influence.

The officer granted Chen Gu the same privileges as a common soldier on the transport ship. He was free to move around the ship as long as he didn't venture into classified areas.

"You can rest for now; we'll depart in an hour," said the officer, before excusing himself and leaving. Chen Gu roamed around for a bit. Since arriving in this era, this was his first time moving freely on such a large warship. After a while, the novelty wore off, and he obediently returned to his room. Soon after, the spaceship began to accelerate, leaving the star system of Witch Star.

They would travel for some time before engaging the warp drive upon reaching 'deep space.'

This preliminary journey would take about an hour and a half.

Chen Gu's small room was well-located, featuring a twenty-centimeter square window through which he could observe the vast expanse of the Star Sea. He admired the interstellar scenery for a while but soon grew bored. He then began studying some combat techniques to pass the time.

After more than an hour, an electronic voice announcement echoed through the cabin, "Attention, attention, attention, the spaceship will initiate its warp drive in ten minutes..."

Shortly after this announcement, Chen Gu sensed some mysterious energy fluctuations in the surrounding void.

Chen Gu, who had initially paid little attention, suddenly remembered something. His expression changed, and he rushed to the small window.

Why would there be abnormal energy fluctuations now when the warp drive wouldn't be engaged for another ten minutes?

Even if the engine needed preheating, it shouldn't cause such significant fluctuations.

Looking through the window, Chen Gu saw a faint blue glow in the Star Sea rapidly spinning outward, as if it were scattering some kind of energy.

The glowing vortex expanded rapidly, and soon a "portal" opened. Before this portal could fully stabilize, a swarm of dark green 'starlights' emerged from it.

Behind those 'starlights,' each was connected to slender tentacles, followed by an enormous head that protruded.

Multiple insect eyes, facing different directions, grew on its head, each protected by a thick, transparent chitinous layer.

Chen Gu gritted his teeth and murmured, "Giant Bubbleflies! The Alien Insect Race has arrived!"

The enormous insect strained to squeeze through the not-yet-fully-stabilized void portal. Its head was already massive but appeared disproportionately small compared to its body.

The Giant Bubblefly's body was milky white and translucent. Through it, one could see its insectoid torso, packed with various members of the Alien Insect Race.

After the first Giant Bubblefly emerged, it spotted the nearby transport ship. Within the ship, a piercing alarm blared, "All hands to battle stations!"

"All hands to battle stations!"

Furthermore, the transport ship promptly reported the sighting of the Alien Insect Race to all nearby fleets.

The void portal finally stabilized completely, and subsequent Giant Bubbleflies found entry and exit much easier.

The first Giant Bubblefly pointed its luminescent tentacles toward the transport ship. It then opened multiple biological hatches on the rear of its vast body, from which swarms of the Alien Insect Race poured out.

The transport ship immediately changed course, retreating toward a certain planet.

While the ship's defensive capabilities were not strong, it was equipped with one hundred twenty gun turrets. Additionally, its hold contained sixteen space fighters and eight Star Armors.

The transport ship surged to full power, retreating at top speed. All its gun turrets fired backward, attempting to intercept the pursuing Alien Insect Race.

Observing the Alien Insect Race, Chen Gu easily identified them. Those are Space Wolf Bugs. They aren't their most powerful space combatants, but with over three hundred of them, it's more than enough to hunt down a transport ship!

Chen Gu frowned. Is this encounter between the transport ship and the Alien Insect Race swarm a coincidence?

I don't believe it. The Star Sea is vast; only those who have experienced it firsthand can understand. In such an environment, the chances of a random encounter are extraordinarily low.

However... Chen Gu noticed something. After the first Giant Bubblefly released a batch of Space Wolf Bugs, the other dozen or so Giant Bubbleflies that flew out of the void portal remained inactive, simply following behind the Space Wolf Bugs in their pursuit.

If their target was this transport ship, they should have immediately released the stronger Void Tiger Bugs, or even their most powerful space unit, the Void-Treading Dragon Bugs. With just one of those, the transport ship would have no chance of escape.

Unless they plan to trail behind the transport ship and attack the destination it's trying to reach.

Chen Gu immediately stood up. As he approached the door, he saw a squad of fully armed soldiers hurrying past. He grabbed one of them. "I need to see the captain!"

The soldier gave him a puzzled look. "Aren't you military personnel?"

Chen Gu shook his head. "But I have very important military intelligence that I must report to the captain!"

Just as the soldier was about to speak, his captain, already short-tempered, urged from ahead, "What are you doing? Hurry up and follow!"

"Captain, this man says he has important military intelligence for the captain..."

"The captain is overwhelmed right now; he has no time to meet with an unrelated person!" The captain glanced at Chen Gu. He knew every transport ship had such individuals: hitchhikers who had pulled strings to get aboard.

He sighed, looking at Chen Gu with a shade of pity. "Trying to save on a ticket... cutting corners can cost you dearly! There's no need to find the captain; it's no use. There are vast numbers of the Alien Insect Race outside. Unless it's the Insect Queen herself you're looking for, no one else can help."

With that, he waved his hand and quickly led his men away. Chen Gu called out from behind, "I really do have military intelligence..." But they ignored him and were already far gone.

Chapter 235: No More Pretense, Laying the Cards on the Table

The squad leader misunderstood Chen Gu's request to see the ship's captain as an attempt to leverage connections for special privileges.

He looked around; the warriors were all tensely occupied. Outside in the Star Sea, the chase had finally begun.

Space Wolves, with body lengths of two hundred meters, were much smaller than the main battleships of the human Star Nations, but they were extremely agile, swift, and ferocious in the Star Sea. Their massive, fang-like mouthparts and wolf-claw-shaped insectile legs could easily tear through ordinary steel armor. Once they got close, they would cause immense trouble for the fleet.

Furthermore, from a distance, they possessed an ovary-shaped organ on their backs that could emit a "biotic energy plasma jet," with massive destructive power, habitually referred to as the "Acid Energy Cannon."

The Space Wolves, holding an advantageous position, initiated the attack. Dozens at the forefront arched their bodies and began their Acid Energy Cannon barrage.

Accompanied by several violent tremors and roars, the transport ship was hit, and its dense turret arrays began to retaliate.

The Space Wolves bringing up the rear were continuously hit; human energy cannons inflicted similarly massive damage. Often, a single shot could rip a two-hundred-meter insect in half, and then, under the forces of space, the insect's body would be rapidly torn to shreds.

But the Space Wolves were too numerous, and more and more Acid Energy Cannon blasts bombarded the transport ship. Chen Gu heard over the communications channel that the warship's hull had suffered severe damage, and the damage control teams were overwhelmed.

Space fighters and Star Armors were already preparing to deploy to relieve the pressure of the attacks on the mothership.

Chen Gu noticed that the transport ship was still accelerating on its original retreat course, and he grew increasingly anxious. He quickly pondered: What methods are there to meet the captain or to warn the military about the insects' schemes?

The answer was clear: Idol Actor!

The game "Infinite" was used as a teaching and training tool by the militaries of various major Star Nations, so Chen Gu was certain that there should also be game pods on this transport ship.

He rushed out. At this time, no one paid any mind to a "hitchhiking" passenger. Along the way, he repeatedly collided with warriors rushing past. They were all too hurried to even exchange apologies before scrambling up and continuing forward, each focused on their own mission.

Chen Gu finally found dozens of game pods in a spacious compartment. He quickly dived into one and immediately activated it.

Bai Xianya counted on her fingers and then pursed her lips in resignation. His Excellency, Idol Actor, the respected director of the 745 Tactical Research Institute, had once again "disappeared" without explanation for nearly a month.

She had initially thought that after their frank discussion last time, Idol Actor would genuinely consider his public identity.

Yet, she hadn't expected him to pull the "ostrich strategy" again—that old fox had hidden himself away!

"Sigh—"

Bai Xianya exhaled deeply. During their time working together, even though Idol Actor often tormented her with his "disappearances," strictly speaking, their achievements were remarkable!

For frontline combat personnel, tactical proficiency generally wasn't very high. The comprehensive tactical manuals compiled by the research institute were extremely helpful to them. The latest comprehensive statistical results were in, showing that personnel losses had been reduced by nearly thirty percent!

Bai Xianya no longer harbored such strong grievances against Idol Actor, but every time the old fellow played his disappearing act, she still felt quite helpless.

Could the prospect of revealing his identity have scared the old geezer into hiding? Bai Xianya grimaced. Just then, a rapid succession of beeps suddenly sounded.

Bai Xianya was startled. The old man's online?

She immediately entered her game pod. Indeed, it was Idol Actor. However, unlike before, this time the alert tones weren't because Idol Actor was replying to her messages, but because he was sending incessant call requests from within the game!

And it was a video call.

Bai Xianya found herself hesitating. Does this mean I'm about to "meet" the cranky old man? Is the mysterious Idol Actor finally going to reveal his identity? Why am I feeling a little nervous...?

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP... The alert tones kept urging her. Bai Xianya quickly sent a message to her uncle, took a deep breath, tidied her appearance, and lightly touched the button. The call connected.

"I have a very urgent matter to report to the military headquarters immediately..." Chen Gu got straight to the point, but then he saw "Army Makeup Reflection" staring blankly, unresponsive.

Chen Gu grew anxious. Sure, a dazed beauty is cute, but at such a critical moment, can we drop the cutesy act?! Seriously, lady!

"Hello, hello, hello!" Chen Gu called out a few times. Bai Xianya abruptly snapped back to her senses. "Tell me honestly, who paid you to use this game account and say these things to me? Is Idol Actor really that timid? What on earth is he worried about?"

Chen Gu was about to lose it. I really have vital military intelligence to report! Can we please get to the point?

"You—" Chen Gu gritted his teeth. "Accounts in 'Infinite' are bound to personal identities. A person might be able to apply for multiple accounts, but using someone else's account would never pass the game's verification!"

Chen Gu took a deep breath and said, "I am Idol Actor. So now you understand why I'm reluctant to reveal my identity, don't you?"

Bai Xianya shrieked, "You—you're so young? Not some old coot, but a fresh-faced kid?"

Such audacious words! Chen Gu roared internally.

His expression turned serious. "Let's not worry about that for now. I am a special agent from the Bureau of Mystic Security's Wuzhaoyin City branch. You can verify my identity immediately. I'm currently on a military transport ship, and we're encountering a large number of the Alien Insect Race. I suspect they're plotting a major conspiracy!"

At the mention of the Alien Insect Race, Bai Xianya instantly reverted to her persona as a strong military woman, her eyes shining with a resolute light. "The transport ship's designation?"

Chen Gu provided the designation and shared his assessment. Bai Xianya immediately said, "Give me one minute!"

Then Bai Xianya logged off.

Chen Gu lay in the game pod, completely bewildered. What now? I've done everything I can. My only hope is the Central Operations Room.

After a minute, someone "knocked" on Chen Gu's game pod. He opened it and got up to see a middle-aged military officer with the rank of Major standing outside with a few soldiers. The officer saluted him. "Your Excellency, I am Major Andrew Buffetos, captain of this transport ship. I have received orders from the Central Operations Room requesting you to assume command of this entire transport ship!"

Chen Gu hadn't expected "Army Makeup Reflection" to be so incredibly effective, managing to get him command of the transport ship just like that.

He quickly exited the pod and said, "To the command deck."

"Yes, sir!"

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The group moved swiftly, with Andrew following behind Chen Gu, continually observing him. Finally, he couldn't resist asking, "Your Excellency, are you really an 'Idol Actor'?"

Chen Gu replied helplessly, "It's me. I didn't want to reveal my identity because I knew you would find it hard to believe."

"I believe!" Andrew became noticeably excited. "In the last major battle, my troops defeated those disgusting bugs all thanks to your tactical manual! If it weren't for your tactical guidance, I'm afraid we would have been completely wiped out!"

Chen Gu felt gratified. He and Institute 745 had developed the tactical manual, which was constantly being expanded. However, the situation on the battlefield changed in the blink of an eye, and warriors faced different opponents and combat environments. Therefore, it was impossible to guarantee that front-line soldiers would always find the perfect "tactic" for every situation.

However, even if it was only partially successful, it represented a tremendous victory.

Andrew's troops were clearly beneficiaries of this tactical research.

During their brief conversation, Chen Gu and Carlos arrived at the command cabin. Bai Xianya and Bai Yunpeng were waiting for them via video communication.

Bai Yunpeng smiled and spread his arms. "At last, our tactical genius, Idol Actor, and Director of Institute 745, Chen Gu! Hello!"

Chen Gu had no time for pleasantries and said, "I propose that Andrew continues to command the battle, while I provide military advice as a staff officer."

Changing commanders right before a battle is a major taboo in military strategy. Moreover, Chen Gu was unfamiliar with the transport ship and would find it difficult to command smoothly and efficiently.

Andrew clearly had great faith in Chen Gu and would undoubtedly accept any suggestions he made. Therefore, it seemed better for Chen Gu to defer command to Andrew.

As for Bai Yunpeng, his main purpose in offering command authority to Chen Gu was to demonstrate a gesture of complete trust.

After Chen Gu made his suggestion, Bai Yunpeng considered it for a moment and then said, "Although you are young, your considerations are more comprehensive. We accept your proposal."

Then, Bai Yunpeng added, "Your situation is very dangerous. Nearby, only a small fleet of six main warships, currently near Witch Star, is rushing to support you."

"However, current intelligence indicates the Alien Insect Race forces are massive, and that support fleet is no match for them. Our next support fleet will take seven hours to assemble and another six hours to reach you. This means you must hold out for at least thirteen hours!"

It didn't seem like a long time, but this was a space war where situations changed in an instant.

To say nothing of other threats, if those three hundred Space Wolves alone caught up and boarded the transport ship, the battle would be over in less than half an hour.

"Now, your mission is to hold out!"

After thinking for a moment, Chen Gu asked, "I'd like to know the transport ship's original intended retreat destination."

Andrew glanced at Bai Yunpeng, who nodded. "Director Chen's security clearance far exceeds yours. You can tell him everything you know."

With Chen Gu's identity confirmed, his status with the Bureau of Mystic Security meant the military had almost no doubts about him.

Andrew tapped the air, and a star map materialized before him. He then selected and enlarged a desolate planet. "The Swan Star System, Planet 62N-41, military designation JM662. It's one of the key defensive points planned by the military for the Swan Star System's second line of defense. It has substantial defensive installations and conceals four star-based ground-to-orbit cannons. Those are super-high concentration energy cannons—one shot can instantly kill a Sky-Stepping Dragon Bug."

"Once we get there, we can abandon ship and land. We can rely on the solid fortifications and the star-based ground-to-orbit cannons to engage the Insect Race fleet and hold out for reinforcements."

Chen Gu frowned and asked, "Is there an army guarding the place?"

"No. This support base has been sealed since its completion. It's impossible to access it without military authorization."

"Besides this support base, are there any other facilities?"

"As far as I know, there are none."

The Insect Race would specifically target such a support base? Chen Gu wondered. Indeed, the base has great strategic value, but it seems unnecessary to launch a large-scale military operation specifically against it.

"Regardless, we cannot play into the Insect Race's strategic intentions. We must change our destination immediately. We won't land for now; we'll engage them in the Star Sea... If worst comes to worst, we'll make an emergency landing on any uninhabited planet and continue the fight there!"

"Alright!" Andrew had just agreed when a combat staff officer beside him reported, "Colonel, our fighter craft and the Space Wolves have started to clash!"

In the Star Sea, the sixteen space fighters and eight Star Armor that had been deployed were already engaging the insect swarm.

The space fighters were twenty meters long, and the Star Armor stood sixteen meters tall. They were more agile than the Space Wolves but few in number. Furthermore, compared to the equipment on a main battleship, these fighters and Mecha were older models.

The space fighters, flying in a suitable combat formation, swept over several Space Wolves. Their missiles struck true, instantly tearing three Space Wolves apart and eliciting cheers in the command cabin.

The Star Armor, coordinating and providing mutual cover, employed more diverse attacks and a variety of weapons. They quickly dispatched another four Space Wolves, striking first to gain the upper hand.

But soon, a row of chambers opened on a Giant Bubble-Fly Insect positioned behind the swarm. A dense, ferocious mass of smaller insects flew out.

These creatures were seventy to eighty meters long, resembling a hybrid of spiders and scorpions, with eight giant, sharp limb-blades. Far more agile than the Space Wolves, they were a species the Alien Insect Race had evolved specifically to counter Star Armor: the Sky-Hunting Spider Insects.

They formed a vast, dark cloud in the Star Sea, swiftly pouncing on the space fighters and Star Armor. Their overwhelming numbers quickly engulfed the human forces. A combat staff officer, receiving continuous feedback from the monitoring devices, reported with a heavy heart, "Lost one space fighter! Lost one Star Armor! Lost a second space fighter..."

And that group of Space Wolves was steadily catching up.

Andrew clenched his teeth. "How many more Star Armor do we have?"

The combat staff quickly tallied the numbers. "A total of three hundred forty-seven Star Armor were being transported back for repairs. Of those, one hundred ninety are still combat-capable. But, Colonel... we don't have that many Mecha pilots."

"How many do we have?"

"We have thirty-one in total."

Andrew slammed his fist on the control console before him. "I'm a Mecha pilot too..."

His staff members were startled and hurriedly came forward to restrain him. "Colonel, calm down! We haven't reached the desperate point where the commander himself needs to enter the battlefield."

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A thought flickered in Chen Gu's mind. "Is this ship mainly used to transport Star Armors for repair?"

"Not just Star Armors, although they constitute the majority. There are also fewer than a hundred starfighters and several main battleship cannons."

As Chen Gu observed the dense swarm of insects outside, an idea formed. "Take me to see the Star Armors."

Andrew was taken aback. "Are you also a Mecha pilot?"

Chen Gu shook his head. "Not yet."

If the military's status in this era was extremely high, with nearly every young person harboring a "heroic dream," then within the entire military, the three most popular branches were Mecha pilots, starfighter pilots, and... starship gunners. Among these, starship gunners had the lowest physical fitness requirements, while Mecha pilots had the highest. And among Mecha pilots, Star Armor pilots faced the most demanding requirements. Many passionate youths were eliminated during the physical fitness assessments.

Simply put, the foremost requirement for Star Armor pilots was physical fitness—a quality Chen Gu certainly did not lack.

The combat staff were unaware of Chen Gu's identity as a special agent. They didn't even know the secrets of Professionals. Only Andrew, with his high security clearance, knew a little. The combat staff only knew that Chen Gu was a master tactician and seemed to be still in high school. Typically, individuals fitting that description had frail bodies or, at best, average physical conditioning. What use would it be to show him the Star Armors?

"Maybe the master tactician can design a set of Mecha tactics for us."

"That's true, too."

Star Armors in their complete form stood between sixteen to twenty meters tall, but those undergoing repair were in a "contracted" state, each housed within an eight-meter-high crate.

Chen Gu and Andrew arrived at the warehouse, where Andrew selected a few of the most advanced models. He was preparing these for himself, hoping to pilot the Confederation's finest Star Armor, "Glory," should they reach a desperate impasse.

Amidst a cacophony of mechanical roars, these Star Armors unfolded to their towering twenty-meter height, each bearing various marks of battle.

Chen Gu connected to one of the Star Armor's systems and quickly located the operation manual. After browsing through it, Chen Gu understood that piloting such a Star Armor required at least three times the physical strength of an ordinary person. It was very difficult for ordinary people to achieve this standard through training alone; the military must have provided specialized drugs to enhance the physical fitness of Mecha pilots.

"I want to give it a try," Chen Gu said.

Andrew hurriedly tried to stop him. "Master, please remain calm! We haven't reached a point so dire that even a tactical genius like yourself must personally enter the battlefield."

The combat staff also chimed in, "Piloting a Star Armor might look simple, but there are many demanding requirements that ordinary people simply cannot meet."

Chen Gu waved his hand. "I know my limits. I won't take any risks."

Andrew said helplessly, "Then... just try it out, but please don't attempt anything dangerous."

Star Armors had many maneuvers that could exert tremendous pressure on the pilot; for an ordinary person, a single move might result in a broken neck.

"Okay," Chen Gu agreed as the Star Armor's cockpit door opened at the Mecha's chest, some ten meters off the ground.

A combat staffer quickly maneuvered a gangway over, but before it could arrive, Chen Gu, with an easy leap, agilely ascended and slipped into the cockpit.

The combat staffer stared, eyes wide in astonishment. "..."

Andrew laughed heartily. "We all underestimated the Master, eh."

As the hatch closed, Chen Gu felt as if he were in a gaming pod, utilizing "Virtual Full-Sensory Feedback Technology," which made the controls feel like extensions of his own body. Chen Gu first made a few tentative movements to acclimate himself. Once adapted, he began performing complex maneuvers, then attempted a few moves from the "Ancient Martial Great Nine Forms."

Andrew and the combat staff were already staring, agape. Then Chen Gu executed several moves from the even more complex "Nuclear Combat Technique"...

The onlookers' jaws practically hit the floor. One combat staffer couldn't help but blurt out, "Master... is he planning to use a cheat code or something..."

Every Star Armor pilot was a precious asset to the military. Training them was extremely difficult, requiring not only a rigorous selection process but also a significant investment in resources, such as precious strengthening potions. Yet, for Chen Gu, it seemed as if he picked it up effortlessly.

As a Second Energy Level Professional, a Star Armor was truly like a large toy to Chen Gu. Professionals were already at the peak of human capabilities. If Professionals, having survived numerous life-and-death trials, still couldn't pilot a Star Armor, then what was the point of the "trials" they had endured?

His experimentation gave Chen Gu a clear understanding: executing the "Ancient Martial Great Nine Forms" posed no problem, but the "Nuclear Combat Technique" wasn't yet fluid and would require more practice.

Then he began to inspect the Star Armor's weapons and equipment.

Andrew and the others watched as a compartment on the Star Armor's right leg hissed open. A giant, long-bladed sword, wreathed in fierce energy flames, flew into the Mecha's right hand. Chen Gu swung it casually a few times. Then, on its left arm, a series of mechanical transformations assembled a triple-barreled rotary energy cannon on the back of its hand.

Chen Gu executed a few maneuvers, and the sword and cannon coordinated perfectly!

This left Andrew, a veteran Mecha pilot, slack-jawed. He stuttered, "Th-this... this is ace pilot level..."

At least, much stronger than me, he silently added.

Chen Gu felt good. He was drawing on Griffin Wester's memories, allowing him to operate the Mecha with ease. During the heyday of the "Blue Blood Thugs," Star Armors weren't as advanced as they are now. However, the "High-Energy Combat Art" paired flawlessly with current Star Armor models!

The "High-Energy Combat Art" truly is well-suited for space combat, Chen Gu mused. This gave his plan a greater chance of success.

From within the Mecha, he told Andrew, "Send a squad to coordinate with me. I'm going to destroy that swarm of Sky Spider insects."

"Ah?" Andrew was stunned. Didn't we just agree that we hadn't reached the point where a tactical genius like you needed to personally enter the fray?

One of the combat staffers said, "Sir, we don't have an Antimatter Bomb powerful enough. This transport ship's mission is solely to carry equipment for repair; it isn't equipped with any high-yield weaponry..."

"I have one," Chen Gu said decisively.

The combat staff exchanged bewildered glances. You have one? How could we not have seen it? You boarded with a pile of takeout boxes; where would a high-yield bomb be?

To destroy that swarm of Sky Spider insects, the bomb would need to be substantial. With current technology, even an Antimatter Bomb would be at least the size of a suitcase.

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Chen Gu didn't explain to them, only saying to Andrew, "Hurry and get ready. We don't have much time."

Andrew hesitated, then clenched his teeth and said, "Alright, I'll accompany you."

"No!" Chen Gu refused without hesitation. "If I fail, this ship will still need you to take command."

Andrew couldn't help but ask, "Your Excellency, are you... truly confident?"

Chen Gu smiled. "Don't worry. I'm still young, with a bright future ahead; I won't gamble with my life recklessly."

"A person who likes tactics won't fight a battle they aren't sure of winning," he added. Andrew was finally persuaded. "Alright, I'll arrange for people to coordinate with you!"

He immediately turned and ordered, "Have all the Mecha pilots prepare!"

The thirty-one Mecha pilots were not actually crew members of the transport ship; they were merely hitching a ride, returning to their homelands for vacation leave.

But at this moment, they assembled without hesitation. Though from different units, they quickly organized themselves by military rank, forming an enhanced Mecha company on their own initiative.

The quality of Confederation soldiers was truly outstanding!

Chen Gu, wearing a Star Armor, blended in with these men. However, his identity and real purpose were known to only a very few. The other Mecha pilots thought the man standing beside them was just like them, undertaking a suicide mission to harass and attack the Space Wolf Insects, buying time for the mothership.

Only three people knew Chen Gu's identity and true purpose: the commander and two deputy commanders of this temporary, mixed enhanced Mecha company.

All three held the rank of captain. Among them, Dou Zhanqiong, the commander, was a celebrated "Mecha Combat Hero" throughout the warzone. He had a glorious record of destroying sixteen Sky-Hunting Spiders and three Space Wolf Insects with a single Mecha.

Furthermore, he had set a record for continuous service among the warzone's Star Armor pilots: a full seven years without a single day's leave.

This time, his superiors had forcibly ordered him to take a break.

This battle maniac had dispiritedly packed his bags and boarded the transport ship home, never expecting to encounter an attack by the Insect Race on a mere transport vessel!

While others panicked, Dou Zhanqiong was thrilled. In his view, there was no such thing as an "unfavorable situation" on the battlefield; there were only battles, one after another.

If one battle didn't solve the problem, then there would be a second, a third, a fourth... My Mecha and I are never weary!

The two deputy commanders were also combat heroes. However, upon hearing of Dou Zhanqiong's great reputation, they immediately deferred to him, willingly taking the deputy positions.

Upon learning Chen Gu's true identity and purpose, Dou Zhanqiong immediately shook his head. "Without an Antimatter Bomb, I can't trust him to annihilate that swarm of Space Wolf Insects. Unless he can prove he has a bomb of sufficient power, I won't risk these precious Mecha pilots accompanying him on this venture."

"Conversely, if he *can* prove it, I will definitely lead everyone to escort him to the optimal coordinates for deploying the bomb, even if it means risking our lives."

He paused, then said to Andrew, who was giving the commands, "You can order me to carry out this task. As a soldier, I will not disobey. I will also risk my life to complete this mission, but I will escort him there alone."

The other two deputy commanders also saluted. "We support Captain Dou. We will accompany him in escorting Chen Gu."

Andrew was momentarily speechless. On this warship, including himself, no more than three people knew the secret of Profession Holders.

He couldn't explain to Dou Zhanqiong and the others that Chen Gu was a Radiation Missionary, and the "bomb" he referred to was very likely a Biological Nuclear Explosion. There's no way to prove it to them. I can't exactly set off a giant firework for them on the spot, can I?

As Andrew wrestled with his dilemma, the door opened, and Chen Gu walked in. He had overheard the conversation outside and calmly said to Dou Zhanqiong, "You don't need to escort me. I can handle deploying the bomb myself."

"Asking you all to come is just a diversion. You just need to fight hard—as you always do. That will be enough."

Chen Gu spoke with admiration. Dou Zhanqiong's statement had deeply touched him. In any organization, there will be careerists like Zhao Zhenhuai; the military is no exception. However, in the Confederation's military, there are far more true warriors like Dou Zhanqiong!

It was precisely because of this that the Confederation had managed to hold out in the war against the Alien Insect Race, staunchly defending the front lines without retreating.

Dou Zhanqiong looked at Chen Gu in surprise, then at Andrew. The captain pulled Chen Gu aside and asked in a low voice, "Are you really sure about this?"

Chen Gu nodded gravely. "Trust me. You can look up the missions I've carried out for the Bureau of Mystic Security. I don't make promises I can't keep; that would be setting my comrades up for disaster."

After much hesitation, Andrew finally sighed. "Alright. If there were any other choice, I wouldn't let you take such a risk."

Indeed, the transport ship had no other options. The pursuing swarm of insects was drawing ever closer. The Space Wolf Insects were baring their fangs and claws; if even one of them pounced, it would all be over.

Chen Gu nodded.

「...」

The first wave of space fighters and Star Armor sent out on combat missions was nearly wiped out. The pursuing Space Wolf Insects and Sky-Hunting Spiders, having shaken off their opponents, were now closing in furiously. The transport ship could only rely on its turrets to hinder them, but with little effect.

Just as the enemy was closing in, eager to claim their victory, the transport ship's hatch opened once more. Massive figures, illuminated by the ship's lights, charged into the Star Sea, bravely confronting the giant insects.

Chen Gu had experienced this kind of "mothership deployment" many times in the game "Endless," but this was his first time experiencing it for real.

With a jolt, he and his Star Armor were launched into the Star Sea. The lights of the mothership behind him illuminated his path, guiding his attack.

At the end of that illuminated path lay a seemingly endless swarm of hideous insects.

Leading the charge, ahead of Chen Gu, was Dou Zhanqiong.

He wasn't in his own Mecha. This one was a temporary pick, on which he'd had a mechanic hastily spray three vivid red stripes. He flew at the vanguard, a fearless and awe-inspiring sight as he charged forward.

In the first exchange, he executed a brilliant Mecha combat maneuver. Wielding a massive energy chainsaw, he sliced under a Sky-Hunting Spider. The creature was disemboweled, instantly becoming a corpse drifting in the Star Sea.

Subsequently, dozens of Star Armor units charged forward, inflicting heavy losses on the Sky-Hunting Spiders.

Chen Gu, blending into the crowd, didn't rush to hunt these Sky-Hunting Spiders. He pushed his Star Armor to maximum speed, its back thrusters operating at full power. Dodging the interception attempts of several Sky-Hunting Spiders, he plunged deep into their swarm.

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Dou Zhanqiong, amidst the fierce battle, had actually been paying attention to Chen Gu's actions. Although he had refused to lead a team to cover Chen Gu, Chen Gu was, after all, the key to the entire mission, so, of course, he could not completely ignore him. But seeing Chen Gu dive headfirst into the swarm as soon as he emerged, Dou Zhanqiong could only sigh with resignation. As expected, he's completely without experience in facing the Insect Race in space combat; his chances look grim.

The swarm was massive. What a Star Armor should do is harass from the periphery, slowly eroding their numbers. Diving straight in would only lead to being overwhelmed by the swarm, almost certainly without exception.

Well, this mission has come down to nothing but fighting. So let's fight!

Dou Zhanqiong stopped paying attention to Chen Gu. He turned around, killed two Sky Spider Insects, and then fiercely fired a shot at a distant Space Wolf Insect. This Space Wolf Insect had been in full pursuit of the transport ship. Suddenly hit from behind, it turned around in anger to attack Dou Zhanqiong.

Chen Gu was surrounded by insects. Their sharp legs were more dangerous than colossal steel blades and could easily slice Chen Gu and his Star Armor in half with a single strike! However, if Dou Zhanqiong had happened to see everything that was unfolding at that moment, he would have exclaimed in disbelief, "Impossible!"

Chen Gu, amidst that dense thicket of insect legs, was as nimble as a fish in water. The insect legs kept striking down, yet Chen Gu, piloting his Mecha, always managed to dodge them by a hair's breadth. Many times, these evasions even possessed a certain beauty, as if both sides had rehearsed extensively to present a performance.

Inside his Star Armor, Chen Gu had activated his Second Energy Level mutated ability, Radiation Field. The insect legs around him, even the minute changes in their internal muscles and blood vessels, could not escape his perception. However, this ability only had a range of fifty meters. Since Chen Gu also had to pilot the Mecha, he constantly needed to make split-second responses, making the situation incredibly precarious. His Mecha seemed to dance on a knife's edge—extraordinarily tense and exciting!

Dou Zhanqiong battled a Space Wolf Insect and a group of Sky Spider Insects fiercely for seven or eight minutes. Suddenly, he inadvertently saw a Star Armor burst out from behind the dense pack of Sky Spider Insects! He recognized that Mecha. "Chen Gu?! He's... still alive? He broke out of the swarm's encirclement?"

The Sky Spider Insects were numerous. They served as adversaries for space fighters and Star Armors, tasked with protecting the Space Wolf Insects. The large bodies of the Space Wolf Insects put them at a disadvantage against nimble space fighters and Star Armors. Therefore, these Sky Spider Insects were densely clustered around the Space Wolf Insects.

Within the swarm, Chen Gu was mostly attacked by Sky Spider Insects. This was because he was too "insignificant"; the Space Wolf Insects disdained attacking him, as the Sky Spider Insects could handle it. Therefore, by breaking through the Sky Spider Insect swarm, Chen Gu had essentially also broken through the Space Wolf Insect swarm.

Directly ahead of him was an incredibly massive creature, far exceeding even the largest mothership currently developed by humanity—a Giant Bubble Flyer. And in the space between the Space Wolf Insects, the Sky Spider Insect swarm, and the Giant Bubble Flyer, several dozen injured Space Wolf Insects were slowly flying back towards the Giant Bubble Flyer.

Just as human warships have damage control departments, injured members of the Alien Insect Race also received treatment. Inside the Giant Bubble Flyer were "dispensing pools" used to treat the injuries of the Insect Race. These injured Space Wolf Insects were flying back to have their wounds treated.

Chen Gu's initial plan, as he had told Andrew, was to blow up the entire Space Wolf Insect swarm. However, while the Mecha troops were preparing for battle, Chen Gu keenly observed that the injured Space Wolf Insects would fly back into the Giant Bubble Flyer for treatment. He decided to go for something bigger.

Chen Gu quickly targeted an injured Space Wolf Insect. The thruster engines on his Mecha's back abruptly changed direction, angling him toward the injured creature. This particular Space Wolf Insect had been hit by a turret on the transport ship. Fortunately, it wasn't a direct hit to a vital spot, but nearly twenty percent of its body had been sheared off. It was now dragging its tattered body, struggling to fly toward the Giant Bubble Flyer. The pain from its wounds made it extremely irritable. Just then, a tiny thing has the audacity to pounce towards me—it's seeking death!

It flew into a rage, swinging its remaining legs at Chen Gu while arching its back. In its ovary-shaped organs, a murky glow of bio-energy was condensing; its Acid Energy Cannon was ready to fire at any moment.

Chen Gu, however, continuously shifted positions in the void. If Chen Zili were present, he would have exclaimed, "The Great Nine Techniques of Ancient Martial Arts!" Using his Star Armor, Chen Gu executed footwork from *The Great Nine Techniques of Ancient Martial Arts*. He naturally wanted to use the more powerful Nuclear Combat Technique, but a Mecha wasn't a biological body. Its movements required coordination with each of its engines. The Nuclear Combat Technique was too advanced. Even though Chen Gu had switched to Griffin Wester's memories, making him equivalent to a Third Energy Level Star Battle Instructor, he still couldn't use High-Energy Combat Art to manipulate the Star Armor and perform the Nuclear Combat Technique's footwork in such a short time.

However, Chen Gu soon found that *The Great Nine Techniques of Ancient Martial Arts* were more than enough! Faced with the Star Armor deploying *The Great Nine Techniques of Ancient Martial Arts*, the bewildered Space Wolf Insect missed with all its ferocious strikes. Chen Gu's constantly shifting position made it unable to lock onto him, leaving it clueless as to where to aim its Acid Energy Cannon...

If Chen Gu had looked back at his fellow Star Armor warriors, he would have understood why the Space Wolf Insects were so bewildered. The clever maneuver Dou Zhanqiong had executed at the start of the battle was practically the limit for these ordinary Mecha pilots. They didn't understand High-Energy Combat Art and were fundamentally unable to integrate true martial arts into their Mecha operations, let alone the complex footwork from *The Great Nine Techniques of Ancient Martial Arts*.

The Space Wolf Insects had never faced such an opponent. With their inherently low intelligence, they were momentarily dumbfounded, unsure how to respond!

SWISH! Chen Gu was suddenly within a few meters of this Space Wolf Insect. As it turned to bite him, it didn't realize Chen Gu had been waiting for this exact opportunity. He abruptly ascended, looped in mid-air, and landed steadily on the Space Wolf Insect's back.

At the same time, he switched his *The Past Lives of Four Hundred* memory to Milna Katerina.

Radiation Field activated again, and Chen Gu could clearly perceive the fifty-meter section of the Space Wolf Insect's body beneath his Mecha's feet.

He raised his energy chainsaw, sliced down, and opened a wide gash on the Space Wolf Insect's back.

Chen Gu was about to execute the next step of his plan when Radiation Field suddenly detected a violent fluctuation within the body of the Space Wolf Insect beneath him. Instantly wary, Chen Gu quickly abandoned his plan and soared into the sky.

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Just as Chen Gu fled, the ovary-like organ on the Space Wolf Insect's back ejected a thick blast from its acid energy cannon!

Struck by Chen Gu's blade, the Space Wolf Insect, in sheer agony, fired an acid energy cannon at him without hesitation!

But Chen Gu was standing on its back, so the shot missed him and landed squarely on the creature's own neck.

Instantly, half of the Space Wolf Insect's neck was obliterated by its own acid energy cannon!

Already grievously wounded and now struck in a vital area, the Space Wolf Insect stopped moving. Soon, it became a corpse drifting in the Star Sea...

Dou Zhanqiong had killed two Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insects amidst the fight but was being rather miserably chased by a Space Wolf Insect. He turned his head only to see that far off in the starry sky, Chen Gu had killed a Space Wolf Insect!

Even if it was wounded, it was still a Space Wolf Insect, and the entire process seemed utterly effortless. In summary: the Space Wolf Insect, unwilling to be ridden by Chen Gu, got so enraged that it finished itself off!

It truly embodied the principle: "The Insect Race will never be slaves!"

Dou Zhanqiong also had achievements in killing Space Wolf Insects, but those were all flukes. The Star Armor's advantage over Space Wolf Insects lay in its agility; by coordinating, Mechas could hunt the

massive Space Wolf Insects. However, when facing one alone, a Mecha could only gain a slight advantage and then retreat, making a kill very difficult.

He couldn't help but mutter, "This guy... he's really something."

Chen Gu cursed the Space Wolf Insect's corpse for its stupidity and proceeded to look for his next target.

This time, Chen Gu got even closer to a Giant Bubble Flyer. A wounded Space Wolf Insect was about to fly back to it—that was his target!

Chen Gu chased after it. As if sensing a threat from his close proximity, the Giant Bubble Flyer's cavity doors opened again, releasing dozens of Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insects.

The Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insects were on a mission; they charged aggressively toward Chen Gu. But Chen Gu did not evade them and continued to chase the Space Wolf Insect through their ranks!

In a very short time, the swarm of Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insects and the Space Wolf Insect crossed paths, and Chen Gu crashed headlong into the arachnid swarm!

Dou Zhanqiong shook his head. "Why do you have to be so reckless..." he muttered. He just charged out of one insect swarm only to plunge straight into another!

But Dou Zhanqiong soon saw that within the Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insect swarm, the glow of the flame chainsaw would flash, or a triple-barrel rotating energy cannon would fire. With each instance, a Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insect became a corpse.

Chen Gu's "Radiation Field" had a range of only fifty meters, which was perfect for dealing with the smaller Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insects. Up close, Chen Gu could narrowly dodge their lunges and clearly identify the weakest parts of their bodies, striking them dead in a single blow!

This skirmish didn't last long. After Chen Gu had killed more than a dozen Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insects in succession, he burst out of the swarm and continued his pursuit of the Space Wolf Insect.

Behind him, the remaining Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insects, having lost more than half their kin, cluelessly continued the chase.

This was the terrifying aspect of the Insect Race. If it were two human armies clashing and Chen Gu had killed half the enemy warriors in a single charge, ninety-nine percent of armies in the world would collapse on the spot. They would have absolutely no courage left to continue the pursuit.

Chen Gu accelerated and, using a technique from the "Ancient Martial Arts Nine Forms," leaped onto this Space Wolf Insect's back. However, he didn't strike immediately; there was still some distance between the Space Wolf Insect and the Giant Bubble Flyer.

The Space Wolf Insect twisted its body violently, trying everything to throw Chen Gu off.

It dared not use its acid energy cannon because of the precedent set by its recently killed kin.

But Chen Gu leaped deftly on its back, dodging the Space Wolf Insect's huge and sharp legs, all the while calculating the time.

The pursuing Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insects gradually caught up. Chen Gu couldn't afford to be disturbed by them, so he activated his triple-barrel rotating energy cannon in a chaotic barrage. Its efficiency was greatly reduced compared to before, and while he failed to kill a single Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insect, he effectively halted their approach.

Then, looking at the Giant Bubble Flyer close at hand, Chen Gu unhesitatingly sliced a colossal wound into the Space Wolf Insect's back. At the same time, something was released from his Star Armor, falling into the wound.

Chen Gu revved up his engines and turned to flee.

The doubly wounded Space Wolf Insect desperately rushed back into the Giant Bubble Flyer, while Chen Gu cranked his engine power to maximum, fleeing for his life!

The Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insects chasing him couldn't comprehend why their prey, which had valiantly charged at them moments ago, was now only intent on escaping. Nevertheless, they pursued without hesitation. Chen Gu was overjoyed. He had a group of meat shields behind him now!

What he had thrown into the Space Wolf Insect's wound was the piece of remains bought from Wu Minzhe, also known as "Steam Locomotive."

These were the remains of a super life-form, which Chen Gu used to trigger a "Biological Nuclear Explosion." Honestly, even Chen Gu himself didn't know how powerful it would be.

After his ascension to the Second Energy Level, his control over the "Biological Nuclear Explosion" had greatly increased, allowing him to delay the blast for some time. This was Chen Gu's first time using this delayed function, however, and he had no idea exactly how long he could delay it.

Therefore, after planting the bomb, Chen Gu fled for dear life.

At the same time, Chen Gu issued a command to all Mecha pilots over the communication channel: "Retreat! All units, full retreat!"

Ordinary Mecha pilots were confused. Who is this guy? What right does he have to order us around?

Dou Zhanqiong and his two comrades knew Chen Gu had succeeded. Although Dou Zhanqiong still harbored some doubts, he issued the order as their company commander, "All units, retreat!"

All the Mecha pilots immediately abandoned the fight and flew towards the mothership.

Just as Chen Gu reached the designated "rendezvous" point with the mixed swarm of Space Wolf Insects and Sky-Snatching Arachnid Insects he had encountered earlier, the super life-form's remains he had thrown into the Space Wolf Insect's wound exploded...

In this era, when people thought of "grand fireworks," their first reaction was no longer the nuclear bombs of Chen Gu's original time. The era depicted in certain countries' films, where monsters and aliens were invariably dealt with by throwing nuclear bombs, was truly gone forever. Besides, aliens aren't like the simplistic foes from those old movies.

The first thing that came to mind for people of this era when thinking of grand fireworks was the Antimatter Bomb.

But this didn't mean that the power of a nuclear blast couldn't meet the standards of "grand fireworks"—for instance, the "Biological Nuclear Explosion" Chen Gu created this time using the remains of a super life-form!

The Giant Bubble Flyer itself was already immensely large, even surpassing humanity's current highest-grade motherships. If this were the era of mother planets, a single Giant Bubble Flyer would far exceed the size of a certain island country. In the Star Sea, it could rival a small asteroid.

The moment the "Biological Nuclear Explosion" occurred, the colossal creature's body suddenly shook, as if it had eaten something bad and was struck by a sudden, sharp pang of pain.

Then, intense light burst forth from within the Giant Bubble Flyer. Initially, it was just a few beams percolating through the weaker parts of its massive body. This was followed by a massive eruption of light from within, completely illuminating the Giant Bubble Flyer and rendering it translucent!