

Full Time 281

Chapter 281 Charging Alone into the Enemy Ranks (2)

Yustadak's eyelids twitched. Although his face remained calm, concern flickered within him. This guy is different from the other professionals I've seen before.

Chen Gu, sword in hand and without using any professional skills, steadily yet rapidly made his way into the insect swarm.

At that moment, he exuded a demeanor that could only be described as "the grace of a master."

After the repeated assaults before the cave stronghold, Chen Gu faced any insect swarm with this same confidence.

Seeing the swarm before him and recalling the experiences of those days, Chen Gu couldn't help but smile and remark, "Is that all they've got?"

With every seemingly simple strike of his sword, even the giant armored bugs and large ghoulish claw bugs were no match for him. One by one, they fell behind him, paving a path for him. Inside the Roaring Command Ship, the adjutant couldn't help but blurt out, "How... how can he be so terrifying?"

Looking around, the [Roaring Mecha Regiment] was equipped with some of the Confederation's most advanced mechas of various models, including a third-class war tactician. Yet, when it came to slaying the Insect Race, they paled in comparison to this man's effortless ease.

And his sword—how could it emit such a long flame? Was it one of the Confederation's secretly guarded, cutting-edge technological achievements?

Yustadak, however, pursed his lips and remained silent, fixating on the man below, as he was already halfway to the Roar.

Yet, those "useless" insects had yet to inflict even the slightest damage on him.

But Yustadak knew this situation would soon be shattered. The first half of the path Chen Gu had traversed was merely the outskirts of the battlefield. The strongest opponents he had encountered so far were only giant armored bugs and large ghoul claw bugs.

The latter half of the journey was the true realm of life and death!

All the powerful Insect Race creatures were gathered in this area. There might even be a bombardment from the Skyrocketing Insects overhead!

The adjutant also watched the man intently, a vague feeling stirring within him that he was witnessing secrets far beyond his station.

Chen Gu continued steadily forward, firmly holding the Riverwash Sword. A swarm of several hundred insects surged towards him, but Chen Gu didn't get entangled with them. With one sweep of his sword, aboard the Roar, Yustadak and the adjutant only saw a streak of crimson lightning instantly pierce that section of the swarm!

In its wake, the insects seemed to have been blasted aside.

In the blink of an eye, Chen Gu had broken through to the other side of the swarm, its numbers instantly halved!

This was a move from the Nuclear Combat Technique that Chen Gu had comprehended during the assaults outside the cave stronghold. In his leisure time, he had named this move [Nuclear Rampage]—it was swift and devastatingly powerful.

The adjutant stood dumbfounded, having never witnessed such a technique. Yustadak's lips twitched involuntarily, but he still consoled himself: Those were just ordinary insects. He still hasn't faced the truly formidable members of the Insect Race.

The insects below, as if sensing his thoughts, reacted immediately after Chen Gu cleaved through that swarm. Two giant ghoulish claw bugs, which had just cooperated to tear a heavy Mecha to pieces, turned and charged at him.

They lunged through the air. Chen Gu pushed off the ground with a powerful leap, sword in hand, to meet them head-on.

SWISH, SWISH, SWISH—

Crimson flames flashed continuously, so fast it was impossible to see clearly. Chen Gu's figure, due to his excessive speed, appeared 'intermittent' to Yustadak and his adjutant. They only saw Chen Gu and his

crimson sword-flames flicker a few times between the two giant ghoulish claw bugs. Then, Chen Gu's figure became coherent again as he landed at an angle. Without even a glance behind, he continued forward, sword held proudly.

Behind him, various "parts" began to fall from the giant ghoulish claw bugs in mid-air.

Bug legs, carapaces, and heads... clattered to the ground. The swarm that Chen Gu had previously cut through had been closely pursuing him. Now, as fragments of their powerful kin rained down before them, they recoiled on the spot, instantly losing the courage to continue the chase.

Inside the Roar, the adjutant let out a shocked "AH!" as if he had seen a ghost. Even the celebrated Mecha pilots of the Confederation, operating the most advanced models of combat Mechas, couldn't possibly dispatch two giant ghoulish claw bugs so effortlessly.

Yet this man, relying solely on that advanced weapon and fighting the two giant insects hand-to-hand, had won so easily.

At this moment, other warriors on the battlefield also noticed that an 'ally' had joined the fray.

They didn't know where this person came from or why he was supporting them alone, but Chen Gu's combat prowess greatly spurred them on!

Look at him! Without a Mecha, he can kill two giant ghoulish claw bugs in a single strike! And us? We've been fighting for ages, bombarding them with all sorts of advanced weapons, and how many insects have we killed?

For a time, everyone surged forward, actually managing to turn the tide of battle somewhat.

Chen Gu continued unwaveringly towards the Roar.

The ground combat was a secondary concern. If they didn't deal with the Skyrocketing Insects, they would still face utter defeat.

As he took a step, the ground beneath him suddenly caved in. A deep pit, seven to eight meters wide, appeared in the sand like a giant maw trying to swallow him whole!

A Burrower!

Inside the Roar, the adjutant couldn't help but cry out softly, "Be careful!"

This drew a fierce glare from Yustadak. Whose side are you on, exactly?

But by this time, the adjutant was so completely captivated by Chen Gu that he didn't even notice his superior's disapproving gaze.

As Chen Gu fell, the gaping maw snapped shut viciously, and he disappeared entirely.

Just as the adjutant was about to exclaim, "AH!" the Burrower that had just emerged from the ground exploded from within. The crimson electric light flashed once more.

The Burrower's massive body tore apart, fragments scattering everywhere. Chen Gu burst out with a sword strike, not pausing for a moment as his blade thrust straight at a nearby Blazing Mammoth Bug!

The Blazing Mammoth Bug was caught completely off guard. It had assumed its prey was already devoured by its comrade, but Chen Gu thrust his sword into its vital spot. The unfortunate Blazing Mammoth Bug had two ovary-like organs beside its head, already filled with fiery bio-energy plasma ready to be sprayed. It was slain before it could react.

Chen Gu spun, withdrew his sword, and swiftly sliced off the two human-sized, ovary-like organs. Then, with a double kick in mid-air, he launched the organs towards two of the most densely packed areas of the insect swarm.

Just like before, the insects paid no attention to what was hurtling towards them and simply tore into the objects with their claws.

Chapter 282 Charging Alone into the Enemy Ranks (3)

BOOM—

BOOM—

The power of the flames was comparable to a heavy mecha firing energy grenade cannons. The insects below let out pitiful squeals as they were slowly burned to ash.

The aide-de-camp clenched his fists tightly, wanting to cheer but held back at the crucial moment. However, other warriors inside the Roar raised their arms and shouted in acclamation, "Mighty!"

The aide-de-camp discreetly glanced at his superior. As expected, Yustadak's face was displeased. The aide-de-camp quietly breathed a sigh of relief, glad he had restrained himself.

Of course, Yustadak couldn't look pleased. He had just thought that Chen Gu would show his true colors when faced with truly powerful members of the Insect Race, such as the giant Ghost Claw Bug or the Shadow Eater Bug. Yet, Chen Gu had easily slain four large insects and even pulled a "stunt": a split kick, using the Blazing Mammoth Bug's fire sacs to incinerate a large swath of insects!

Not only the warriors inside the Roar saw this, but the mecha pilots outside did as well, and the morale of the entire corps was greatly boosted.

This was a good thing. Even though Yustadak was reluctant to admit it, he obviously could not belittle Chen Gu at this moment. Thus, he could only sulk like a young wife bullied by her mother-in-law.

Chen Gu had killed the Blazing Mammoth Bug, but his surroundings became even more hostile. A horde of insects, many of them powerful, surged toward him, scurrying to surround him layer by layer.

However, Chen Gu was truly wary of the Skyrocketing Insects above him.

Their power was not inferior to human Close Range Attack Ships. They were weapons capable of destroying several city blocks, or even an entire city, with a single blast.

If one landed squarely on him, even with his physical fitness far superior to other warriors of the same Energy Level, he would still die a heroic death on the spot.

But while guarding against the Skyrocketing Insects, he continued to slay the large insects, and suddenly a daring tactic popped into his mind.

Chen Gu no longer rushed to kill these insects. Instead, he reined in the power of his Riverwash Sword, dashing back and forth on the battlefield. Whenever he encountered a powerful insect, he would provoke it, gradually gathering a large group of formidable Insect Race members around him.

Heavy mechas, often operating in groups, were attacking a Blazing Mammoth Bug when, unexpectedly, Chen Gu burst out from an angle and severed the Blazing Mammoth Bug's scorpion tail with a single sword strike. Enraged, the Blazing Mammoth Bug abandoned the heavy mechas and pursued Chen Gu.

Naturally, the heavy mecha pilots were shocked, thinking this "reinforcement" was creating an opening for them. However, there were already too many large insects around the "reinforcement," and they couldn't let him bear the brunt alone.

So, the heavy mechas followed, constantly bombarding the Blazing Mammoth Bug, trying to make it turn back and fight them.

However, compared to the damage from Chen Gu's sword severing its scorpion tail, their attacks mostly struck the Blazing Mammoth Bug's thick shell, inflicting far less significant wounds. Naturally, the Blazing Mammoth Bug hated Chen Gu intensely and doggedly pursued him, ignoring the attacks from behind.

In this way, Chen Gu soon attracted a large crowd of insects, his surroundings packed with a massive swarm of them!

At first, when Chen Gu began luring the insects, those mecha pilots whose targets had been stolen wanted to share the burden with the "reinforcement" and draw the insects back. Later, as there were too many large insects around him, attempting to "share the burden" risked turning the entire horde towards themselves. The mecha pilots were reluctantly forced to assist others instead. After all, on the battlefield, the insects far outnumbered the mechas; there was plenty of fighting to go around.

Chen Gu, having attracted several hundred large insects, was in extreme danger; a moment's inattention could mean his end there.

Feeling it was about time, he unleashed Nuclear Frenzy Kill, bursting out from among the large insects and heading straight for the nearest Skyrocketing Insect.

Having once controlled a Skyrocketing Insect with Mind Remote Control, he was very familiar with the anatomy of such colossal creatures. He chose his target carefully, having long noticed from certain bodily reactions that this particular Skyrocketing Insect's acid cannon was ready to fire.

He charged beneath the Skyrocketing Insect, swinging the Riverwash Sword with a bravado that was almost comically ferocious!

"Come and hit me if you dare!"

Then, a Nuclear Fusion Beam struck the Skyrocketing Insect's vulnerable spot!

The Skyrocketing Insect was engaged with a Close Range Attack Ship. However, there was this small pest below that had killed many of its kind and had been flitting about. It had now so intelligently positioned itself directly underneath, seemingly goading it with an attack and continuously beckoning, Come on, hit me! Very well, it wouldn't be impolite to oblige. So, it fired its acid cannon!

The Skyrocketing Insect's acid cannon was immensely powerful, comparable to the main gun of a Close Range Attack Ship. The moment the acid cannon blasted down, Chen Gu switched to the memories of Derek Kun Shen Ken and escaped using Quantum Teleportation.

Those relentless giant insects caught up just in time.

BOOM—

One Blazing Mammoth Bug after another, one giant Ghost Claw Bug after another, one Shadow Eater Bug after another, all disintegrated rapidly in the pool of bio-energetic acid...

Chen Gu reappeared several hundred meters away. His legs felt weak, and he nearly collapsed.

When he had thought of this cunning tactic, he had quickly assessed his condition. He felt his Quantum Wizard abilities were up to the task, so he went for it. The result was spectacular, wiping out hundreds of giant insects in one fell swoop.

But it also left him feeling utterly drained, as if his body had been ransacked. He couldn't afford to use this tactic a second time.

Immediately, Chen Gu headed straight for the Roar without hesitation.

Before teleporting, he had already pinpointed the Roar's position. Therefore, he reappeared only a few hundred meters away from it. This distance was no issue for Chen Gu. He sprinted at full speed, cutting down more than a dozen insects en route, until he reached the Roar.

"Open the hatch!" Chen Gu yelled.

The Roar's response was somewhat sluggish.

It wasn't because Yustadak and the aide-de-camp were intentionally dawdling to make things difficult for Chen Gu; they were simply stunned. The moment the acid cannon had fallen, the aide-de-camp had closed his eyes in anguish, and the cockpit had fallen silent.

Even Yustadak had been genuinely grief-stricken for a moment.

He knew Chen Gu had come to "usurp command," which rankled him, but Chen Gu had been continually slaying members of the Insect Race. He was, after all, an ally.

He certainly didn't feel schadenfreude at the thought of such a heroic figure dying like that.

It could only be said that they weren't Bai Yunpeng and hadn't witnessed Chen Gu's earlier battles. Otherwise, they wouldn't have worried, knowing Chen Gu would surely escape.

Consequently, when Chen Gu suddenly materialized several hundred meters in front of the Roar, Yustadak and the aide-de-camp were stunned again. What just happened? How did he do that?

Chen Gu traversed the few hundred meters in the blink of an eye. By the time he was below, yelling to open the hatch, they still hadn't snapped out of their shock, hence their slow reaction.

This slight delay irritated Bai Yunpeng, who had been monitoring the situation through observation posts. He immediately reprimanded Yustadak over the military's dedicated communication channel, "What are you doing? Are you disobeying a direct order?!"

Chapter 283 The War Effort - A Great Display of Divine Might (1)

Yustadak had already been intimidated by Chen Gu's performance, but his rebellious streak flared up again when he was yelled at. Without a word, he grudgingly opened the passage and brought Chen Gu on board. Then, he asked with ill grace, "Do you think you can turn the tide of battle? On what grounds?"

Chen Gu didn't explain; he simply said, "Control!"

Reluctantly, Yustadak handed over the highest control authority of the Roaring, then sat down forcefully to one side, watching Chen Gu's actions.

In the cockpit, Bai Yunpeng's holographic projection appeared. The marshal then said with utmost trust, "Go ahead and do what you can. Whether you can save the Roaring Mecha Troopers is up to you!"

Yustadak snorted again, but neither Chen Gu nor Bai Yunpeng paid him any attention.

Chen Gu took over the control authority of a third-tier War Sage, quickly familiarized himself with it, and then pointed at the adjutant. "Step back."

In the face of a formidable enemy, he had no time for diplomacy; his actions and words were very direct.

The adjutant wasn't angry but rather startled. "This War Sage requires coordination between the main and secondary controllers to operate effectively..."

Chen Gu interrupted him. "I can handle it alone. You can't coordinate with me."

That was putting it mildly, rather than saying the adjutant's abilities couldn't keep up with his own.

The adjutant hesitated but stepped down. Yustadak, shaking his head repeatedly, thought this was all nonsense. But now that he had been stripped of military command, what more could he say?

Chen Gu switched to Griffin Wester's memories and activated the High-Energy Combat Art. Instantly, a tremendous sense of exhilaration flooded his body.

This was a true weapon of war!

Even Star Armor seemed like child's play compared to a War Sage.

The belligerence encoded in the war maniac Griffin Wester's memories came into play. This significantly reduced the weakness Chen Gu felt from activating his professional skill again.

Yustadak watched indifferently, but quickly understood that Chen Gu was targeting the Skyrocketing Insects. He said coldly, "The War Sage is cumbersome and not agile. Moreover, it's now stuck in the desert. You think you can use a War Sage to attack the Skyrocketing Insects? That's suicide!"

In all of the Roaring Mecha Troopers' ground combat forces, only the War Sage could hurt the Skyrocketing Insects—how could Yustadak not know that?

But he had not used the War Sage to attack the Skyrocketing Insects before for two reasons. Firstly, the Insect Race was continuously reinforcing its troops, and the Mechas needed the War Sage's firepower support, so he simply didn't have the freedom to attack the Skyrocketing Insects. Secondly, once the War Sage attacked the Skyrocketing Insects, it would definitely provoke retaliation.

With the Skyrocketing Insects flying in the sky and the War Sage trapped in the sand, it was a sitting duck.

So far, the War Sage had not suffered a large-scale attack from the Skyrocketing Insects. This was partly due to a delay in the Insect Race's battle command. Three Skyrocketing Insects had been dispatched earlier to attack the War Sage. However, just then, all Troop Nest Beetles were annihilated by Chen Gu. This severed their connection with the Empress and caused some confusion within the swarm, which is why the command had not been fully carried out.

More importantly, though, the Close Range Attack Ships, although outnumbered, had been desperately engaging the Skyrocketing Insects. This prevented them from breaking free to attack the War Sage.

If the War Sage took the initiative to attack the Skyrocketing Insects, the Close Range Attack Ships' previous efforts would be in vain. A single blast from a Skyrocketing Insect, and the War Sage would be finished.

But Chen Gu ignored his words and began to operate the War Sage. The first move, however, made Yustadak's heart leap with apprehension.

The War Sage lunged forward precipitately. It felt as though Chen Gu was handling it for the first time, had made an operating error, and was causing the War Sage to nearly fall to the ground.

This was a battlefield! If it fell, the War Sage would be finished.

But as Yustadak and his adjutant exclaimed in shock, Chen Gu controlled the War Sage's artillery, firing successive shots at the ground!

BOOM!

BOOM!

BOOM!

After several shots, the recoil force actually lifted the colossal War Sage. It pulled its legs out of the desert and was propelled into the air by the reaction force of the shells.

Yustadak's mouth hung open. What kind of maneuver was this?

And it wasn't over yet. Chen Gu was indeed operating alone, so quickly that both Yustadak and his adjutant were dazzled.

In mid-air, the War Sage fired its cannons in different directions again. This adjusted its attitude, turning its most powerful front side towards the sky.

From a distance, the War Sage at this moment looked as if it was reclining obliquely in mid-air. The position it faced was precisely where several Skyrocketing Insects were!

Inside the cockpit, Yustadak and his adjutant watched in amazement. Chen Gu, controlling two operator stations by himself, moved so fast that they couldn't see his movements clearly at all.

Data was quickly calibrated. Then, all the weapons on the front of the Roaring targeted different enemies. They fired one after another as the massive War Sage fell backward.

The warriors in the distance only saw their flagship, the Roaring, displaying its awesome power. It unleashed rays of energy cannons and ejected all sorts of physical ammunition in straight or curved trajectories.

Shaken, Yustadak quickly turned back to look at those Skyrocketing Insects.

The Skyrocketing Insects in the sky were fully engaged in battle with the Close Range Attack Ships. They had never worried about being attacked from the ground. Thus, they "received" the dozens of energy beams released by the War Sage without any defense.

But these attacks were not aimed at just one Skyrocketing Insect. Under Chen Gu's swift and intricate control, the War Sage attacked seven Skyrocketing Insects. Each endured the bombardment of seven energy ray cannons of varying calibers, as well as five missiles and heavy howitzer shells.

Yustadak stamped his foot, about to lament that such attacks were not enough to kill a Skyrocketing Insect and that Chen Gu should not have dispersed his firepower. Just then, however, he saw the hit Skyrocketing Insects seemingly lose control over their bodies and then slowly fall!

All seven Skyrocketing Insects, without exception, were downed!

Chen Gu understood the physiological structure of the Skyrocketing Insects very well. He targeted his attacks precisely to ensure they were completely incapacitated. Yustadak, on the other hand, had worried needlessly.

And the Roaring, after this simultaneous frontal barrage, accelerated its backward fall. Chen Gu once again operated swiftly, firing all the artillery from its rear!

BOOM!

A huge counterforce came from the ground, lifting the War Sage slightly upward in a slanted position. Then, Chen Gu quickly adjusted the angles of various weapons on its body and fired them in succession. This stabilized the War Sage's upright posture in mid-air. He then rapidly fired in one direction, and the War Sage, under the reactive force, swiftly moved in the opposite direction.

It was precisely this airborne lateral movement that allowed it to dodge a massive acid energy cannon. The shot came from an enraged Skyrocketing Insect in the sky!

Chapter 284 - The War Effort - A Great Display of Divine Might (2)

Yustadak and his adjutant were both breaking out in a cold sweat.

Before the Skyrocketing Insect's retaliatory attack arrived, the entire War Machine had already lost its balance and was about to topple. Given the War Machine's bulk, if it fell into the sand, the acid cannons raining down would leave no possibility for evasion; death would be certain!

Yet Chen Gu not only dodged but, as it fell, it seemed he had calculated it precisely. The War Machine's broad feet landed squarely on the backs of two Blazing Mammoth Bugs!

The Blazing Mammoth Bugs were immense, but size is relative. In front of the War Machine, they were like cute little critters.

So, when the War Machine crashed down, with a couple of CRACKS, the enormous Blazing Mammoth Bugs were crushed to smithereens...

But because it had landed on the Blazing Mammoth Bugs, the War Machine didn't get its feet stuck in the sand as before. Chen Gu once again started his lightning-fast maneuvers—Yustadak even had an illusion, feeling as though he saw plumes of white smoke rising from Chen Gu's body!

This time, the War Machine intentionally fell backward, its front facing the sky.

Just like the previous maneuver, all weapons on its front fired...

In the sky, the enormous Skyrocketing Insects were hit by various energy beam cannons. Unlike missiles and heavy grenade launchers, energy beam cannons had a different effect. Upon impact, they would either pierce the target directly or, if the target had high defense—such as energy shields, armor, or carapaces—the energy would gather outside the defense. This formed an expanding semi-spherical energy structure. Once the accumulated energy reached the defense's limit, it would burst forth completely.

The Skyrocketing Insects were currently in this situation. Missiles and heavy grenade launchers constantly exploded around them, with massive booms and flying shrapnel. Several energy semi-spheres were also growing on their bodies, as the energy beams behind them ceaselessly pumped in more power.

BOOM. BOOM. BOOM...

At last, all the accumulated energy erupted.

The Skyrocketing Insect was blown away, then wobbled as it crashed into the desert.

However, this attack wasn't as unexpected as the last. Only five Skyrocketing Insects were shot down, while two managed to escape.

After two such attacks, Chen Gu had rendered twelve Skyrocketing Insects combat-ineffective. Initially, they had outnumbered the human Close Range Attack Ships by seven or eight, but now the insects were the ones lacking in numbers!

The Skyrocketing Insects were routed.

The scales of victory in this battle began to tilt towards the Roaring Mecha Regiment. Without support, the Insect Race's seemingly fearless—but tactically barren—approach to combat only accelerated their demise.

Chen Gu continued to operate the Roarer. After knocking down another two Skyrocketing Insects, he was shocked to discover that the Roarer's energy gauge was issuing an alarm! Its energy was running low...

On the other side, Yustadak was completely convinced. Chen Gu did exactly as he had said! He had come to the battlefield alone from outside the main engagement. He not only dealt with a large number of bugs but also, through inconceivable maneuvers using the War Machine, took down a considerable number of Skyrocketing Insects. He had forcefully changed the course of the battle with his own strength!

Yustadak was a standard military man—proud and confident, but he accepted defeat gracefully and treasured his comrades as his own flesh and blood. Chen Gu had saved his troops and rectified the grave mistake Yustadak had made due to his rash pursuit of glory. He was thoroughly impressed.

He approached cautiously and said, "You... repeated full-energy volleys consume a considerable amount. A weakness of the Third-Class War Machine is that its energy storage is somewhat insufficient."

"Oh." Chen Gu seemed a bit unsatisfied. It was as if memories of Griffin Wester from all over his being were conveying one thing: Not enough!

So Chen Gu also felt an overall sense of dissatisfaction. He thought for a moment and asked, "The various types of missiles and other shells should be sufficient, right?"

"This..." The adjutant also came forward, pulling out a list. Only twelve missiles remained, and less than ten percent of the shells...

Chen Gu slammed a fist in annoyance. "This thing just doesn't last long enough in a fight..."

Yustadak and his adjutant exchanged glances, speechless. Such a powerful and massive War Machine, and in your hands, it 'doesn't last long enough'? What audacious words!

The adjutant, already worshipping Chen Gu with blind devotion, said with a beaming smile, "If Your Excellency wishes to become a War Machine pilot, based on today's combat achievements alone, I believe even a First-Class War Machine wouldn't be out of your reach."

From the holographic projection, Bai Yunpeng declared decisively, "No way! Chen Gu, you need to face reality. Your value doesn't lie on the battlefield; there are more significant things you can do!"

Yustadak and his adjutant looked at each other again. He's already this skilled in combat, yet that's not his greatest value? Who on earth is this extraordinary individual?

Chen Gu snorted. Once I get back, I'll have to deal with the Bureau of Mystic Security first, he thought. However, these were classified matters and couldn't be disclosed in front of Yustadak and the others.

Outside in the desert, the Mecha troops were still battling the bugs. Chen Gu casually scanned the surroundings. Then, his hands moved swiftly, and the Roarer fired all its missiles and shells in one go, completely depleting its energy reserves. Chen Gu let out a long sigh, fully entering Sage Time.

Completely spent.

Because of this barrage, explosions lit up the sky among the bug swarms outside, and their numbers were reduced by almost half in an instant!

Yustadak was first dumbstruck, then so ashamed he wished the earth would swallow him whole.

Before Chen Gu arrived, Yustadak had been using the Roarer as a fixed artillery platform for fire support, much like Chen Gu's final barrage.

But even when used as a fixed artillery platform, Chen Gu's efficiency was many times higher than his...

Seeing that the battle was decided, Bai Yunpeng issued his final orders, "Chen Gu, Gong Shuxu and his team are on their way. Rendezvous with them and return together."

"Yustadak, have your troops rest and regroup where you are, then await further orders."

"Yes, sir!"

About fifteen minutes later, the few thousand remaining bugs completely scattered. Some light Mechas pursued for a while before regrouping.

Yustadak led his tired Roaring Mecha Regiment out of this desert area, setting up a temporary camp at the foot of a rocky mountain to recuperate.

He dispatched scout patrols to maintain vigilance in the surroundings. Then, finding a hidden compartment in the Roarer, he pulled out a small liquor cabinet and, grinning, hospitably offered Chen Gu some of his cherished fine wine.

But before they could take a sip, Gong Shuxu arrived with the Specialized Reconnaissance Team.

They arrived in three heavy armored vehicles, their expressions stern and businesslike. They immediately placed the highest-level security restraints on Chen Gu and prepared to take him away.

Yustadak instantly became frantic. He rushed in front of Chen Gu, shielding him, and roared, "What do you think you're doing?! What is this?! Since when does the Confederation treat its combat heroes like this?!"

It wasn't just him; all the Mecha pilots present stood up indignantly, surrounding Gong Shuxu and his men.

They all knew very well who had saved their lives.

Chapter 285 - Special Troop Nest Beetle

Gong Shuxu gave him a faint glance, and Chen Gu quickly stopped him, knowing that the Sixth Energy Level powerhouse was about to use psychological suggestion to make these warriors back down.

"There's no need for that." He stopped Gong Shuxu, then turned and said in a low voice to Yustadak, "There's something not quite right with me... you know, it's a necessary precaution. It's okay, I'll go back for a check-up and will be free again soon."

Yustadak looked dubious, but Chen Gu smiled. "Don't worry, I still want to try being a first-class war strategist."

Yustadak hesitated, then stepped back. Chen Gu relaxed his shoulders toward Gong Shuxu. "Let's go."

Three heavy armored war vehicles departed, when suddenly a scout trooper rushed back. "A bug hive has been found!"

Yustadak and the others were startled. "Prepare for battle..."

"No, no..." The scout trooper waved his hands repeatedly. "An exterminated bug hive!"

Yustadak and his adjutant exchanged glances, both recalling the beginning of the war when the Insect Race's reinforcements had been ceaseless, only to abruptly stop later on.

It was clearly at that time the bug hive had been wiped out. But by whom?

Who else could it be?

If it were the military, Marshal Bai would certainly have reported it to him by now.

It had to be that one.

Yustadak looked towards the three heavy armored war vehicles disappearing in the distance, murmuring, "Truly a divine being..."

Inside the vehicle, Chen Gu suddenly remembered something. "Wait a minute..."

Instantly, everyone from Gong Shuxu down to the other professionals became vigilant. "What trick are you trying to pull!"

Chen Gu couldn't help but laugh. "Don't be nervous. I just remembered something; I need to ask Marshal Bai."

Gong Shuxu agreed, and the call to Bai Yunpeng was connected from inside the vehicle. Chen Gu reported truthfully, "I encountered a Troop Nest Beetle earlier that was a bit strange."

After hearing this, Bai Yunpeng acutely realized that this already dead Troop Nest Beetle might hold special significance.

He immediately ordered, "You lead the way. Make sure to bring back this creature."

So, the convoy temporarily changed its route, heading towards the battlefield nearby, to where that "pocket-sized" Troop Nest Beetle was.

Upon arrival, even the professional scout troopers were amazed. "I've seen many a Troop Nest Beetle, been in six or seven clearing operations, but never one this small."

Gong Shuxu stood to one side, silent, embodying a sense of self-importance. Because he was from the Bureau of Mystic Security special service and had never been on the battlefield, he wasn't familiar with the Alien Insect Race.

However, among the professional scout troopers, an old woman with a weather-beaten face showed a grave expression. "This creature is no simple matter." She walked around the Troop Nest Beetle, and after giving Chen Gu a deep look, said, "You're really lucky; I have a premonition that this beetle holds a great secret of the Alien Insect Race."

A young girl, about thirteen or fourteen years old, surprisingly also a scout trooper, always followed her, somewhat like a grandchild. "Why?"

"The Alien Insect Race's Troop Nest Beetles are launched directly from the Star Sea. Before they are fully prepared and ready inside the giant bubble-flying insect's body, they are already equipped with various insect embryos. Once they land, they can rapidly cultivate an Insect Race army according to instructions."

The little girl was also aware of this fact. "So all the Troop Nest Beetles we can see are enormous."

The elderly woman, Ma Shuwen, pointed at the beetle in front of her. "It's empty inside and doesn't contain those insect embryos. It seems this one did not come from the giant bubble-flying insects, but must have undergone some incident and mutated from another insect."

A stocky man standing nearby spoke up, "I'll do it."

He volunteered, and the other professionals stepped back. This man, named Elton, whose profession was "Elemental Navigator" at the Second Energy Level, was able to change the arrangement of elements to a certain extent, achieving the effect of altering material properties.

He approached and gently rubbed his hands on the Troop Nest Beetle, which was almost burnt to charcoal, and then activated his ability.

Chen Gu wore the highest level of "security fetters," which truly resembled the full-body shackles of ancient times and restrained all his abilities.

Yet, he still felt an indescribable power at work in the space around him.

The power was not overbearing but had a feeling of being "ingenious."

Chen Gu saw the sand around the Troop Nest Beetle slowly turn into an oily liquid.

In this state, it would be easy to pull out the entire Troop Nest Beetle. However, the beetle's tendrils were embedded very deeply. Elton had only changed a portion of the surface sand. His ability continued to extend downward. Even as a Second Energy Level professional, it took him nearly half an hour, leaving him puffing and panting, before he finally said, "Done."

Gong Shuxu gave a signal, and a heavy armored vehicle came over. A mechanical arm extended from the back of the vehicle, lifted high, grabbed the Troop Nest Beetle, and slowly dragged it out.

Its roots were nearly a hundred meters long!

Several professionals worked together to pack and bundle up this Troop Nest Beetle, placing it on the roof of another vehicle. Then the group set off again.

Their destination was a temporary human base seven hundred eighty kilometers away, where aircraft could send them into the starry sky, then aboard a battleship to return to the rear.

All Insect Races on the road had been cleared by the "Roaring Mecha Corps." Theoretically, it was very safe. Thus, everyone was relaxed on the journey, and with the convoy's speed, it would only take a few hours to arrive.

More than an hour after departure, they encountered a severe sandstorm, with flying sand and rocks, and darkness all around.

The convoy stopped temporarily to wait for the storm to pass, which delayed them by over three hours.

Then they continued on their way, without further incident, and smoothly reached the temporary base.

It was an unmanned base on top of a low mountain peak with a sizable flat area. Originally, it served as a logistics supply transfer point for the "Roaring Mecha Corps."

For the "Roaring Mecha Corps," their actual reinforcements from the rear had previously been over a hundred kilometers away.

The electronic system verified the team's identities, and they were permitted entry. The base's heavy armored gate slowly opened, and the three vehicles drove in one by one. Gong Shuxu did not dare to delay for a moment, immediately taking Chen Gu and heading straight for the warehouse housing the aircraft, following the electronic map's guidance.

However, as they were halfway through the base, everyone suddenly sensed something and abruptly looked up. In the distant sky, a series of shining lights appeared.

The professionals' faces changed drastically. Those lights were all too familiar to them: "Insect Race!"

At a glance, there were hundreds of lights, meaning there were at least a hundred Troop Nest Beetles. Once they landed, they could form a vast army within half an hour and then come swarming over!

Chapter 286 - Aerial Battle with the Insect Race (1)

"Why has the Insect Race descended here?" The professionals all turned to look at the particular Troop Nest Beetle.

Gong Shuxu made a snap decision. "Leave this place at top speed!"

According to the usual practices of the Insect Race's descent, they still had half an hour, enough time to leave aboard a flying vehicle.

Gong Shuxu grabbed Chen Gu. "If you truly have no ill intentions, then cooperate with us with all your might!"

Chen Gu nodded vigorously.

They rushed to the warehouse, where everyone worked together to quickly open the large doors. Elton and Gong Shuxu, taking Chen Gu with them, were the first to board a flying vehicle shaped like a stingray. Ma Shuwen and another professional, Boles, went to start the flying vehicle. Once the rest of the professionals had loaded the Troop Nest Beetle onto the vehicle, the engines had already started, pushing the entire vehicle slowly out of the warehouse. Then, the engines blasted downward, and the vehicle ascended smoothly.

Once it reached an altitude of over ten meters, the flying vehicle suddenly accelerated, zipping into the upper atmosphere with a SWOOSH.

The whole process, all told, took no more than seven or eight minutes. After rising into the air, everyone finally breathed a sigh of relief. With more than twenty minutes left, they had enough time to escape the planet; the Insect Race wouldn't be able to catch up.

But just then, a dense swarm of dark shadows appeared in the distance, swiftly pursuing their aircraft. The professionals' faces changed dramatically; even Gong Shuxu couldn't help but look grave.

"It's the Void Devouring Beetles!"

As the dense shadow drew near, Chen Gu got a clear view of these insects that could fly high in the sky like fighter jets. They were somewhat reminiscent of ancient pterosaurs but more ferocious, with wingspans of over twenty meters. As they closed in, the creatures spread out and, suddenly opening their mouths, rapidly spat out what looked like insect eggs.

Ma Shuwen and Boles skillfully maneuvered the aircraft, dodging the insect eggs as they exploded mid-air, their power no less formidable than human energy grenade cannons. The Void Devouring Beetles quickly dispersed, intercepting the aircraft from all sides. Ma Shuwen and Boles put all their effort into responding, but with the overwhelming number of Void Devouring Beetles, they had several narrow escapes from the exploding eggs.

"Your Excellency!" Ma Shuwen called out to Gong Shuxu for help. Gong Shuxu nodded slowly. Several Void Devouring Beetles suddenly changed their attack targets, viciously spitting out a series of exploding eggs that blew some of their own kind to smithereens.

But even though Gong Shuxu was at the Sixth Energy Level, he was too far from most of the Void Devouring Beetles to "befuddle" the majority of them, and the aircraft was still in grave danger. The Void Devouring Beetles continued their assault in waves. Those that approached fell within Gong Shuxu's skill range and turned to bomb their own kind. The situation slowly began to improve.

After about a third of the Void Devouring Beetles were blown to pieces, everyone let out a collective sigh of relief; the most dangerous moment had finally passed.

At this moment, the Insect Queen, orchestrating from behind the scenes, seemed to realize what was happening. The Void Devouring Beetles no longer approached to attack but instead surrounded the aircraft from a distance, bombarding it solely with exploding eggs.

"These Void Devouring Beetles must have been brought by one of the Troop Nest Beetles. They were already hatched inside the Giant Bubble Flyers," someone deduced.

"If they just stall us, and the Troop Nest Beetles below hatch more insects, we're done for!"

But everyone was at a loss. Apart from Gong Shuxu, who was at the Sixth Energy Level, nobody else's abilities could reach far enough to affect these Void Devouring Beetles. The aircraft's weapons were also limited, making it difficult to eliminate all of them.

Ma Shuwen gritted his teeth. "Force our way through!" It was their only option now—a do-or-die attempt.

The aircraft suddenly accelerated, recklessly climbing in a straight line.

The exploding eggs around them rained down like projectiles, with swarms of Void Devouring Beetles preparing to intercept ahead.

With a low roar, Gong Shuxu's power burst forth. More than half of the intercepting Void Devouring Beetles began attacking their own kind.

WHOOSH—

The aircraft burst through the dense barrage of exploding eggs. The space ahead was clear, and everyone cheered. But suddenly, the entire aircraft shook violently, alarms blared, and all the instruments began flashing red.

"Damn, we're hit!"

Several exploding eggs caught up from behind and struck the aircraft's wing.

The aircraft became unstable, its speed rapidly declining. Ma Shuwen and Boles strained with all their might, but the aircraft plunged unstoppably toward the ground.

BOOM!

The aircraft slammed into the ground, breaking apart as it skidded before finally coming to a stop. For a moment, silence enveloped the scene, with only the burning wreckage of the aircraft remaining. But soon, strange noises filled the sky as the Void Devouring Beetles swarmed forth, diving in formation!

THUD! A foot kicked a twisted metal panel off the aircraft, sending it flying, and a stocky figure crawled out. It was Elton.

However, as soon as he emerged, he faced a large swarm of Void Devouring Beetles diving at him. The lead one already had its mouth open, ejecting several exploding eggs. This terrified Elton so much that he ducked and, without hesitation, plunged into a nearby ravine. The moment his body hit the ground, the rocky bottom of the ravine turned into a viscous liquid. He fell into it, and the liquid instantly solidified back into rock.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM...

The exploding eggs blasted the ground, sending rocks flying and creating craters on the surface. The wreckage of the aircraft, bearing the brunt, was shattered even further.

After this swarm of Void Devouring Beetles passed, the rocks in the ravine turned back into liquid. Elton climbed out, bedraggled, cautiously surveying his surroundings.

From another piece of wreckage, Gong Shuxu pulled Chen Gu out. A crash landing might spell doom for regular warriors, but for professionals with robust physiques, it was mostly non-fatal. Chen Gu and Gong Shuxu had sustained only some scrapes.

Gong Shuxu first led Chen Gu to a hidden spot, then gazed at the Void Devouring Beetles in the sky, mentally calculating their next move. In fact, even now, this Sixth Energy Level powerhouse felt little distress. Before their journey, he and Aviloya had an understanding: rescuing Chen Gu was ideal, but if that proved impossible, he was free to escape on his own. On a ground battlefield, a warrior of his caliber could sway the entire tide of battle; even if something unexpected happened, a solo escape would pose no issue.

Chen Gu raised his hand. "Help me open it."

After resting during the journey, Chen Gu's condition had completely recovered.

Gong Shuxu glanced at him coldly but disregarded the request.

Chen Gu said, "If I really had an issue, it wouldn't erupt now. I'd surely follow you back to human society. That's where I could cause the greatest harm."

Chapter 287 Aerial Battle with the Insect Race (2)

Gong Shuxu remained unmoved. On a massive rock in front of him, a Void Devourer Beetle landed, its grim insect eyes scanning for prey. The next moment, influenced by Gong Shuxu's ability, it opened its mouth towards the sky and spat a string of explosive larvae at another Void Devourer Beetle diving down, killing its kin. Soon after, it too met a violent end, killed by the concentrated fire of its own kind.

Chen Gu spoke again, "It's been nearly half an hour since those Troop Nest Beetles arrived. The swarm's main force should be here soon. You can certainly escape, but I'm afraid the others might not be as capable."

Gong Shuxu hesitated for a moment, then turned to release Chen Gu from the safety shackles. He placed the shackles securely under a rock. Perhaps they'd be needed for Chen Gu again once the battle was over.

Chen Gu flexed his limbs. Meanwhile, Gong Shuxu, searching for his next target, spotted a Void Devourer Beetle plunging down. With a mere thought, he captured it using his ability.

But Chen Gu called out from behind, "Don't waste it!"

Gong Shuxu frowned. Waste? He gave Chen Gu a somewhat dissatisfied glare, but Chen Gu was unconcerned. "Leave it to me," Chen Gu said.

Gong Shuxu suddenly sensed a rather unsettling power surge from Chen Gu, manifesting as invisible tendrils that wrapped around the Void Devourer Beetle.

Even as a Sixth Energy Level practitioner, Gong Shuxu couldn't help but blurt out, "A Brain Domain Hacker?"

Chen Gu didn't reply. Protected by Gong Shuxu, his Mind Remote Control over the Void Devourer Beetle progressed very smoothly, and he succeeded in no time!

Gong Shuxu was stunned as well. The professions of Brain Domain Hacker and Psychological Spy had a long-standing feud. Nearly all Brain Domain Hackers looked down on Psychological Spies, a fact that the Psychological Spies could never convincingly refute.

This was because, in the early stages, Psychological Spies were, in every aspect, far inferior to Brain Domain Hackers. Anything a Psychological Spy could do, a Brain Domain Hacker could also do, and often even better in other areas.

This led to a fixed notion among the vast majority of low-Energy Level professionals, such as Marcus: Psychological Spies had terrible direct combat abilities.

In the later stages, however, Psychological Spies developed strong resistance to Brain Domain Hackers and could often emerge victorious in confrontations.

But how many high-Energy Level professionals were there? Such battle instances were correspondingly rare. Furthermore, high-Energy Level professionals needed to maintain their dignity and couldn't be seen arguing like children, shouting everywhere, "We Psychological Spies power up in the late game; we're not weak at all!" Consequently, not many knew this truth. Even if someone spoke out, few in the current environment would believe it.

Therefore, Gong Shuxu was frustrated. Neither Psychological Spies nor Brain Domain Hackers knew that their abilities could actually synergize and enhance each other when they cooperated!

In the past, they would give each other the cold shoulder upon meeting. If they were enemies, they would fight fiercely enough to beat each other's brains out; cooperation was out of the question.

Today was just an accident.

Chen Gu took control of this Void Devourer Beetle. Without hesitation, he charged out, vaulted onto its back, and cried, "Hyah!" The beetle roared and soared into the sky with Chen Gu aboard.

His Riverwash Sword erupted with over twenty meters of crimson sword-flames. Chen Gu fought like a dragon. Combined with the Void Devourer Beetle's explosive larvae, he decimated the group of seven or eight Void Devourer Beetles in mere moments!

Watching from below, Gong Shuxu nodded in silent approval. His abilities focused on psychological suggestion. He could make Void Devourer Beetles attack their own kind, or even manipulate their behavior to some extent through suggestion. However, he couldn't directly control them as Chen Gu did.

Whenever he controlled one to release a burst of explosive larvae, other Void Devourer Beetles would quickly kill it. In contrast, Chen Gu could control one to perfectly coordinate with him, slaying seven or eight enemies in one go.

It wasn't that he was inferior to Chen Gu, but rather that their skills had different focal points.

This swarm of Void Devourer Beetles in the sky had already been reduced by nearly half by Gong Shuxu. After Chen Gu's assault, only about half of the original number remained.

Ma Shuwen and the other professionals also emerged, each displaying their abilities. The battle proceeded very smoothly.

Gong Shuxu found it hard to maintain his composure. If I don't show some real skill, Ma Shuwen and the others will probably think Psychological Spies are inferior to Brain Domain Hackers again, won't they? Fortunately, the distance was now sufficient.

He stepped out slowly. Suddenly, with a mere exertion of his will, all the Void Devourer Beetles circling in the sky were influenced by his ability, and they began to attack each other indiscriminately, friend or foe alike.

These Void Devourer Beetles were circling overhead, not far from Gong Shuxu, entirely within the range of his fully exerted abilities.

From the sky, huge Void Devourer Beetles fell like dumplings, THUD, THUD, THUD, gouging out a series of deep pits as they struck the ground. One moment Chen Gu and the others were in the thick of battle; the next, they were suddenly idle. Falling Void Devourer Beetles and flying debris even splattered onto Elton's face, causing the Elemental Navigator to hop about awkwardly in evasion, looking rather embarrassed.

After these Void Devourer Beetles had completely slaughtered each other, Gong Shuxu, hands clasped behind his back, unhurriedly walked before the group. "Take stock of the losses," he said.

Upon counting, everyone's spirits instantly plummeted: three professionals had died!

All of them had been in flyers that crashed. Disoriented and unable to escape in time, they were killed by pursuing Void Devourer Beetles that blew them up within the wreckage.

Including Gong Shuxu, the reconnaissance team initially had nine members. Now, with three lost, seven remained, including Chen Gu.

Gong Shuxu calmly retrieved the safety shackles and gestured towards Chen Gu. Chen Gu was exasperated. "With a formidable enemy right before us, you really want to do this?"

Gong Shuxu was adamant.

On Witch Star, Gong Shuxu had unjustly detained Chen Gu for over half a month. Later, feeling guilty, he had proactively helped him contact a military transport ship for his return. As a result, Chen Gu had run into this current predicament—making Gong Shuxu feel even more indebted to him.

Still, he said, "This matter is of great importance; we cannot afford to be careless."

After a pause, he personally stepped forward, fastened the safety shackles on Chen Gu, then patted his shoulder. "If, after we return this time, it's confirmed that you're completely in the clear, then this old man will owe you two favors. If you need anything in the future, just one call, and I'll be there!"

Then, the old man stubbornly added, "But only those two favors! Psychological Spies and Brain Domain Hackers are irreconcilable!"

Chapter 288 [Air Pressure Grenadier]

Chen Gu rolled his eyes, too lazy to say anything more to the stubborn old geezer.

"Let's get moving. The swarm should be here any minute," Ma Shuwen said from one side, while the little girl Lisa nodded repeatedly. Her blond hair, blue eyes, petite figure, and pale skin made her as adorable as a doll.

Gong Shuxu nodded, waved his hand to open a projected map, and pointed at a green marker. "Let's head to Base 11. It's the closest base with spare aircraft."

No one objected. They immediately set off on a long trek—Base 11 was a whopping 1,600 kilometers away!

Unseen by them, a large swarm had gathered near the Troop Nest Beetles. This swarm was different from previous ones. It featured a complete variety of insects, including a substantial number of Lethal Mosquito Bugs and Phantom Sky Devourer Bugs.

Once the swarm had fully assembled, they set off with a cacophony of chirps and buzzes, roaring mightily in their advance.

...

The scout squad moved at full speed. The sound of flapping wings grew from a distant murmur to a near roar, increasing in volume. Ma Shuwen glanced back: leading the charge were the fastest Lethal Mosquito Bugs. She simply called out, "Boles."

Her old partner stepped forward and gestured. "Leave it to me."

Boles stood behind the group and took a deep breath. Chen Gu saw a certain fluctuating force around them begin to coalesce into a faint orange glow, centering on Boles.

This energy was quite faint, yet its range was incredibly vast, eliciting reactions even thousands of meters high in the sky.

Chen Gu suddenly felt the pressure on his mask increase, making it emit a faint creaking sound.

Then Boles made a motion as if drawing a bow and shooting an arrow toward the Lethal Mosquito Bugs. The orange energy at his fingertips quickly formed a fluidly shaped long arrow.

WHIZ—

The special arrow shot out, swiftly hitting the swarm of Lethal Mosquito Bugs.

Following that, an explosive sound ripped through the air. The sky where the swarm of Lethal Mosquito Bugs flew trembled violently. Hundreds, even thousands, of the bugs were instantly shattered, their fragmented carcasses and torn wings scattering down like rain.

Chen Gu was taken aback, recalling a very rare profession. Airburst Grenadier?

Manipulating air pressure allowed one to unleash terrifying destructive power. This profession was practically useless without atmospheric pressure, unless one reached a high Energy Level and could create their own. However, within an atmosphere, its attack power was shocking, and its methods diverse and unpredictable.

Boles nodded and looked again at the Lethal Mosquito Bugs.

The bugs, stunned by the first hit, flew around chaotically for a moment but eventually regrouped and charged back fiercely.

Boles didn't hold back, repeatedly "shooting arrows." Each shot created a severe air pressure difference within the Lethal Mosquito Bug swarm, causing heavy losses in a short period.

When they charged, there were tens of thousands of them. But after seven or eight minutes, only a few thousand remained, and they fled in disarray.

"Let's go," Gong Shuxu said indifferently. "As long as we don't get entangled by the flying bugs, they'll never catch us."

That was true. With the Professionals' speed, it was nearly impossible for ground-based insects to catch them.

The swarms behind them seemed to realize this too, as no pursuers appeared for a long time. Even the Lethal Mosquito Bugs and Phantom Sky Devourer Bugs had vanished.

But a day later, a huge buzzing sound once again came from the sky behind them, revealing a vast, dark silhouette.

The Professionals were dumbfounded. Then, the buzzing intensified in the sky around them. It wasn't just from behind; it also appeared in front and on both flanks.

The bugs had actually circled around to their front and flanks, encircling them!

Swarms of Lethal Mosquito Bugs and Phantom Sky Devourer Bugs appeared.

Clutched in their claws were Giant Ghost Claw Bugs, Armor Bugs, Blazing Mammoth Bugs, and more.

Chen Gu also saw a new species emerge among these bugs. This insect resembled a pangolin and was about the same size as a Blazing Mammoth Bug. However, it had six biological spray cavities on its body, similar to an egg-launcher bug's organ chambers, suggesting it was far more powerful than an egg-launcher bug.

"Giant Cannon Beetles!" Ma Shuwen gritted her teeth. "The bugs are really going all out this time." She couldn't help but look at Chen Gu. "Is this because of you?"

Chen Gu was also puzzled.

Initially, when the bugs attacked, everyone thought it was because of that special Troop Nest Beetle. But now, that Troop Nest Beetle had been completely destroyed in the aircraft crash.

Why, then, were the bugs still pursuing them so relentlessly?

Chen Gu didn't think so highly of himself as to believe there was something special about him that made the bugs harbor such a relentless vendetta.

But the current situation was indeed baffling.

"Could it be because I destroyed two of their nests that the bugs are coming for revenge?" Chen Gu muttered to himself. This caused Ma Shuwen and the others to look at him sideways. "You destroyed two nests?"

Realizing he had let something slip, Chen Gu didn't deny it. "Surely the bugs aren't that irrational, right?"

The bugs and the human army were currently locked in fierce combat. Various forces should be deployed to the main battlefield, not chasing him for revenge.

"Release me." Chen Gu gestured to Gong Shuxu. Although still reluctant, Gong Shuxu saw that the Lethal Mosquito Bugs and Phantom Sky Devourer Bugs had already released the larger ground-based insects. Air and ground units then coordinated to pounce on the squad.

Gong Shuxu had no choice but to undo Chen Gu's safety shackles.

Chen Gu flexed his limbs, drew his Riverwash Sword, and stepped forward to face a group of charging Giant Ghost Claw Bugs.

KILL—

It was unclear who yelled first, but the Professionals cunningly followed Chen Gu, using him as the spearhead to charge into one side of the bug swarm.

If this kid can annihilate two nests, he's certainly strong enough to lead the charge!

Gong Shuxu, hands clasped behind his back like a grandmaster, leisurely followed the group. Chen Gu had already plunged into the swarm. A twenty-meter-long crimson sword flame instantly flared, shredding bugs.

The Professionals behind him indeed felt less pressure. They defended the flanks and took care of any stragglers.

Besides, with Gong Shuxu, a powerhouse, at the rear, there was always someone to cover them.

However, no one noticed Gong Shuxu's expression change slightly the moment he engaged the swarm. He immediately shouted, "Everyone be careful! These bugs are different. They seem to have been specially altered and have greatly increased resistance to my skills."

The Professionals were taken aback. They knew bugs evolved quickly, but they had never encountered an evolution specifically targeting a single Professional before.

A single thought emerged in everyone's mind: This time, the bugs are truly sparing no expense. They're determined to kill us all.

Chapter 289 Changes Arise Incessantly

Only Chen Gu at the front remained unaffected, continuing to swing his sword in battle and forcibly carving a path through the giant insects.

If ordinary people were present, the sight would leave them dumbfounded. The insects were dozens of meters in size, and Chen Gu appeared minuscule before them. Yet, this tiny figure wielded a giant sword as if he had entered an uninhabited land. The behemoths in his path were split asunder by the gleam of his sword, their remains and fluids spraying everywhere...

But a large swarm of insects surged forward. The insect horde also moved with incredible speed. After the "airdrop" of these large insects slowed the team, they swiftly closed in for the kill.

At the critical moment, Gong Shuxu roared. His Sixth Energy Level power erupted. Even though the insects had been specially conditioned, many couldn't withstand his ability and instantly turned to attack their own kind.

The entire battlefield descended into chaos. Gong Shuxu strode forward, focusing intently, intent on leading everyone out of this encirclement before the insect swarm closed in.

As he passed by the others, a hand suddenly reached out. It lightly patted his shoulder, yet it produced a loud BANG!

A viscous, black substance, like crude oil, rapidly spread from the palm onto Gong Shuxu's shoulder. It covered most of his shoulder and threatened to expand further!

Gong Shuxu's sturdy frame wobbled. He turned his head in disbelief toward the attacker, his lips trembling, unable to utter a word. The ability he had been maintaining instantly collapsed. He then gathered all his strength and focus to combat the "blackness" on his shoulder.

The hand that had struck Gong Shuxu also turned pitch-black in an instant. It then swelled rapidly, veins bulging, skin rotting, as strange scales sprouted from it.

The transformation then spread rapidly. He let out a triumphant roar. His protective suit and breathing mask burst as his body swelled to over four meters tall. A crimson, forked tongue lashed out, flicking wildly in the air, as if a long-suppressed entity had finally been unleashed!

Ma Shuwen, caught off guard, was struck by the tongue. A sharp SLAP sent her flying, half her body instantly becoming bloodied. Nearby, a giant Ghost-Claw Insect raised its massive pincer, preparing to strike.

Ma Shuwen was momentarily immobilized. She watched the seven to eight-meter-long insect pincer, like Death's scythe, descend upon her. She sighed and closed her eyes, awaiting her end.

Suddenly, a streak of crimson lightning flashed from the side, CRACK! It sliced through the underbelly of the giant Ghost-Claw Insect.

Ma Shuwen heard the Ghost-Claw Insect utter a piercing shriek. Then, with a PLOP, she was drenched from head to toe in a foul-smelling, viscous fluid—dark green, thankfully.

She opened her eyes in a daze. Chen Gu was charging toward Gong Shuxu, sword in hand. The giant Ghost-Claw Insect before her had collapsed, its huge pincer severed, and a wound was gradually appearing down the center of its body.

Still reeling, Ma Shuwen saw Chen Gu rush to Gong Shuxu's side. He held his sword with both hands and shouted, "Don't move!"

WHOOSH—

A sword came down.

Gong Shuxu knew what Chen Gu intended. He was amazed that this young man was so decisive, instantly finding the solution with the least cost in this crisis. Simultaneously, he gritted his teeth, overcame his body's instincts, and remained perfectly still, just as Chen Gu had warned.

He felt a searing sensation flash across his shoulder. Chen Gu's sword had severed his arm along with the entire shoulder!

For an ordinary person, this sword strike would have been fatal. But Gong Shuxu was a Sixth Energy Level master. Although severely injured, the wound was not life-threatening. Indeed, once he returned to the main encampment, with his status and influence, various precious elixirs and healing methods could be employed. His shoulder and arm could regrow. After a period of recuperation and training, his strength would be completely unimpaired.

The severed shoulder and arm carried away the corrupting mutation, completely saving Gong Shuxu.

The Sixth Energy Level master was drenched in a cold sweat from the pain. For a time, he had lost all combat capability.

Chen Gu grabbed him and handed him to the doll Lisa, "Take good care of him!"

Chen Gu then took a deep breath. He held his sword upright before him, adopting a defensive opening stance from the Nuclear Combat Technique.

Before him stood the four-meter-tall, pitch-black creature with a blood-red tongue—the professional-turned-Mutant!

Ma Shuwen had regained her composure. She gathered the other professionals, forming a protective circle around the injured Gong Shuxu. Staring at the Mutant in disbelief, she stammered, "Boles... you... how could you become this!"

Her answer was a strange throbbing in the enormous Mutant's chest and abdomen. Suddenly, it spewed countless black specks, like tiny mosquitoes, from its mouth. These black specks swarmed out, landing among the surrounding insects.

Each black speck infected an insect. Given the already countless number of insects, the moment the specks landed, the creatures began to writhe in agony on the ground. For a critical moment, they stopped their assault on the humans.

Then the Mutant, Boles, moved abruptly, charging toward Chen Gu.

Chen Gu dodged and advanced. Their exchange was incredibly fast, the sounds of their blows—BANG! BANG! BANG!—echoing incessantly. Even the professionals behind them could only perceive a streak of crimson lightning weaving around a massive black shadow.

Gong Shuxu's severe wound had stopped bleeding. As he watched the huge black shadow, complex emotions surged within him. He had been wary of Chen Gu potentially mutating throughout the entire journey. Yet, he had never expected a true Mutant to be hidden among them—and for it to be Boles.

It was precisely because Boles had attacked at a critical moment that he himself was severely injured, and the entire team had teetered on the brink of collapse.

Yet, at the crucial moment, it was Chen Gu—the one he had constantly been wary of—who had turned the tide. He not only saved Gong Shuxu but also temporarily stabilized the situation.

Gong Shuxu felt a wave of shame and muttered to himself, This is bad. Now I owe that annoying Brain Domain Hacker three favors...

I wonder if I'll ever be able to repay this debt in my lifetime!

"You all go first!" Chen Gu shouted amidst the battle.

But the others couldn't bear to abandon Chen Gu and flee. Annoyed, Chen Gu yelled, "Go first! I can easily get away!"

He was inwardly anxious. You liabilities! Why aren't you running while these insects are still dealing with the effects of the corruption? Are you trying to get me killed?!

As soon as you're gone, this master actor can fight his way out. One Quantum Teleportation and I'll vanish!

At the critical moment, it was Gong Shuxu who made the decisive call: "Go!"

Chapter 290 The Greatest Enemy is Hunger (1)

Several uninjured professionals gritted their teeth, helped up Gong Shuxu and Ma Shuwen, and said to Chen Gu, "Take care of yourself." Then they fought their way out together.

Once they broke through the swarm, the formidable nature of the professionals became apparent again. Elton carried Gong Shuxu, Lisa carried Ma Shuwen, and another named Chao Wanghou covered their retreat. The group sped away, faster than the swiftest horse.

A normal person would never have been able to run so fast with two injured people slowing them down.

Chen Gu was in a very passive position, trying to delay the battle on his side. Once a professional Fell and transformed into a Mutant, they would undoubtedly become very strong. Moreover, Boles, a Pneumatic Grenadier, unleashed a plethora of attacks in this planet's atmosphere.

The insects started to mutate as well!

Already particularly fierce and ferocious, they became even more terrifying. Not only did their size increase yet again, but their bodies also sprouted densely packed keratin spikes, and their strength was greatly enhanced.

They began to attack those insects that had not been contaminated, and a massive battle commenced.

By this time, Chen Gu was quite certain: Boles's target wasn't them, the professionals. In comparison, he valued this insect swarm far more!

But that bastard Boles kept harrying him. Now huge, with formidable strength and a myriad of mutant skills at his disposal, Chen Gu found himself unexpectedly suppressed, unable to find a chance to escape!

After a while, as Boles forced him to retreat step by step, rage welled up within Chen Gu. With a loud roar, his body began to swell.

CRACK, CRACK, CRACK...

Accompanying the sounds of his bones growing, Chen Gu swelled to a height of five meters!

This is probably my limit in this state, he felt. But it's enough. His immense frame brought with it dozens of times more strength. The Riverwash Sword in his hand seemed like a toothpick, yet Chen Gu dared not discard it.

Fighting a Mutant directly made it very difficult to avoid contamination.

Fortunately, the twenty-meter crimson sword-fire was still usable. He struck Boles heavily with his sword.

The crimson sword-fire surged. A large number of scales erupted on Boles's body, and he actually managed to forcefully block Chen Gu's sword strike. However, the tremendous force still sent him staggering back continuously.

Seizing the advantage, Chen Gu unleashed Nuclear Rampage with his massive body!

BOOM, BOOM, BOOM...

Despite his greatly reduced agility due to his enlarged size, making Nuclear Rampage seem like a laggy, frame-skipping version without its usual lightning-fast continuity, it was still too rapid for Boles to react. He was bombarded repeatedly by the crimson sword-fire, retreating again and again. By the time Chen Gu finished this wave of attacks, Boles had been pushed back several hundred meters.

With a great roar, Chen Gu raised his sword, and the crimson sword-fire, now over twenty meters long, surged forward again. Boles let out an infuriated howl and slammed his fists heavily onto the ground, yet he dared not abandon a defensive stance.

But unexpectedly, Chen Gu did not press his attack; instead, a layer of pale blue energy ripples began to emanate from his body.

Boles paused for a moment. His intelligence had declined after his mutation, but he quickly realized: This guy is trying to escape!

Weren't you the one who swelled up your body to fight me to the end?! Why are you running, you treacherous human scoundrel!

Boles let out a furious roar and charged forward. A few hundred meters was nothing for such a behemoth, but the energy ripples surrounding Chen Gu were already collapsing inward and about to disappear.

Boles raised his hand and struck the empty space forcefully. A sudden, massive air pressure differential appeared around Chen Gu. With a BOOM, the vibrating energy ripples swayed unstably.

Chen Gu's head buzzed, and blood gushed from his nose, but the energy ripples contracted inward, taking him along as he vanished on the spot.

ROAR—

Boles, impotent with fury, roared several times. He straightened up to look at Elton and the others still sprinting furiously across the distant wasteland, then scanned the entire battlefield. Although the

Mutant insects were more formidable, the ordinary Insect Race members were vast in number. He abandoned the chase and turned to plunge into the insect swarm.

Chen Gu had judged correctly: Boles valued the insect swarm more. As long as he possessed a massive Mutant insect swarm, he would be nearly invincible on this planet. Everything else could be slowly dealt with after he controlled the swarm.

「...」

Chen Gu, dizzy and disoriented, fell from midair. With a thud, his head smacked on a rock, shattering a stone the size of a washbasin, before his body slowly contracted to its normal size.

His Quantum Teleportation had carried him further than Elton and the others, landing him ahead of them.

Ma Shuwen saw Chen Gu suddenly appear from midair and drop down, and she noticed his body had originally been very large.

She was momentarily speechless, then asked Gong Shuxu, "What... what profession is he exactly?"

Gong Shuxu didn't know how to respond and said stiffly, "I don't know either."

Ma Shuwen was puzzled but did not ask any more questions.

Only when everyone else ran up to Chen Gu did he slowly roll over and sit up. Boles's interference in the final moments of the Quantum Teleportation had taken a heavy toll on him. I'm afraid I won't be able to use my Quantum Wizard skills for a short while, he felt.

"How are you feeling?" Chao Wanghou asked with concern, reaching out to help him up.

Chen Gu waved him off and stood up by himself. Still feeling a bit dizzy, he said, "Let's go, fast!"

Behind them, the chaotic battle of the swarm had reached its peak, with insects of all sizes attacking and tearing at each other, and Boles flashing in and out, subduing a giant insect each time.

The professionals fled, utterly disheveled and in disarray.

They didn't stop until they had run for over a hundred kilometers, finally pausing to catch their breath. Elton, wiping sweat from his brow, asked incredulously, "When did Boles Fall?"

Everyone noticed that Gong Shuxu's face looked rather unsettled.

Boles was military, and this incident had resulted in his severe injuries—he was at the Sixth Energy Level! This matter would be difficult for Marshal Bai to explain to Aviloya.

Chen Gu had also recovered by now, but he remained silent. The Great Actor Chen had discovered a very serious problem plaguing him: he was hungry! Ever since turning Isabella Wu's page, he seemed afflicted by something akin to a binge-eating disorder, often feeling famished. And when hunger struck, his eyes would practically turn green; he had to eat his fill immediately, otherwise, the feeling could even start affecting his rationality.

His eyes scanned everyone as he asked, "Does anyone have any food?"

"Yes." Several people replied, reaching into their military backpacks and pulling out a few packs of individual military rations.

It was the same kind of latest individual military ration Chen Gu had eaten at the cave outpost: nutritionally complete and extremely calorie-dense. A single palm-sized piece could satisfy the needs of a fully armed warrior engaged in high-intensity combat for three days.