

Full Time 271

Chapter 271: Be Pious to Gourmet Food (2)

The Fish King was still in the agony of spawning. Its body trembled, but it swept its tail towards Chen Gu without hesitation.

This creature was massive, yet its movements were uncharacteristically agile. Chen Gu leaped into the air to dodge the tail, only to find the Fish King reaching out with a claw. It had anticipated Chen Gu's direction of dodge—this claw strike was sure to hit!

The Fish King's claws were as thick as century-old trees, with curved tips shining with a sharp, cold light. If caught, Chen Gu believed that even with his great strength, his body would not withstand such a blow.

He had no choice but to abandon Mind Remote Control and switch to another ability, Thought Storm!

An invisible wave of force emanated from Chen Gu, rapidly sweeping in all directions.

The fish that had swarmed onto the stone platform stiffened and fell off. Even the Fish King paused briefly, giving Chen Gu a chance to catch his breath. He landed on the Fish King's back, clutching tightly onto its metallic scales, then unleashed another Thought Storm. This time, however, it was not a group attack but targeted specifically at the Fish King.

Subsequently, he deployed Mind Remote Control once more.

Having suffered two Thought Storms, particularly the second one which left it dazed, the Fish King's resistance to Chen Gu's Mind Remote Control was significantly weakened. The Fish King began to fall under Chen Gu's influence bit by bit.

As the Fish King recovered from the Thought Storm, its resistance became somewhat self-contradictory, its actions hesitant.

But the massive swarm of fish below frantically surged upward. The fast-moving Energy Gathering Piranhas made their way onto the platform, baring their teeth and claws as they lunged at Chen Gu.

Chen Gu gripped the Fish King's scales with one hand to stabilize himself and wielded the Riverwash Sword with his free hand, slashing down an Energy Gathering Piranha.

However, at that moment, Chen Gu was a Brain Domain Hacker, not a Radiation Missionary. His execution of Nuclear Combat Technique was awkward and its power greatly reduced, forcing him to switch to Ancient Martial Great Nine Forms, which was naturally far less potent.

The swarm of fish madly surged forward. For every one he cut down, three more took its place.

Soon, dozens of Energy Gathering Piranhas had completely surrounded Chen Gu.

Chen Gu desperately held on, but in a moment of carelessness, one of the Energy Gathering Piranhas bit into him. Fortunately, at the critical moment, Chen Gu violently contracted his body, and the Energy Gathering Piranha only managed to bite through his clothes.

Chen Gu was wearing a protective spacesuit. If damaged, the nearby skin would immediately feel intense discomfort.

At this moment, Chen Gu was extremely grateful he had previously consumed the Skyrocketing Insect and snake eggs. These had greatly enhanced his physical strength, especially the snake eggs from the planet's indigenous creatures, which aided his adaptation to its environment.

So, despite the discomfort, there was no real harm. But seeing the surrounding Energy Gathering Piranhas repeatedly snapping their massive jaws, the sound of their steel teeth clicking, he still felt a shiver of lingering fear.

He swung his sword continuously, yet could not stop the Energy Gathering Piranhas from surging forward. Soon, hundreds of Energy Gathering Piranhas reached the back of the Fish King, and Chen Gu was close to his limit. If things got too dire, he would have to use Quantum Teleportation to retreat. Just then, the Energy Gathering Piranha King let out a roar, and the swarming fish suddenly quieted. The Energy Gathering Piranhas fiercely attacking Chen Gu also forcibly stopped. Though they still glared at him menacingly, they dared not move rashly under the Fish King's command.

Chen Gu sighed with relief. Just in the nick of time, Mind Remote Control finally succeeded!

Chen Gu, controlling the Fish King, had it let out another roar. The Energy Gathering Piranhas dispersed. Despite struggling with his own hunger, Chen Gu began to search through the Fish King's memories.

The intelligence of this Energy Gathering Mechanical Species was somewhat higher than that of the Steam Mechanical Species, only slightly better than average wild animals. This Fish King was smarter still, equivalent to a human child of about ten years old.

He took a look and found what he was looking for.

Then he commanded the Fish King to roar repeatedly. To his surprise, the fish swarm grew excited upon receiving the Fish King's orders. Soon, almost all the fish, including the juveniles, swarmed towards a large cave!

Under Chen Gu's control, the Fish King finished spawning, came down from the stone platform, and blended into the fish swarm, rolling away with them.

This cave was the main exit for the fish swarm.

The enormous fish swarm, possibly numbering in the tens or even hundreds of millions, surged forward like a breached flood. They traveled a long distance to reach a zone of caverns with particularly complex terrain.

The fish swarm, leaving en masse, had already alarmed the "masters" of this area.

In the complex terrain of the caves, countless Energy Gathering Mechanical Species with spider-like lower bodies and venomous snake-like upper bodies crawled out from the surrounding stone walls.

Their numbers were no less than that of the Energy Gathering Piranhas.

Then, as the Fish King let out a roar, the two massive swarms went to war...

Chen Gu wanted to eat the Fish King in peace and then make a full retreat, but first, he had to deal with the Energy Gathering Piranha swarm.

Every species has its natural predator. Of course, if the Energy Gathering Piranha swarm was at the very top of the planet's food chain, this rule would not apply.

If Chen Gu couldn't find any predators of the fish in the Fish King's memory, he would take the risk of leading the swarm back to that expanse of dark red, viscous ocean.

He didn't believe that odd super lifeform couldn't handle this small fish swarm. The problem was that Chen Gu himself might get entangled in the process.

Luckily, these fish did have an adversary: the Energy Gathering Snake-Spiders.

Living in proximity, the two sides often clashed during hunts. Today, the Fish King was to lead a "royal expedition" to completely annihilate their archenemy. The fish swarm was suddenly thrilled, each fighting eagerly to be first.

However, the reason these two swarms had been unable to get along yet coexisted for so many years was that they were evenly matched in strength.

The battle raged fiercely, with both Energy Gathering Piranhas and Energy Gathering Snake-Spiders dying constantly. With the Fish King constantly urging them on from behind, the fish swarm attacked madly, regardless of losses. The Energy Gathering Snake-Spiders, too, refused to abandon their lair. In the end, a giant Energy Gathering Snake-Spider King, as big as a small mountain, also appeared, squeaking strangely while directing its swarm to fight.

When Chen Gu saw this Energy Gathering Snake-Spider King appear, his eyes once again shot out two oily green beams. Another portion of pure, natural, delicious ingredient!

Eat it! I must eat it!

Indeed, his earlier decision not to just slice up the Fish King and flee was the right one. To enjoy a peaceful meal—it was precisely because of his reverence for delicacies that this second helping had come about!

It could only be said that, at this moment, Chen Gu was being influenced by Isabella Wu's memories in a rather... peculiar way.

Chapter 272: Be Pious to Gourmet Food (3)

The two clans fought until the heavens dimmed and the earth darkened. Many parts of the underground caverns were irreparably damaged. After an unknown amount of time, both clans were finally exhausted. The remaining low-ranking warriors, despite being continuously urged on by their kings, were still timid and fled, desperately seeking any path to escape.

Under Chen Gu's control, the Energy Gathering Piranha King ferociously pounced toward the Energy Gathering Snake Spider King!

With Chen Gu and the Energy Gathering Piranha King attacking together, it was as if Chen Gu had an additional Piranha King clone. How could the Energy Gathering Snake Spider King, whose strength was on par with the Piranha King, withstand this? Not long after, it let out a mournful howl and died on the spot.

Chen Gu also felt a throbbing in his brain, a sign that the "Mind Remote Control" skill had reached its limit.

Learning from his last experience controlling the Skyrocketing Insect, Chen Gu immediately made the Energy Gathering Piranha King ram headfirst into the cave wall.

BOOM!

The entire cave shook, the wall cracked, and fragments of rock burst in all directions.

What astonished Chen Gu, however, was that the head of the Energy Gathering Piranha King was incredibly hard. Astonishingly, it didn't die from the collision.

Seeing that he couldn't hold on much longer, Chen Gu finally made the Energy Gathering Piranha King charge toward the dead body of the Energy Gathering Snake Spider King.

When this creature died, one of its sharp, slender spider legs jutted high upwards. Chen Gu knew where the Piranha King's weak spot was and aimed it at the spider leg.

CRACK—

A truly grating sound rang out as the spider leg pierced deep into the Piranha King's weak spot. Chen Gu's "Mind Remote Control" skill dissipated, and the Piranha King regained its "self," only able to let out one tragic cry. It struggled in its dying throes, dragging the corpse of the Energy Gathering Snake Spider King, stumbling a few steps before finally collapsing dead.

Chen Gu took a breath and sat down with a thump, utterly exhausted.

However, this "hard work" was worth it. Now it's time to reward myself!

Chen Gu's index finger twitched with eagerness, yet he hesitated: Should I consume the Energy Gathering Piranha King first, or the Energy Gathering Snake Spider King?

Ah, such a tough choice.

So, Chen Gu decided not to choose. I want them all; I'll eat them both at once!

He started to work, and under the edge of the Riverwash Sword, he successfully sliced out a certain organ from the inside of the Energy Gathering Piranha King.

It was a substance that looked like a beautiful green gemstone with some bright yellow special pipes wrapped around it. In Chen Gu's eyes, it seemed just like a big lump of jelly.

This thing was the main reason the Piranha King could become a king. It secreted certain substances, allowing the Piranha King to break the size constraints of a regular Energy Gathering Piranha and grow to hundreds of times its size.

And the "delicacy" inside the Energy Gathering Snake Spider King was its six... venom sacs!

Inside, several liters of venom were collected! In Chen Gu's eyes, this was the sweetest beverage. Just by smelling the venom, he couldn't help but be intoxicated by it, subconsciously feeling, These two ingredients are a perfect match—just like red wine and steak from my previous life!

But Great Actor Chen had not completely lost himself. He still retained some sense of reason. This is venom, the venom of an Energy Gathering Mechanical Species king! To drink it would be to court death, wouldn't it?

Yet there was always a voice in his mind continually tempting him: Maybe, just maybe, I could. I'm a professional, and my physique is far different from ordinary people. What is deadly poison to ordinary folks may be nectar and ambrosia to me. Don't believe me? Just take a whiff... isn't it incredibly sweet?

Chen Gu decided to eat the innards first.

Influenced by the memories of Isabella Wu, Chen Gu fashioned cooking utensils, endured hunger, and earnestly began to cook.

More than half an hour later, a delicacy entered his mouth.

The material was indescribable. It was quite chewy upon consumption, reminiscent of eating tough toffee in his past life.

Chewing vigorously, he was surrounded by a tremendous sense of satisfaction, and the stuff was incredibly delicious. Chen Gu felt somewhat light-headed—as if he no longer cared about anything.

Suddenly feeling thirsty, he casually picked up the poison sacs, drained one in a gulp, and found it wonderfully tasty. Like being drunk, he was devoid of any other thoughts; drinking seemed the right thing to do.

By the time he had finished all six poison sacs, he shuddered: What have I done?!

He stood still for a while, waiting for a terrible reaction to occur within his body, but oddly enough, everything was fine; nothing went wrong.

He swayed his head, feeling in peak condition, his spirits soaring. Ignoring everything around him, he strode confidently toward a cave. THUD! He collided with the stone wall, sending rubble flying. Still, Chen Gu didn't realize anything was amiss. He reoriented himself and walked inside.

Behind him, in the vast underground cavern with its complex terrain, the ground was littered with the corpses of Energy Gathering Mechanical Species. The outcome of the battle was almost unbelievable, yet Chen Gu simply walked away.

It was only when he had gone a considerable distance that he suddenly felt dizzy and collapsed with a thud, thinking, Damn it, the poison's hit me...

「...」

The "Gong Gong Mechanical Corps" steadily advanced and indeed discovered an 'Alien Insect Race nest', although this nest was different from the one Nan Minghuo found—it was a traditional underground nest.

Despite its considerable size, it was incapable of spawning large Insect Race creatures, filled only with Claw Insects and Spike-Shooting Insects; even Egg Artillery Insects were rare.

Qiao Dingfang dispatched his "Light Cavalry Fourth Brigade," and within two hours, they had cleared out the nest.

The "Light Cavalry Fourth Brigade" was equipped with light Mechas and the "Nezha-3" Floating Weapon Platforms, each warrior flanked by eight of these hovering weapon units—as Selena once mocked Dora: Your ability is just a floating gun, after all.

Light Mechas, augmented with weapon control AI and coordinated with the "Nezha-3" Floating Weapon Platforms, allowed a single warrior to unleash firepower equivalent to an entire squad of ordinary

infantry. This made them the most effective combat units for large-scale extermination of common insect swarms.

As Qiao Dingfang reported to Bai Yunpeng, despite a facade of nonchalance and restraint, anyone could see the smugness in his heart.

After all, his supposedly elite main force had been outmaneuvered by the motley "Chu Xiang Composite Brigade." Did Qiao Dingfang not care about losing face?

Now things were looking up. Nan Minghuo had merely discovered an Alien Insect Race nest, but he had genuinely annihilated one—clearly outranking the other.

In the Central Operations Room, Bai Yunpeng and Nan Zhendong were puzzled. "We've found three nests so far," Bai Yunpeng said. "The Insect Race has committed a somewhat disproportionately large force to this battle area..."

"Could there be something different here?" Nan Zhendong wondered aloud. "Or do they have some greater plan to swallow our entire military force in this battle zone?"

Nan Zhendong then added firmly, "We need to be careful!"

After some thought, Bai Yunpeng went to find Aviloya and asked for help. "I'd like to send out a professional reconnaissance team to thoroughly investigate this zone. Could I ask for Lord Gong Shuxu's support?"

Aviloya had been considering recalling Gong Shuxu; after all, a Sixth Energy Level was not to be taken lightly.

But the battle against the Alien Insect Race was a major event for the entire tribe, and she herself had risen from this conflict. So, after brief consideration, she nodded and said, "Good."

Chapter 273: Enormous Stature

On the planet, Qiao Dingfang led his massive army triumphantly forward. They were now only 600 kilometers away from their target, Hive Number One.

Although he had outmaneuvered the Chu Xiang mixed brigade and reclaimed the prestige befitting the main force, Qiao Dingfang had not let success go to his head. That underground nest had served as a warning, and he constantly reminded his troops as they advanced, "Do not act rashly. We must sweep the area as we go, identify any hidden dangers, and eliminate them in advance!"

When the temperature was at its highest, the scouts at the forefront discovered a vast area of uneven terrain and alerted the larger force behind them.

Qiao Dingfang's reconnaissance riders flew through the air. When the main force caught up, the riders quickly found numerous holes, about thirty centimeters high, across the region. The entrances were smooth, as if something frequently moved in and out.

Since humanity's large-scale advance on this planet, no native creatures had been discovered, so everyone's first thought was the Alien Insect Race!

Immediately, Qiao Dingfang ordered, "Halt the advance."

Soon, a team of elite light Mechas entered the area. After searching, they found several larger holes. They didn't risk entering but instead released bio-mimetic reconnaissance mechanical insects.

As these hundreds of mechanical insects delved deeper, a complex and enormous underground cave system unfolded before everyone's eyes.

Not only Qiao Dingfang but also Bai Yunpeng and Nan Zhendong back in the Central Operations Room, were taken aback.

A few hours later, the mechanical insects discovered significant clues: numerous signs of biological activity.

In the distant main headquarters, Bai Yunpeng and Nan Zhendong wore solemn expressions. On the ground, Qiao Dingfang and his troops were already in strict formation; they had even preemptively devised several battle plans.

The mechanical insects moved forward another dozen or so kilometers and encountered a strong energy reaction, revealing a scene that took everyone by surprise.

A brutal underground battlefield lay before them; it seemed that hundreds of millions of Energy Gathering Mechanical Species had met their demise there!

The vast cave was filled with complicated terrain and littered with the corpses of the Energy Gathering Mechanical Species. Clearly, there were two warring groups, one being the Energy Gathering Piranhas and the other the Energy Gathering Spider Snakes.

Seeing the massive numbers of both, Qiao Dingfang's face was solemn, but he also breathed a quiet sigh of relief. That was close!

The legion commander looked out at the vast, rocky plain before him. It was pocked with countless hidden caves, and he understood this was undoubtedly the hunting ground for these two giant groups of Energy Gathering Mechanical Species.

They ambushed their prey here. Had they not been engaged in mutual destruction, his troops would have faced a bitter struggle on this territory.

Even in victory, losses would have been severe, and there was even a real possibility of defeat. After all, these Energy Gathering Mechanical Species were very familiar with the underground caves, holding a geographical advantage.

Amidst this feeling of fortune, a strange thought suddenly occurred to him. Hive Number Two's inexplicable collapse allowed that Nan Minghuo to escape disaster. On our Gonggong Mechanized Legion's march, two gigantic groups of Energy Gathering Mechanical Species wiped each other out, meaning we also narrowly escaped a catastrophe! Well, it's a draw then. And since I discovered and annihilated Hive Number Three, all things considered, I'm still one up!

The mechanical insects had already located the monarchs of both species.

They quickly approached and circled the two monarchs, scanning and collecting data. Soon, certain details on the corpses drew everyone's attention.

"This is... the presence of a third party? A part of the Fish King's internal organs and all the Spider King's venom sacs have been dissected and removed!"

In the Central Operations Room, an advisor couldn't help but remark, "Is this a case of 'the fisherman profiting when the snipe and clam grapple'?"

Bai Yunpeng's intuition, however, told him, I'm afraid it's not that simple. It's possible that this unseen third party came specifically for these two monarchs and perhaps even instigated this great battle from the outset.

This was just speculation, without evidence to back it up, so it didn't win much support from others. Then the video feed changed: there were actually some stone pots, stone basins, and stone bowls nearby...

"This..." The entire Central Operations Room was speechless. What is going on?

But Qiao Dingfang truly felt lucky; no matter what, his troops had avoided a tough battle.

The mechanical insects searched the entire battlefield and quickly found the lair of the Energy Gathering Piranhas. The Central Operations Room then issued a command, "Continue to advance, and on your way... be extremely careful."

"Yes!" Qiao Dingfang acknowledged the order. Truthfully, he didn't need their reminder; he felt he had nearly become as skittish as a startled bird already.

The [Gonggong Mechanical Corps] continued along the designated route towards Hive Number One. Behind them, the all-class professional reconnaissance squad sent by Bai Yunpeng had already rendezvoused with Gong Shuxu, preparing for an in-depth inspection of the entire war zone.

Meanwhile, in the Central Operations Room, Bai Yunpeng and Nan Zhendong stared at the screen showing the pots, pans, bowls, and a clay stove, lost in thought.

...

Chen Gu finally woke up in the darkness. It felt like he had been through a hangover, with a splitting headache and a parched mouth.

He sat up and looked around at the stillness. Then, a wave of fear washed over him as he recalled his experience. From now on, I really can't let that crazy woman, Isabella Wu, influence me. I need to control my mouth; I can't just eat anything. And I especially can't disregard everything just for food. I'm a highly intelligent life form, after all!

He lightly slapped his own mouth, then stood up with a wobble, accidentally bumping his head on the cave ceiling.

BANG!

Chen Gu's headache, already present, worsened immediately. He reached out, steadying himself against the stone wall.

It took a while for him to recover. Then, as he looked up again, his head hit the rock. Chen Gu realized something was amiss; the cave seemed to have gotten shorter.

Before he passed out and walked into this cave, there had been tens of centimeters between his head and the rocks above. How could he be hitting his head now just by looking up?

Chen Gu suddenly had a realization: Wait, did this 'Best Actor' grow taller?!

Another thing confirmed this: his entire protective suit had burst.

In other words, Chen Gu was now a good tens of centimeters taller than before.

Chen Gu's original height was already above average for this era, a little over 1.8 meters but not quite 1.85 meters. He was still young and estimated he might have eventually reached about 1.9 meters after college.

The average adult height in this era was around 1.85 meters.

But now, Chen Gu was at least 2.2 meters tall!

This height wasn't particularly astounding for this era, but growing tens of centimeters after just one sleep definitely was.

Chen Gu didn't feel excited about the sudden increase in height; it wasn't like a sudden increase in assets. Instead, he just smiled wryly. Really, I can't just eat things recklessly anymore...

He quickly thought about it; none of his four current professions had any skills that would change his physique...

Chapter 274 - [Fantasy Comes True]

No, that's not right! Chen Gu suddenly remembered that there actually was a profession with this ability: the advanced skill of a Brain Domain Hacker, "Imaginative Creation." If he could really use this ability, even transforming into a towering giant wouldn't be a problem, he thought. Could it really be related to this skill?

He tried switching to Isabella Wu's memories and then, with strength equivalent to the Third Energy Level, activated "Imaginative Creation." Unexpectedly, his body actually began to shrink slowly according to his "imagination," and before long, he had returned to his original height!

"This..." Chen Gu was ecstatic. "After eating two kinds of delicious ingredients, I can actually use such a powerful skill?" The benefits were "delicious ingredients," and the drawbacks were "odd and bizarre things," he mused.

Chen Gu quickly started imagining. In front of me lies a gigantic remnant of a super life form!

The space before him remained empty.

In front of me lies a remnant of a super life form of normal size.

Still empty.

In front of me lies a tiny remnant of a super life form!

Yet, there was still no response.

Chen Gu scratched his head and changed his request. In front of me, there are 1,000,000 Starshields.

But there were none.

He didn't give up. There is a mountain spring on the stone wall.

Still nothing.

After numerous tries, Chen Gu finally concluded despondently that this so-called "Imaginative Creation" was a severely castrated version. Apart from changing his body size, it was utterly useless for anything else.

However, the ability to change his body size was quite handy. His body could even expand to over three meters, an effect almost rivaling the transformation of the Hell Titan. Moreover, he could control the transformation of individual body parts without having to expand or shrink his entire form.

HMM... Chen Gu stroked his chin, suddenly struck by a bold idea! But he did not attempt it.

After exerting himself for a while, the splitting headache from his hangover finally dissipated. Chen Gu continued forward. Before falling unconscious, he had been in an almost drunken stupor, so he didn't know where he had ended up. Now, all he could think of was finding an exit to see what was above ground.

He now knew this underground cave was fraught with danger and the Energy Gathering Mechanical Species were very powerful, so he proceeded with extreme caution.

「...」

The battlefield was gruesome. This planet's desert terrain was a rare sight. Towering Mechas were surrounded and cut off by innumerable insects of the Insect Race, losing contact with each other and forced to fight alone. Every now and then, a Mecha position would be breached by the Insect Race; mighty Mechas would be toppled, then swarmed and overrun by countless insects.

The fierce wind often whipped up sand, shrouding the battlefield in a haze and making the situation appear even more dire.

In the sky, a dozen Close Range Attack Ships that had rushed to provide support were entangled with over thirty Skyrocketing Insects, constantly at a disadvantage. Three of them were already billowing thick black smoke. Though they were still desperately holding on, everyone could see their fall was only a matter of time.

Humanity's Close Range Attack Ships were already few in number. Once these three fell, the battle would inevitably and completely be lost.

Atop a huge sand dune, hundreds of light and heavy Mechas were locked in fierce combat, forming a protective circle around an especially colossal and unique Mecha in the center.

The Mechas employed by human ground forces—heavy Mechas included—were only about ten meters tall, at most no more than twenty meters, and couldn't be compared to Star Armor.

However, this particular Mecha stood a towering one hundred and fifty meters tall and appeared extremely bulky. Its feet sank deep into the sand. Although its movements were somewhat cumbersome, it provided the most crucial fire support on the battlefield, second only to the Close Range Attack Ships.

This was the ultimate weapon of the Confederation's ground warfare: the War Leveller!

Strictly speaking, this weapon wasn't a Mecha. It required an entire reinforced company of warriors to operate and used a special material reactor for power. It was fitted with hundreds of energy cannons of

various calibers, as well as sixty-eight other types of weapons. Its armor was also extremely thick, capable of withstanding a direct hit from a Close Range Attack Ship. It was a concentration of firepower, capable of crushing any ground combat force.

The one before them was only a first Energy Level War Leveller; the highest, Third Energy Level War Levellers, reached up to three hundred meters tall.

Because of their immense weight, these terrifying war machines couldn't be transported whole by ordinary ground-attack transport ships. Typically, they were dismantled, shipped in pieces, and then assembled on-site.

The 'Roar Number' War Leveller before them was the flagship of the Roaring Mecha Regiment. It was unfortunately caught in extremely unfavorable terrain, making the already cumbersome War Leveller even more difficult to maneuver. But the War Leveller was armed to the teeth. Unable to move? That didn't matter; it would simply fire in all directions!

However, this time, they were genuinely ambushed by the insects.

The vast majority of the planet's surface was hot, coarse rock. Previous battles had taken place on rocky mountains, so the Alien Insect Race had only deployed surface species like the Claw Beetle, Sting Beetle, and Cannon Egg Beetle. But here, as soon as the Roaring Mecha Regiment appeared, they were overwhelmed by a large number of subterranean attackers—Sand Serpents, Burrower Electric Beetles, and Stealthy Swallow Beetles—which burst from the sand to attack from below. Then, swarms of fierce Mosquito Insects flew in from all directions. On the ground, countless Armored Beetles, Claw Beetles, and more swarmed forward.

The Roaring Mecha Regiment's strength was clearly superior to that of the Chu Xiang Mixed Brigade, but the first wave of the ambush dealt them a devastating blow. Although they later received support from

Close Range Attack Ships, the Insect Race countered by sending an even greater number of Skyrocketing Insects.

So, after several hours, the situation became increasingly dire. The Mecha warriors were utterly scattered, forced to fight individually. Defeat seemed only a matter of time.

In the Central Operations Room, Bai Yunpeng was extremely annoyed and began to demand accountability. "What's going on? Where did this huge swarm of insects come from, and why didn't we detect them before?"

Several operations staff officers manipulated their equipment and pulled up footage recorded by war satellites. It showed large numbers of insects pouring out from between several mountains near the desert, rushing to reinforce the battlefield. However, when the satellites flew over those mountains, they detected nothing.

Bai Yunpeng immediately understood, gritting his teeth. "The Mirage Clam Insects!"

Moments later, he added angrily, "Yustadak cannot escape blame!"

Inside the 'Roar Number' War Leveller, Regimental Commander Yustadak was frantically operating four square energy cannons by himself, continuously sweeping the endless waves of insects on the ground. Watching his Mecha warriors fall one by one outside, his heart filled with infinite regret.

The Central Operations Room had, of course, informed him about the Mirage Clam Insects at the earliest opportunity. He could have proceeded cautiously like Qiao Dingfang, sending out numerous light Mechas for reconnaissance to ensure absolute safety before advancing. But the advance party, the Chu

Xiang Mixed Brigade, had already fallen behind due to additional tasks, and the speed of the main force, the Gong Gong Mechanical Regiment, had suddenly slowed. This was when Yustadak harbored a trace of ambition! If I could be the first to breach Hive Number One...

Chapter 275 - Skill Improvement

As for adventure, there definitely was some risk involved, but when was war ever a sure thing? Risk was always part of the equation.

So Yustadak hastened his advance, and he led his Mecha warriors straight into an ambush set up by the Insect Race.

But now, it was too late for regrets. His own death wasn't a cause for pity, but the warriors under his command were dragged down by their leader—they were all fine young men.

Yustadak was filled with infinite regret, and the fire from his weapons grew even fiercer as he tried to save as many as he could with his own abilities.

However, the swarm of insects was endless—escaping was not an option. Resolving one crisis only led to being entangled in another dangerous situation soon after.

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Chen Gu suddenly saw a glimmer of light ahead and felt a surge of joy. He stealthily moved closer. It was either an exit or some kind of machine that emitted light.

Luckily for Great Actor Chen this time, he discovered a narrow opening.

The exit was surrounded by rubble, which suggested that no machines had passed through there. Chen Gu peeked cautiously outside, uncertain if it was safe.

Suddenly a dark shadow swept quickly past the opening, startling Chen Gu so much that he didn't dare to move in the cave.

Then, one after another, shadows flashed by. Chen Gu, whose vision had already adjusted a bit, could see that they were pitch-black with some special dark patterns.

Chen Gu murmured to himself, They don't look like machines, more like... insects!

He didn't realize that during all this time burrowing underground, he kept circling around one battle zone. He couldn't make out his direction underground, nor did he know how far he had actually traveled.

The shadows streamed by relentlessly until at last, they were all gone. Chen Gu pushed aside the rubble and cautiously crawled out. Looking ahead at the shadows confirmed his suspicion—it was indeed a large group of insects he was familiar with: Gigantic Armored Beetles, Giant Claw Beasts, Spine-Shooting Insects...

Looking in the direction from which the insects had come, between several mountain peaks there was peace, with restless Claw Beasts crawling back and forth at the valley mouth.

Why did this scene feel so familiar?

Chen Gu suddenly remembered that outside the nest of the Skyrocketing Insect he had consumed earlier, it looked just like this.

He switched to Griffin West's memories and after a moment, found a safe infiltration route. He then moved forward cautiously, skirting around a mountain peak and indeed, he saw another massive insect nest!

Compared with the nest Chen Gu had destroyed the last time, there were fewer Troop Nest Beetles here—only about sixty or seventy.

But these Troop Nest Beetles were all hastening the hatching of other members of the Insect Race. There were dozens of huge withered cocoons on the ground; the Skyrocketing Insects inside were nowhere to be found.

Chen Gu sharply realized. Had the battle already begun?

On this planet, the only enemies of the Insects were humans, so the other side involved in the battle had to be the human military.

Chen Gu's thoughts spun quickly. This was an opportunity to return to human society, but if he went back just like this, how much could he really help in this battle?

During this time, Chen Gu had gotten a grasp of the "tricks of the trade" for a professional's involvement in war.

It was much like the last time when he had controlled the Skyrocketing Insect; with his own power alone, he had destroyed the entire hidden nest.

But there was clearly no such opportunity with the current nest, yet this did not mean Chen Gu could do nothing.

He lurked in the shadows and, after observing for a while, he chose a Giant Claw Beast and initiated Quantum Teleportation. In the next moment, he appeared beneath the Giant Claw Beast.

The Giant Claw Beast stood still, surrounded by a large number of other Insect Race members.

They were clustered around a Troop Nest Beetle, waiting for other members of their race to emerge from the Troop Nest Beetle. Once a unit was assembled, they would set off for the battlefield together.

Chen Gu arrived unnoticed, startling not a single insect around him. He hid in the shadow beneath the Giant Claw Beast and began Mind Remote Control.

The size of the Giant Claw Beast was similar to that of the energy-gathering carnivorous fish king, but its intelligence was much inferior, roughly equivalent to that of a five-year-old human child.

Even so, completely controlling an intelligent life-form was not an easy feat.

The Giant Claw Beast did not know what was happening, but it felt an intense "headache," so it roared and began thrashing wildly, brandishing its teeth and claws with terrifying ferocity.

Other Claw Beasts and Spine-Shooting Insects around it were flung away in an instant, creating chaos near the Troop Nest Beetle.

This turmoil inadvertently exposed Chen Gu.

But Chen Gu was huddled under the Giant Claw Beast, and as long as he carefully avoided the claws of the beast above, he sneered inwardly at the other insects outside that had discovered him. Come at me if you dare!

A Giant Claw Beast in the throes of severe pain was no easy creature to approach. Several Claw Beasts howled continuously, charging at Chen Gu without reason, only to be predictably sent flying by the rampaging Giant Claw Beast...

Chen Gu sneered secretly, but the commotion quickly caught the attention of other insects. A host of Gigantic Armored Beetles, accompanied by several other Giant Claw Beasts, hurried over to subdue this troublemaker.

If they really managed to close in, Chen Gu would be thrown into a tough fight, and it was likely this would interrupt his Mind Remote Control over the Giant Claw Beast.

By then, he would have to use Quantum Teleportation to escape.

Chen Gu no longer paid attention to the surrounding insects and concentrated all his efforts on his skill, determined to take control of the Giant Claw Beast before the big bugs arrived.

Originally, Chen Gu thought he was racing against time to control this big fellow. Even if he was a bit faster than with the Fish King, he feared it wouldn't be by much.

But to his surprise, this time it went exceptionally smoothly. The Giant Claw Beast resisted Mind Remote Control and posed a certain obstacle for Chen Gu, but with his focused power enhancing the skill, the Giant Claw Beast's resistance seemed feeble. Chen Gu, astonished, found he had taken control of the big brute while those big bugs were still hundreds of meters away.

He had expected a hard and dangerous struggle, but it turned out to be unexpectedly easy.

Could it be because of... those things I ate last time?

Chen Gu speculated but now was not the time to clarify. He leapt onto the back of the Giant Claw Beast and, controlling the creature, bulldozed through those "little insects." Upon reaching the Troop Nest Beetle, he jumped up with effort and charged on.

Then came a massacre!

The Troop Nest Beetle was in unspeakable agony, unable to make any sound. It was immobile and trembling all over with pain—this became a silent urge, pushing the insects to swarm frantically, determined to rip this "rebel" to shreds!

Chapter 276: The Man Who Plays with Explosions

Between these mountain peaks, a small basin had formed. Tens of thousands of insects from the Insect Race remained here, besides those dispatched after forming units.

Because one of the Troop Nest Beetles had been attacked, the others were accelerating their hatching process, spawning soldiers to kill that rebel!

Chen Gu saw that nearly all the insects in the basin had gathered around this particular Troop Nest Beetle, and he broke into a smile.

While on the giant ghoulish claw bug, he gently raised his hand, pressing down on a certain part of the Troop Nest Beetle beside him.

Then, familiar, faint blue ripples began to undulate. In an instant, Quantum Teleportation whisked both him and the giant ghoulish claw bug away from the basin.

THUMP!

Chen Gu and the giant ghoulish claw bug landed outside the mountain range. Simultaneously, within the basin, the light bursting from that Troop Nest Beetle was so intensely bright that the arriving insects, in pain, turned their heads to avoid it. Then, in the next moment, a massive fireball soared into the sky...

Behind the mountain range, Chen Gu felt the familiar trembling of the earth and cracked a smile. He patted the giant ghoulish claw bug crouching beneath him like a loyal dog and muttered to himself, Indeed, I've always been a man who plays with explosions.

Hardly any insects remained in the basin. Chen Gu's attack on the Troop Nest Beetle was intended to attract all the other insects so he could eliminate as many as possible with a single Biological Nuclear Explosion.

He had not attacked the Troop Nest Beetle directly because the giant ghoulish claw bug was more conspicuous and could draw the other insects' attention more quickly.

Moreover, the giant ghoulish claw bug's rebellion would enrage the insects even further, hastening their gathering.

As he rode the giant ghoulish claw bug out, the ghoulish claw bugs on sentry duty outside the mountain range couldn't understand what was happening. It's clearly a giant ghoulish claw bug, but why is there a human on its back?

Before they could figure it out, the giant ghoulish claw bug's claws descended, impaling them.

He returned to the basin. Due to its wide area and the even distribution of the Troop Nest Beetles, only about a dozen had been killed by the first explosion. Chen Gu spurred the giant ghoulish claw bug toward another Troop Nest Beetle and triggered a second Biological Nuclear Explosion!

He continued this process, bombing them one by one, until only thirty Troop Nest Beetles remained. By then, Chen Gu could no longer initiate Biological Nuclear Explosions.

But he had other skills. For instance, by combining Nuclear Meltdown Ray Eyes with Radiation Field after finding the Troop Nest Beetles' weak spots, he effortlessly killed them.

The reason he waited until all his Biological Nuclear Explosions were spent before using these skills was simple: Chen Gu truly was a man who played with explosions.

Clearing this nest was particularly challenging for Chen Gu. By the time he reached the last Troop Nest Beetle, he was gasping for breath.

Yet, a bold idea suddenly occurred to him. He casually killed the giant ghoulish claw bug beneath him with his sword and began exerting Mind Remote Control on the enormous Troop Nest Beetle.

The invisible spiritual power, like tentacles, wrapped around the Troop Nest Beetle. It wasn't long before Chen Gu understood that Troop Nest Beetles were more like 'biological tools' without a clear sense of self; what they hatched was entirely the decision of the Empress controlling them.

For example, the Skyrocketing Insect Chen Gu had controlled previously had been prearranged by the Empress to set up cocoons upon landing.

Their job was to hatch, providing the developing insects with nourishment and energy.

Even so, they exhibited some organism-level neural reflexes. Even if he couldn't completely control them, a Brain Domain Hacker could still make a difference.

Chen Gu had originally wanted to see if he could control the hatched swarm via the Troop Nest Beetle, but now he changed his mind. He withdrew Mind Remote Control, swept a Thought Storm over the Troop Nest Beetle, making its body stiffen and tremble, and then used Mental Tentacles to adjust some of the beetle's neurons.

Following these neural "commands," the Troop Nest Beetle's body began to focus all its efforts on hatching a large creature: the Blazing Mammoth Bug.

This, in turn, stopped the hatching of other insects.

In just half an hour, one of the cocoons within the Troop Nest Beetle swelled at a rate visible to the naked eye.

Before the Blazing Mammoth Bug matured, Chen Gu had already taken control of it with Mind Remote Control.

Then, as the Blazing Mammoth Bug "fell ripe from the stem," Chen Gu mounted it. With a blast from his Nuclear Meltdown Ray Eyes, he completely killed the Troop Nest Beetle and steered the Blazing Mammoth Bug straight toward the battlefield.

「 」

The Roaring Mecha Corps had reached their last stand, with Close Range Attack Ships constantly crashing from the sky. Although the Skyrocketing Insects also suffered losses, their numbers still greatly exceeded those of the human warships.

Three Skyrocketing Insects had now disengaged from the main battle and were flying toward the Roar, the war machine, intent on destroying this most threatening weapon!

In fact, because the Empress commanded from behind the scenes, the Insect Race's grasp of the battle situation had always been delayed. They should have targeted the Roar with Skyrocketing Insects much earlier.

However, Chen Gu, still dozens of kilometers away, did not see that after he killed the last Troop Nest Beetle, the swarms on the battlefield suddenly descended into chaos.

Even those three Skyrocketing Insects slowed their pace somewhat.

The Close Range Attack Ships seized this opportunity to destroy an already injured Skyrocketing Insect.

But soon, the swarms calmed down. At the rear of the entire insect army, amidst the dense ghoul claw bug swarm, one very ordinary and inconspicuous ghoul claw bug quietly broke away from the main group. It found a relatively hidden place and suddenly let out painful shrieks.

This ghoul claw bug began to mutate!

All of its legs and claws plunged deep into the ground. As they pierced deeper, they began to resemble the subterranean tentacles of a Troop Nest Beetle.

To delve deeper underground and obtain nutrients and energy, its tentacles had to pierce very deeply. It frantically drew materials and nutrition from its own body to sustain their growth. This caused its large body to shrink rapidly until, within just a few minutes, it became a diminutive Troop Nest Beetle.

Finally, when its tentacles were deep enough, it began to grow rapidly. Both the accelerated shrinking and rapid growth were extremely painful, violating biological norms. This mutated Troop Nest Beetle, now without vocal organs, trembled incessantly from pain. Yet, in just over ten minutes, it grew to be over ten meters tall.

Although still small compared to a mature Troop Nest Beetle, it could now re-establish contact with the Empress.

Once the mutated Troop Nest Beetle re-established contact with the Empress, the chaos and unrest throughout the entire swarm quickly subsided.

But just as the Empress transmitted new orders, THUMP, THUMP, THUMP... The beloved "Leading Actor" was riding his dear little motorcycle... no, riding his beloved elephant trunk... still incorrect, he was riding his beloved Blazing Mammoth Bug, arriving casually but purposefully.

Chapter 277 - Battlefield Troublemaker

Although the Troop Nest Beetle had chosen a relatively concealed location, Chen Gu still spotted the over ten-meters-tall creature at a glance.

He found it strange. Why is there a Troop Nest Beetle here?

Its height of over ten meters was enormous, but compared to those in the hive, this fellow was really just a little, little, little, little brother.

Then, before Chen Gu had time to think, he saw the unfavorable situation on the battlefield.

Chen Gu's expression darkened. He urged the Blazing Mammoth Bug to charge forward, and it then spewed a jet of flames at the newly born Troop Nest Beetle. The swarm on the battlefield was thrown into disarray again.

After burning the Troop Nest Beetle to death, Chen Gu didn't dwell on it. He flipped over and hid in the crevices of the Blazing Mammoth Bug's shell, continuing to control it as it charged onto the battlefield.

Awkwardly, on the edge of the battlefield, a heavy Mecha was engaged in a tough fight. Seeing a Blazing Mammoth Bug rush in, it raised its arm and fired without hesitation.

Chen Gu was startled. Controlling the Blazing Mammoth Bug, he made it lurch, narrowly dodging the cannon shot. After that, he no longer dared to let his mount get close to those Mecha warriors.

He began weaving through the swarm with slick moves. Oops, he accidentally knocked over a group of Claw Bugs. Just then, a heavy Mecha fired a cluster bomb. The bomb exploded in midair, and countless small projectiles rained down. The fallen Claw Bugs couldn't dodge in time and were all blasted to smithereens.

Oops, and "accidentally" he bumped into a giant Claw Bug. This giant Claw Bug was also "unlucky." The Mecha warrior in front of it happened to thrust an energy sword. The bug could have dodged it, but now it essentially slammed its vital spot onto the blade.

HISSS—

A chill to the core, spirits soaring.

"Oops," this is really embarrassing. I didn't expect that a flick of my tail would knock over an entire patch of Cannon-Egg Bugs behind me.

These Cannon-Egg Bugs were originally firing explosive eggs at the Roaring Warlord, but now the biological projectiles soared high only to fall back into the insect swarm. BOOM, BOOM, BOOM... The insects were thrown into utter chaos. The Blazing Mammoth Bug had already waddled far away, unscathed by the blasts!

Such a Blazing Mammoth Bug, more a hindrance than a help, rampaged through the swarm, causing countless "accidental injuries."

As it happened, this creature was also one of the most powerful types in the swarm. Those Claw Bugs and Spike Spitters fumed and snarled but were powerless against it. After wreaking such havoc, the Blazing Mammoth Bug finally caught the attention of some powerful members of its kind. Several Blazing Mammoth Bugs, giant Claw Bugs, and some newly emerged Burrowing Tunnel Bugs encircled it.

They weren't really trying to kill this Blazing Mammoth Bug, just trying to drive it away so it wouldn't cause any more trouble.

Under the menacing roars and intimidation of these "bosses," the Blazing Mammoth Bug seemed furious. But after roaring back a few times, it "wisely" turned and fled.

The "bosses" were satisfied. Working together, how could we not handle a young upstart like you? But as they were shaking their heads and about to disperse, a volley of energy cannon fire rained down from the nearby Roaring Warlord, blasting them all into fragments on the spot!

Yustadak was very pleased with his marksmanship. So many large insects, their minds must be addled to cluster together like that! I really seized that opportunity and eliminated them with one shot.

And the culprit, that particular Blazing Mammoth Bug, had already scampered off, completely unscathed.

It waddled across the battlefield. Suddenly spotting a Mecha warrior, it "saw red" and, roaring, charged.

But upon reaching the Mecha warrior, its foot suddenly sank, stepping on a Subterranean Lightning Bug that was about to ambush the warrior from beneath the sand.

The Subterranean Lightning Bug let out a terrible scream, almost split in half, while the Blazing Mammoth Bug also stumbled and fell. Getting up, it unleashed its fury, bellowing at the Subterranean Lightning Bug, and in a rage, tore its victim in two!

The Mecha warrior wore a look of complete bewilderment. However, being in only a light Mecha, he didn't dare engage the Blazing Mammoth Bug. With a swift movement, the rocket engines on his back fired, whisking him far away.

Many warriors, including Yustadak, suddenly felt that the battle wasn't as "intense" anymore.

In the command center of the warship Roaring Warlord, Yustadak suddenly asked his lieutenant, "How long has it been since new Insect Race reinforcements arrived?"

The lieutenant, whose focus had mostly been on coordinating artillery fire with Yustadak, was jolted by the question. After a moment of serious recollection, he suddenly realized, "Almost an hour now!"

Previously, a large group of Insect Race reinforcements was certain to arrive within half an hour at most. They were very familiar with the Insect Race's combat methods: once they locked onto prey, they would continuously send reinforcements, leveraging the hive's powerful production capacity, until the prey was utterly destroyed.

Hope also rose in Yustadak's heart. The hive wouldn't give up. Something unexpected must have happened!

The lieutenant's voice trembled slightly. "Is this our chance?"

"Yes!" Yustadak replied, then fired another shot, annihilating a group of large Claw Bugs. Before firing, he had seen a Blazing Mammoth Bug waddling away, and he couldn't help feeling a pang of regret. Still, taking out more than ten large Claw Bugs with one shot was a notable achievement.

He just found it strange. That Blazing Mammoth Bug... it looks somewhat familiar.

Chen Gu had engineered the deaths of hundreds of large insects, but he remained calm and clear-headed. The true key to deciding the outcome of this battle lies in the confrontation between the Close Range Attack Ships in the sky and the Skyrocketing Insects.

Controlling the Blazing Mammoth Bug, Chen Gu had it amble leisurely through the swarm, its head swinging side to side. Unseen, his actions were already beginning to shift the ground battle in their favor.

He directed the Blazing Mammoth Bug to dash straight beneath a Skyrocketing Insect. Then, looking up, it let out a roar and unleashed two jets of flame towards the Skyrocketing Insect's opponent, a Close Range Attack Ship!

Of course, this was futile. The Close Range Attack Ship, thousands of meters high in the sky, barely registered the provocation from the insect below. It simply had too many targets to spare additional firepower; otherwise, a single shot could have reduced the Blazing Mammoth Bug to ashes.

But Chen Gu's real target was never the Close Range Attack Ship. The fiery barrage swept across a swarm of Mosquito Bugs, incinerating over a dozen unlucky ones on the spot. Several others were sent tumbling to the ground by the rolling heatwaves.

Having failed to attack the enemy ship, the Blazing Mammoth Bug seemed extremely enraged and agitated, jumping around and howling. No one noticed an unfortunate Mosquito Bug being trampled beneath its feet.

Then Chen Gu quietly activated Mind Remote Control, effortlessly taking control of the Mosquito Bug.

Chapter 278 - That Man, He's Appeared Again!

Great Actor Chen was under considerable strain at this moment; controlling two creatures simultaneously with "Mind Control" was a first for him.

Empowered by Isabella Wu's assimilated memories, his strength was equivalent to a Third Energy Level Brain Domain Hacker, but simultaneously managing two creatures still stretched his capabilities.

Fortunately, the rich experience in Isabella Wu's memories was of great help to him. Otherwise, he truly wouldn't have been able to do it.

The Fierce Mosquito Bug took off in a crooked flight. Whether it was dazed from a crash or not, it didn't return to its swarm but instead rammed into a Skyrocketing Insect.

The moment it collided, the glow of a Biological Nuclear Explosion erupted violently from the Fierce Mosquito Bug.

BOOM—

Given its small size, the Biological Nuclear Explosion unleashed by the Fierce Mosquito Bug naturally couldn't compare in power to one from a Blazing Mammoth Bug or a Troop Nest Beetle.

However, Chen Gu had previously controlled a Skyrocketing Insect and knew its anatomy like the back of his hand. The Fierce Mosquito Bug had chosen a very clever location for the explosion.

It wasn't a fatal spot for the Skyrocketing Insect. Given the Fierce Mosquito Bug's explosive power, even a blast in a vulnerable area wouldn't actually kill the Skyrocketing Insect. The explosion targeted a critical area on the Skyrocketing Insect's body, one rich in nervous tissue. An impact there from the explosion would paralyze the giant bug for a short time, rendering it incapable of flight.

This particular Skyrocketing Insect, now rigid, crashed to the ground!

BOOM...

WHOOSH—

It plummeted into the desert, crushing countless insects, then skidded a great distance.

This was all Chen Gu could manage. The rest was up to the warriors in the Close Range Attack Ships to seize the opportunity.

Chen Gu estimated the paralysis would last half a minute at most.

Fortunately, the Confederation warriors didn't disappoint him. From a Close Range Attack Ship, an energy ray cannon fired rapidly, accurately hitting the Skyrocketing Insect's vital spot!

The Skyrocketing Insect died instantly, its enormous body twisting on the ground until, after more than ten minutes, it finally lay still.

Cheers erupted on the Close Range Attack Ship. The victory was practically a gift, as the Skyrocketing Insect they had been battling inexplicably plummeted, becoming a live target!

Chen Gu secretly sighed in relief, then controlled the Blazing Mammoth Bug and jauntily walked away.

「...」

In the Central Operations Room, Aviloya had already left.

While handling official duties at the Bureau, she suddenly received a call from Bai Yunpeng. "There's a situation I think I need to report to you."

"What situation?"

"Come over. It concerns military secrets."

Aviloya was somewhat displeased but, given her military background, she quickly arrived at the Central Operations Room. Bai Yunpeng wasted no time, immediately signaling an aide beside him, who then played footage captured by a war satellite.

In the mountain basin obscured by the illusion-producing beetles, a massive flame suddenly soared into the sky.

Aviloya's heart stirred. She was very familiar with the form of that flame. "Biological Nuclear Explosion?"

Bai Yunpeng was faintly excited. "I also concluded it was a Biological Nuclear Explosion!"

Aviloya pondered for a moment, then said, "You mean... Chen Gu?"

Bai Yunpeng nodded forcefully. "It could only be him!"

Aviloya still found it hard to believe. "But he's already..." She didn't finish her sentence before a series of beeps suddenly rang out. Several combat staff rushed to the instruments, operated them quickly, and then excitedly clipped some battle footage. "Marshal Bai, look!"

It was multi-angle footage of the Fierce Mosquito Bug's explosion, captured by an "observation post" near the battlefield.

This time, Bai Yunpeng was even more certain. "Still a Biological Nuclear Explosion. Who else could it be but him?"

"On that planet, all of our professionals are accounted for. The only Radiation Missionary not under our control is Chen Gu. He's not dead, and he hasn't mutated!"

Aviloya was speechless for a moment but remained cautiously optimistic. "It could also be that there's a naturally awakened Radiation Missionary hidden within your army."

"No!" Bai Yunpeng denied loudly. He quickly pulled up images of the second bug nest and the energy-cluster spider nests, showing each to Aviloya. "A powerful professional has been covertly protecting our forces all this time!"

"If it weren't for his help, my two armies would probably have faced annihilation!"

Looking at these images, Aviloya became even more convinced it wasn't Chen Gu's doing. "Impossible. He's only Second Energy Level. How could he possess such tremendous destructive power?"

Bai Yunpeng replied, "And you were just criticizing me for not believing in the capabilities of your Bureau of Mystic Security agents!"

"But this..." Aviloya faltered. This is too exaggerated, she thought. Even I, the Director-General, can't believe it.

Bai Yunpeng didn't continue the conversation with her, instead issuing an order, "Inform the Howling Mecha Legion. Tell them to keep an eye out on the battlefield and give their full support to Master Chen Gu!"

Aviloya went to Bai Yunpeng's side and spoke softly, "If we truly find him, detain him immediately and put a 'safety shackle' on him!"

Bai Yunpeng was stunned for a moment, then understood and asked in a low voice, "You're still worried he's mutated?"

"Precisely. Even if he is alive, even if he really did secretly help the army, it's very possible that after mutating, he intends to use this to infiltrate human society and cause even greater harm."

Bai Yunpeng slowly nodded. "Indeed, that's a possibility. Such measures, although cruel, are the most prudent."

It's not just a possibility; it's highly probable, Aviloya thought. But since Bai Yunpeng had agreed, she said no more.

Bai Yunpeng, calming from the excitement of discovering Chen Gu was alive, had a fleeting look of pain and struggle in his eyes.

「...」

On the battlefield, Chen Gu, controlling the Blazing Mammoth Bug, repeated his old trick and killed another three Skyrocketing Insects. By then, the time limit for his Mind Remote Control skill on the Blazing Mammoth Bug had been reached.

So, he stopped hiding. Controlling the Blazing Mammoth Bug, he made it completely switch sides, opening its mouth and spewing two massive streams of flame toward the densest part of the insect swarm!

This action threw the swarm into an uproar. Several giant Ghoulish Claw Bugs, wreathed in flames, pounced onto the Blazing Mammoth Bug, their sharp claws piercing deeply into its flesh. Chen Gu, after leaving behind one last Biological Nuclear Explosion, swiftly escaped the battlefield using Quantum Teleportation, landing near the corpse of a cultivator Troop Nest Beetle he had killed earlier.

BOOM——

This Biological Nuclear Explosion killed a large number of the Insect Race and made it absolutely clear to Bai Yunpeng and Aviloya in the Central Operations Room: it had to be that kid!

Aviloya pulled the images of the second bug nest and the energy-cluster spider nests onto her screen, studying them closely. That kid's three supposed professions... they couldn't cause this kind of destruction...

Chapter 279 - Third-Class Researcher

Even though Aviloya had tried her best to guess Chen Gu's professions, she only dared to imagine three, unaware that this fellow already possessed four.

Chen Gu's fall onto the sand didn't hurt, but he dared not use his professional skills again for a short while.

When he looked again, the situation of the Human army on the battlefield had greatly eased. However, there were still too many Skyrocketing Insects; they outnumbered the Close Range Attack Ships by seven or eight.

Continuing like this, without any other support, it would only be a matter of time before they faced inevitable defeat.

Chen Gu felt a headache coming on. On the entire battlefield, the only War Strategist in the Human army capable of turning defeat into victory was simply being used as a stationary turret.

He had been searching for traces of humanity, wanting to return to human society. But now, with the army right before his eyes, Chen Gu hesitated.

In his hands, he clutched several energy blocks.

These were what he had picked up from the bodies of the fallen Mecha warriors after controlling the Blazing Mammoth Bug to charge in.

These energy blocks from the Confederation were universal. As long as he inserted one into an instrument, he could communicate with this army and, through them, even contact the Central Operations Room.

However, Chen Gu was also acutely aware that returning this time would almost certainly subject him to harsh scrutiny.

Tales of slice experiments might be somewhat exaggerated, but being treated like a lab rat and subjected to various tests would be unavoidable.

Chen Gu had initially wanted to see if there was a chance to sneak onto a Close Range Attack Ship and stow away, then slowly figure things out.

But now, identity verification was ubiquitous in human society. Once he returned, he would likely be exposed in less than half a day.

Chen Gu was truly unwilling to place his fate in others' hands. As he hesitated, an "observation drone" suddenly flew over the battlefield at high speed, descending towards him.

Chen Gu's expression changed. He was about to activate "Quantum Teleportation" when the "observation drone" suddenly stopped. It wobbled and struck various poses, as if it were a living creature expressing itself through some kind of body language. Eerily, Chen Gu understood in an instant: Don't worry, I mean no harm.

And believe it or not, this "thing" was actually trying to be cute!

Chen Gu found it somewhat comical and stared at the "observation drone" with suspicion.

The "observation drone" was designed solely for a clear view of the entire battlefield and had no inherent means of communication. Yet now, it was establishing some form of contact through this pet-like "body language."

Chen Gu remained highly guarded. The "observation drone" slowly descended and began to sketch words in the sand.

「In the Central Operations Room」

Bai Yunpeng nervously stared at the holographic projection before him. Chen Gu's guarded posture was strikingly clear.

Beside Bai Yunpeng, a young female combat staff officer couldn't help but blush under the intense gazes of everyone present.

This combat staff officer was an electronic pet enthusiast. In her spare time, she would design an "electronic pet script" for observation drones. Sometimes, during night shifts, when no one was around, she would upload her script into some observation drones. Then she would watch them make various pet-like poses to satisfy her "peculiar" passion!

Absolutely... shameful!

However, today, Bai Yunpeng had determined Chen Gu was on the battlefield and desperately wanted to find him. But with the unfavorable battle situation, he couldn't dispatch anyone. His only option was to first use an observation drone to search from the air.

Once they spotted Chen Gu, Bai Yunpeng hesitated, worried that Chen Gu would flee if approached.

The young combat staff officer had been accompanying Bai Yunpeng all along. She had witnessed all of Chen Gu's valiant actions, from the battle in the stars to the stand at the cave encampment, and admired him immensely. So, in a spur-of-the-moment impulse, she blurted out, "I have a way."

When she explained her method, the looks everyone in the operations room, including their guest Aviloya, gave her were somewhat odd.

「On the battlefield」

The "observation drone" tried to move smoothly, careful not to startle Chen Gu. A line of words appeared in the sand:

"Chen Gu, I am Bai Yunpeng!"

Inside the Central Operations Room, Bai Yunpeng tensely watched Chen Gu.

Chen Gu hesitated for a moment before writing in the sand, "I have not mutated."

Bai Yunpeng turned to Aviloya. As aloof as ever, she stated, "No Mutant would ever admit to their own corruption."

Unsatisfied, Bai Yunpeng glared at her. He then had the combat staff officer write another line in the sand: "I believe you, but Aviloya thinks you should undergo a strict inspection."

Chen Gu's eyelids twitched. Aviloya, why is it always Aviloya? Is this woman my fated nemesis?

Yet, thinking back on the ridiculous things his original self had done, it seemed he had no grounds to complain about Aviloya.

And, rationally speaking, if he were in their shoes, he wouldn't believe his own claims about not having mutated and fallen either.

In the Central Operations Room, Aviloya saw that Bai Yunpeng had explicitly implicated her. Yet, she didn't mind and even seemed somewhat pleased.

After considering, Chen Gu wrote again in the sand, "I have a way to turn the tide of the battle."

Bai Yunpeng was overjoyed. "Indeed, a master!"

As long as Chen Gu said he could do it, Bai Yunpeng believed him. This was trust built upon Chen Gu's repeated, death-defying assaults before the cave stronghold!

Chen Gu wrote again, "You have to guarantee that when I return, I will only undergo standard inspection procedures."

Bai Yunpeng did not answer immediately but turned to Aviloya and asked, "How do you plan to deal with him?"

Aviloya walked over briskly, pushing Bai Yunpeng aside.

"You..."

Aviloya took control of the observation drone and wrote in the sand, "I am the Director-General."

Chen Gu instantly felt a pang of guilt, a reaction clearly visible to the observation drone's camera.

Bai Yunpeng and Bai Xianya found it strange. He's just a high-ranking superior, is there really a need for such reverence?

When Aviloya saw his reaction, irritation flared within her. She took a deep breath, constantly reminding herself: The overall situation is paramount.

"If the inspection confirms that you really haven't mutated, you will need to cooperate with some research related to professions."

Chen Gu immediately tensed. "What kind of research?"

"Research that will not infringe upon any of your rights and interests."

Chen Gu's eyes darted. He threw out his condition: "If I cooperate with the Bureau's research, will there be a stipend?"

A vein throbbed on Aviloya's smooth forehead. Behind them, Bai Xianya almost burst out laughing. This "old rascal" has some nerve, bargaining with a Valkyrie! Wasn't it said that in the entire Star Sea, any male who faced Aviloya would become utterly infatuated and lose all reason?

Aviloya took a deep breath, her chest rising and falling. Finally, she replied, "Comparable to the standard of a Third-Grade Researcher."

Third-Grade Researcher? Chen Gu seethed. You're third-grade! Your whole family is third-grade!

He decisively wrote two words in the sand: "Goodbye!"

Chapter 280 Charging Alone into the Enemy Ranks (1)

Chen Gu turned and walked away. Bai Yunpeng, growing anxious, remarked sarcastically, "The Bureau of Mystic Security really knows how to honor the talented—a third-class researcher, such an esteemed identity."

Aviloya turned and glared at him coldly. He's bargaining with me, she thought. If he truly wanted to leave, he would have simply used Quantum Teleportation and vanished. Why walk away so slowly?

But Aviloya couldn't let the negotiation break down. She sent an observation drone to intercept Chen Gu. The overzealous young combat strategist even programmed the drone to make a "pleading" gesture. However, the script for the gesture was from an electronic pet, so its attempt to make him stay had an unmistakably cloying, pet-like quality.

Aviloya nearly exploded with rage, wishing she could draw her sword and cut down the young combat strategist.

Chen Gu was visibly startled. He backed away a few steps and quickly wrote on the ground, "What do you want?!"

Aviloya took another deep breath, relying on her formidable self-control as a Professional to suppress her surging rage and impatience. The observation drone wrote on the ground, "The standard for a first-class researcher."

Chen Gu wrote back, "In the military, I'm the director of a research institute."

Bai Yunpeng nodded repeatedly, fanning the flames with his formal pronouncements. "It's one thing if the Bureau of Mystic Security doesn't value talent, but as the Director, you shouldn't disparage a master like this."

A vein throbbed twice on Aviloya's forehead. She finally conceded, and the drone wrote, "The compensation package for a lead researcher on a scientific project, plus a dedicated research fund."

That's more like it, Chen Gu thought. Then he wrote on the sand, "For this matter, I want Marshal Bai's guarantee."

Bai Yunpeng immediately thumped his chest. "Rest assured! As long as the examination proves you haven't mutated, if the Bureau of Mystic Security doesn't want you, the military does! If she dares to harm you, I'll lead my own attendants to storm their headquarters and bring you back!"

Chen Gu breathed a sigh of relief. He didn't trust Aviloya. It wasn't about her character; he simply didn't know what kind of person she was. It was merely because he had offended her before. However, he had some trust in Bai Yunpeng. After all, Bai Yunpeng had been upfront, telling him, "Aviloya thinks you should undergo a strict examination."

Chen Gu wrote again, "Give me command of the War Shepherd."

Aviloya instinctively objected, "No! The War Shepherd possesses immense destructive power. If he has mutated, giving it to him means the Roaring Mecha Regiment is finished!"

Bai Yunpeng, however, ignored her and replied, "Alright." Then he turned to Aviloya. "Without additional support, the Roaring Mecha Regiment will be annihilated sooner or later. That being the case, why not trust Chen Gu this once?"

Yustadak was shocked when he received Bai Yunpeng's orders. "You want me to hand over my flagship?"

Bai Yunpeng maintained a calm expression but was inwardly fuming. If it weren't for your recklessness, would the Roaring Mecha Regiment be in such a dire situation?

"Are you going to disobey a direct order?" Bai Yunpeng, displeased with him and disinclined to explain, asked coldly.

Yustadak gritted his teeth in humiliation but still said, "No, I'll hand it over!" But he added bitterly, "However, the Roar is deeply mired in sand. I can't go out to meet this person you mentioned. He'll have to cross the dangerous battlefield himself to take command."

Bai Yunpeng, knowing Yustadak's intentions, cut off the communication with a cold laugh.

Inside the Third-Rank War Shepherd, the adjutant looked helplessly at his commander. "Regiment Commander, in this situation, without reinforcements, what good would it do for anyone to come? What could they possibly use to turn the tide of this battle?"

Yustadak said coldly, "There are no reinforcements. Marshal Bai means someone is coming alone to take over my command!"

The adjutant was dumbfounded. "Th-this... changing commanders in the middle of a battle is a grave taboo! Besides, we're surrounded by the Insect Race. How could he possibly get in?"

Yustadak likely knew some secrets about Professionals, but he believed that in the current situation, even if one came, they wouldn't have the power to turn things around. He narrowed his eyes slightly. "Just watch. My command isn't so easily taken!"

As they spoke, someone was indeed approaching from beyond the vast battlefield.

The crew high up in the War Shepherd immediately noticed this figure, who was starkly out of place. The adjutant slapped his forehead. "He... he's not wearing a protective suit!"

This planet's environment was inhospitable: the temperature was extremely high, the air was toxic, and various radiation particles invisibly harmed living organisms. Yet, the person approaching from outside the battlefield wore only plain clothes—not even a protective suit, let alone an exoskeleton—just a mask over his face.

The adjutant felt a surge of panic. If it were me, I'd probably be dead out there already.

The man gradually neared the battlefield and was quickly spotted by the insects. A swarm of Ghost-Claw Insects roared and wheeled around to pounce on him. Yet, with no visible action from the man, there was a flash of fire, and those few Ghost-Claw Insects shattered into pieces, falling onto the desert. Flames still licked at their wounds.

Definitely a Professional, Yustadak muttered to himself. But so what? This is large-scale warfare. Unless he's above the Fifth Energy Level, he can't make much of an impact in a battle like this—at best, he's a powerful shock trooper, a 'Soldier King' type.

Ignoring his adjutant's astonishment, Yustadak still sneered. That flashy move only took out a few Ghost-Claw Insects. The swarm is enormous; he might not even make it to the Roar.

Then, under their watchful eyes, the man stepped onto the battlefield. Only then did the adjutant clearly see the ancient-looking longsword in the man's hand. A crimson blade of fire, visibly over twenty meters long, extended from it. The blade of fire blazed fiercely, releasing an invisible power that actually made the surrounding insects show a hint of fear!

The adjutant was astounded. These insects operate purely on an instinct to kill! Apart from powerful members of their own kind, they almost never show fear.

But the insects showed only that fleeting "fear" before recklessly charging forward once more, their roars ear-splitting as they swung sharp claws and opened grotesque, enormous maws.

Then the adjutant saw the man's hand move. The crimson blade of fire flashed past like thick red lightning, and a shower of severed insect claws, legs, and mandibles rained down before him. Dark

green ichor splattered everywhere. The insects writhed and shrieked in agony, but the man walked past with calm composure, utterly unfazed by the chaos his single strike had wrought.