

Full Time 301

Chapter 301: The Duck That Got Away (3)

Several kilometers away, in a hidden mountain hollow, Chen Gu returned with the victor through Quantum Teleportation.

It was somewhat strenuous. This was his first time teleporting such a large "object," and it was indeed much more difficult than moving alone.

Ma Shuwen and the others had been dumbstruck from the moment Chen Gu teleported to rescue the victor, a state that persisted until Chen Gu returned with it.

The sole thought in the minds of the professional scouts was, This is impossible... What exactly is this guy's profession? From the moment we met him until now, he has displayed skills from at least three different professions!

Now, Chen Gu's biggest problem was the victor beside him. It had no idea what had happened and was suddenly surrounded by a group of weird individuals it had never encountered before.

Even with grave injuries, the defiant victor struggled to rise, ready to let out a threatening roar.

But they were only a few kilometers away from the Insect Race, and if the creature were to roar, they would immediately be exposed.

Chen Gu had no desire to face the formidable Insect Race.

Without hesitation, he dramatically increased his size, instantly swelling to a giant. Then, spreading the fingers of one hand, he forcibly pressed down the injured victor, while his other hand grabbed its mouth, squeezing with such force that it could not open its jaws or let out the sound.

Feeling "offended," the victor was even more furious, twisting its body to "confront" Chen Gu.

Had it not been injured, even with the surge in strength Chen Gu gained from his transformation to a giant, he wouldn't have stood a chance against the victor, which had obtained the Super Life gene chain.

At least not in terms of strength.

But now, it was miserably wounded. Any movement caused its two large wounds to spurt copious amounts of pale blue liquid, while waves of intense pain assailed its brain.

Chen Gu, of course, showed no mercy in suppressing it.

Chen Gu simply flipped over to straddle the victor, pinning it firmly beneath him, and then freed a hand to forcefully jab his fingers into one of its wounds.

In pain, the victor's body convulsed, but its mouth was firmly clamped by Chen Gu, so it couldn't make a sound.

Elton, having snapped out of his stunned state, immediately and obsequiously cooperated with Lord Chen Gu, suggesting, "Why not simply kill it!"

This murderous voice seemed to be universally understood across species, and in an instant, the victor caught on. It dared not cause any more trouble and lay on the ground, gently wagging its tail...

Chen Gu also breathed a sigh of relief.

He recalled that in his previous life, the unparalleled Empress had made some remarks about horse training when she was young.

To sum it up simply: mix benevolence with authority. If that fails, the beast is ungovernable and better off dead.

This approach, while overtly sharp and somewhat utilitarian, was precisely what Chen Gu needed to swiftly subdue the victor. Otherwise, he would indeed have to kill it and then destroy all evidence with a Biological Nuclear Explosion.

Under no circumstances could he allow the victor to fall into the hands of the Insect Race.

Fortunately, he was successful and saved the victor's life—an act of grace.

Suppressing the victor, brutally jabbing its wounds—this was an act of merciless power.

Chen Gu slowly got off the victor's back, watching it warily, ready to kill it immediately if it showed any sign of rebellion.

Gong Shuxu, who was on lookout above, said softly, "The Insect Race is coming."

Chen Gu slowly loosened his grip. The victor whimpered softly but still sprawled on the ground, showing submission.

Chen Gu breathed a sigh of relief and said to the Energy Gathering Mechanical Species, "As long as you behave, we can save you. If you make trouble, that's suicide..."

It was unclear if the Energy Gathering Mechanical Species understood, but at least it was being "obedient" for the moment. Chen Gu was surprised that the creature was actually obeying when he realized something was wrong: the victor's spirit was fading, and the blue liquid flowing from its two wounds was also lessening.

Chen Gu was startled. Is this thing... going into shock from blood loss?

Chen Gu felt overwhelmed. The Insect Race would be arriving soon, yet the Energy Gathering Mechanical Species was massive and heavy. He obviously couldn't escape with it in tow—using Quantum Teleportation constantly wasn't an option.

Chen Gu's eyes shifted. Regardless of whether the victor could understand, he continued, "Then I can only apologize. I will use Biological Nuclear Explosion on you. Given your body, blessed by Super Life, the explosion should be very powerful and ought to kill many insects. It can be considered your own way of seeking revenge."

Chao Wanghou secretly curled his lips. He thought Chen Gu was casting pearls before swine. After all, everyone in Star Sea knew the Mechanical Species was hot-tempered and difficult to communicate with. Otherwise, why were there so few Mechanical Species in the beast battles?

But then the victor suddenly flipped over and got up!

Chao Wanghou was taken aback, watching as the Energy Gathering Mechanical Species, clearly on the brink of collapse, still tried hard to convey a demeanor of, I can still endure, don't leave me behind.

Did it understand Chen Gu's words?! Chao Wanghou felt that this mission had shattered his usual understanding of things far too many times.

Still, Chao Wanghou couldn't help but shake his head. He felt that despite its willpower, the victor's injuries were too severe. It couldn't hold on for long and would become a burden if they took it along.

Then Chao Wanghou's common sense was shattered yet again: a stream of red light, similar to the glow of a Super Life's crown, suddenly surged from the victor's body.

This light possessed some special power that quickly repaired the victor's two wounds and seemed to inject a spark of vitality into it. The victor trembled slightly and regained some of its imposing presence.

But just as it was gathering its strength, Chen Gu grabbed its head and pushed it down. The victor, now filled with respect and awe for him, didn't dare to resist.

Chen Gu said quietly, "Don't expose yourself. Follow me."

Gong Shuxu also returned from his lookout post, signaling to everyone with several hand gestures, and they all began retreating in one direction.

All the while, the victor crept low to the ground, using the uneven rocks to conceal its massive form.

After a while, as they distanced themselves from the swarm, the victor suddenly bit Chen Gu's clothes and tugged gently. Chen Gu understood its intent and said to everyone, "Follow it. It knows this place well."

The victor realized it was near the mouth of the cave it had wanted to escape into earlier.

It led them easily into the underground cave and then dashed along the path, returning to its familiar world with excitement and relief. It took several sharp turns at great speed and ran a considerable distance. Yet, when it looked back, it found Chen Gu still close behind, smiling enigmatically at it.

Chapter 302: Fly, Fly (1)

The victor felt a sense of foreboding. Sure enough, Chen Gu went over and ruthlessly rapped it on the head.

THUD!

The victor's head was knocked so hard it smashed into the rocks.

It pulled its head out, bringing a mass of broken stones with it. After repeatedly weighing its options, it still didn't dare to turn on Chen Gu. The main reason was the feeling that it had no chance of winning.

Chen Gu spoke indifferently, "You probably understand what I'm saying. I know you do."

The victor did not respond.

Chen Gu paid it no mind and continued, "Those bugs are targeting you. Their numbers are incredibly vast; they are a powerful group capable of dominating the entire Star Sea."

"They've set their sights on you, and they will send out an even larger swarm, scouring the entire planet. You'll have no place to hide."

"And I cannot allow you to fall into their hands. So, if you leave me no other choice, I can only kill you. Hmm, it might be a bit cruel—the kind of killing that would leave not even your bones."

The victor trotted up and affectionately nuzzled Chen Gu with its head.

Chen Gu smiled as Gong Shuxu and the others caught up from behind. Chen Gu patted the victor's head and mused for a moment, "Since you've decided to follow us, it's time to give you a name."

Chen Gu tilted his head, looking at the victor. "You see... how should I put it? You're quite a bit short of a true super life form. A true super life form has the stature of a Phoenix, but you... you look more like a chicken. However, your combat ability is still pretty good. Let's just call you 'Combat Rooster'."

The victor didn't understand how utterly conscienceless this name was. At that moment, it only wanted to show its "affection" for Chen Gu, cheerfully circling him a few times, bobbing its head and wagging its tail.

Lisa looked disdainful upon hearing the name, and Ma Shuwen almost burst out laughing. A look of relief crossed Gong Shuxu's face. Still the same vexing Brain Domain Hacker.

Elton, however, nodded in approval. "Good name."

Everyone else, including Chen Gu, looked at him in surprise.

Elton was taken aback. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing," they all shook their heads together.

Gong Shuxu said, "Alright, let's not waste any more time. There are still four victors left, and we must stop the Insect Race from capturing them."

Combat Rooster—the powerful Energy Gathering Mechanical Species and future super life form—shook its tail, approached Chen Gu, and growled towards a particular direction in the cave.

Chen Gu was puzzled. "What do you mean? Can you find the other victors?"

Combat Rooster nodded its head.

Gong Shuxu also nodded. "The victors still compete with one another. Presumably, killing the other victors would make their path to becoming a super life form much smoother. As a result, they can actually sense each other's approximate locations."

Combat Rooster nodded repeatedly.

They couldn't express these things as clearly as Gong Shuxu did, but some instinct told them what to do for their own benefit.

"Lead the way," Chen Gu said, glaring at Combat Rooster.

This creature is quite cunning, Chen Gu realized. It wants to use us to deal with its own competitors.

Combat Rooster cheerfully ran ahead. It couldn't clearly express that this mutual sensing ability could actually be turned off voluntarily.

For example, after it broke away from the main group, it had turned off that sense. At that time, it had become frightened and prepared to flee for its life.

But the other victors all had their senses switched on. They were all ambitious, hoping to kill off the other victors as soon as possible.

「...」

Deep within the Insect Race's nest in the rear, they had planned for a long time. Just when the genetic chain seemed within reach, their efforts came to naught. The Empress screamed repeatedly, venting her fury for a good ten minutes or so. The entire nest teetered on the verge of collapse, and the other Insect Race members were as silent as cicadas in winter.

Just then, an image was transmitted back, and the Empress's anger finally turned to joy.

The image showed a vast, flat wasteland. Swarms of insects surrounded it, constantly converging inward from all directions.

Enclosed by their ranks was a group of mechanical beings from beyond the stars, numbering a few thousand. Each one was exceedingly powerful, and they protected a victor at their center.

The Empress let out another scream, urging her children, "Quick, quick, quick! Take them down for me! I want that genetic chain!"

"Complete the task, and you will be amply rewarded. But if you can't bring back the genetic chain, don't bother returning."

Among the swarm, there was also a Troop Nest Beetle that relayed the Empress's command to every member of the Insect Race. The swarm instantly became agitated and recklessly charged toward the mechanical beings from beyond the stars.

The mechanical beings roared, tearing the insects before them to shreds. However, more insects surged in from behind, and slowly, the mechanical beings were whittled down.

This particular swarm was the largest group of the Insect Race that had last landed, numbering over a hundred thousand. Annihilating a few thousand mechanical beings from beyond the stars was, therefore, no problem at all.

The victor led its kin in desperate charges left and right, hoping to break through an opening to escape. But a dense mass of the Insect Race surrounded them. They made numerous efforts, but each time, the Insect Race, heedless of casualties, fiercely repelled them.

The number of mechanical beings from beyond the stars beside the victor dwindled until, finally, it was left alone.

But the mechanical beings were indeed formidable; their few thousand had managed to slay over ten thousand insects.

The victor kept roaring, a hint of impotent fury in its cries. Yet, having received the favor of a super life form, it was confident it could at least escape, even if its kin were almost entirely wiped out.

Even during an escape, my own kin are just a burden, it thought.

It picked a target and charged, truly crushing everything in its path; even a Blazing Mammoth Bug was dispatched with a single swipe of its claw.

It was like a sharp blade effortlessly slicing through tofu, easily cleaving a gap in the Insect Race's blockade.

In the nest, the Empress hadn't expected this victor to be so fierce. But the fiercer it was, the more excited she became. This indicated that the genetic chain's effects exceeded her expectations.

The Empress screamed out commands. Soon, at the rear of the swarm, Armor-Piercing Arrow Bugs began to rally.

Hundreds of Armor-Piercing Arrow Bugs formed arrays. Receiving the Empress's orders, they disregarded friendly fire and simultaneously unleashed their sharp arrow-spines!

The victor had never anticipated such an attack from the Insect Race while it was locked in a life-or-death struggle with them.

Taken completely by surprise, a multitude of sharp arrow-spines rained down around the victor, instantly blasting the area into chaos!

Dozens of Blazing Mammoth Bugs, hundreds of giant Ghost Claw Beetles, and countless other insects perished on the spot in that barrage.

The victor, too, was hit by four sharp arrow-spines in succession.

Two of the arrow-spines struck vulnerable areas. As the second wave of attacks came, it was blasted to the ground. It rolled continuously, now powerless to escape.

Chapter 303: Fly, Fly (2)

Witnessing this scene, the Empress showed no sorrow for her countless dead offspring. Instead, she shrieked with excitement.

She cautiously issued an order for the insects on the battlefield to watch out for accidents.

Last time, at a crucial moment, a bizarre individual had suddenly appeared and inexplicably snatched away the prey already within her grasp!

This time, she would not allow such an incident to occur.

Therefore, the crawler Troop Nest Beetle, having received the order, abandoned its usual habits and swiftly advanced. Its body was petite compared to a normal Troop Nest Beetle, yet it remained a behemoth among common insects. It shoved aside other bugs and rushed to the victor, coiling its tentacles to restrain the immobile creature.

Then the crawler Troop Nest Beetle deemed it appropriate—or rather, the Empress controlling it did, as the Troop Nest Beetle possessed no independent thought.

The Empress, of course, knew professionals existed among humans. In fact, all Empresses had attempted to engineer offspring capable of effectively resisting them.

However, professionals hadn't appeared en masse on the battlefield. Consequently, even if such modifications were successful, they weren't widely utilized. It was a matter of "cost"; these specialized offspring consumed too many resources, and with professionals being so rare, the enormous expense to specifically counter them wasn't justified.

If needed, Troop Nest Beetles could be modified on the fly.

When prey she had nearly captured suddenly vanished previously, the Empress recognized it as a professional's ability. However, she also understood that professionals had their limits; otherwise, they would have easily flattened the Insect Race.

With such a large Troop Nest Beetle now entangled with the Energy Gathering Mechanical Species, the professional likely lacked the ability to take them both.

Besides, even if they were taken together, the presence of the Troop Nest Beetle would allow her to immediately pinpoint their location.

All she desired was the gene chain. Whether the Energy Gathering Mechanical Species lived or died made no difference to her.

The vast insect swarm behind them surged forward. Just then, that accursed pale blue ripple reappeared, followed by that damned human.

The surrounding insects were already close, swarming forward. But the energy ripple rapidly collapsed inward; a group of bugs pounced to bite and, with a SNAP, bit nothing.

It wasn't entirely empty space they bit. The crawler Troop Nest Beetle was still there, and hundreds of large insects sank their fangs into it simultaneously! The unfortunate Troop Nest Beetle shuddered violently in pain.

From her nest at the rear, the Empress watched the abandoned Troop Nest Beetle and suddenly realized her mistake: a professional's ability could let him take what he wanted and leave what he didn't.

This meant that unless the Troop Nest Beetle completely merged with the Energy Gathering Mechanical Species—even if it were to enter the Mechanical Species as intimately as a lover—the professional could still callously leave it behind.

A miscalculation! The Empress silently berated herself but would never admit her mistake to her offspring. Instead, her fury erupted anew as the prey was snatched away just before being secured.

This time, her roar, a terrifying sonic wave, washed over the battlefield. Tens of thousands of Insect Race members collapsed in agony, their bodies unresponsive.

This was the Empress's punishment for them!

The punishment lasted over twenty minutes, leaving all the insects paralyzed. If a human bombardment had occurred then, nearly one hundred thousand members of the Insect Race would have been annihilated.

But the Empress had all but abandoned this generation of offspring. She quickly contacted her other broods, informing them of the spoiler's presence. She then issued a difficult command to the crawler Troop Nest Beetles serving as mere tool-commanders within the swarm: modify and adjust.

This command caused the insect swarm, which was splitting up to pursue the victor, to immediately slow down.

This was because these new Troop Nest Beetles, to maintain communication with the Empress and their own mobility, had sacrificed much of their modification and incubation capacity.

The Empress's orders required them to modify a portion of the Insect Race, enhancing their resistance to professionals' abilities.

However, their current form couldn't extract energy and nutrients from the planet, yet this modification demanded immense energy. Thus, they had to pause temporarily. The Troop Nest Beetles extended their feelers deep underground to draw power and sustenance.

Then they slowly began the transformation process.

They were much smaller than regular Troop Nest Beetles, which limited the number of large insects they could modify at once.

But it was the Empress's command, and they obeyed unconditionally.

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Chen Gu had initially expected the insects to pursue them relentlessly after he brought back the second victor, just like before. Unexpectedly, this time, an inaudible sound had paralyzed all the insects on the ground, allowing Chen Gu and his group to escape easily.

Chen Gu tossed the severely injured, dying victor onto the Combat Rooster's back. The rooster squawked unhappily but, cowed by Chen Gu's intimidating glare, obediently galloped off, carrying its mortal enemy.

In the sky, the battle satellite faithfully relayed every scene back to the Central Operations Room. Bai Yunpeng, seeing Chen Gu snatch the second victor, heaved a sigh of relief. Beside him, Nan Zhendong couldn't help but exclaim repeatedly, "This kid is really good! How did you meet him?"

Bai Yunpeng replied, "We met playing games."

Nan Zhendong roared with laughter. Then, with the shrewd expression of a seasoned tactician, he said to Bai Yunpeng, "Such talent is wasted at the Bureau of Mystic Security! We need to find a way to get him into the military department. Whatever it takes, I'll support you!"

Bai Yunpeng's eyes lit up. Why else would I have dragged this old fellow here to witness Chen Gu's performance? Wasn't it precisely to hear him say this? That old hag Aviloya is too difficult for me to handle alone, but with two Marshals working together... this is practically a done deal!

He gave Nan Zhendong an "it's settled" hand gesture, and the two tacticians shared a conspiratorial smirk.

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After escaping for dozens of kilometers, Chen Gu and his group slowed slightly, preparing to change direction and pursue the third victor.

At that moment, Ma Shuwen suddenly said, "It's dead."

The second victor on the Combat Rooster's back had died.

The Combat Rooster, in a previous near-death state, had unleashed a latent potential bestowed by its super life force. But the second victor's injuries were far more severe; it had first been pierced by four barbs from Swordtail Beetles and then bombarded by a salvo from Arrow Beetles.

Throughout their journey, it had repeatedly tried to cheat death. Each time the red light surged, however, it would slowly fade, powerless to heal its grievous wounds.

Now, it had finally succumbed, dying completely.

With a roar, the Combat Rooster tossed its dead enemy off its back and then bit into the carcass.

However, just as it took a bite, it glanced sheepishly at Chen Gu. Chen Gu nodded. "Go on, eat. Can't let good food go to waste. Make sure you eat every last bit."

Overjoyed, the Combat Rooster began to devour its meal ravenously.

Chapter 304: The Insect Race Is Utterly Defeated (1)

The second victor was an extraterrestrial mechanical species, actually slightly smaller than the native mechanical species' Combat Rooster, but not by much.

As the Combat Rooster devoured its prey, a red glow continuously flowed back and forth across its body, and as it fed, its body visibly began to grow.

In just a few dozen minutes, an extraterrestrial mechanical creature over ten meters long had been entirely consumed! The Combat Rooster's body had grown to twenty meters, about the size of a Blazing Mammoth Bug.

Clearly, they could hunt and kill each other to plunder that red glow, using it to fortify themselves.

The Combat Rooster was extremely gratified. The power it had lost due to severe wounds was fully recovered, and now it was even stronger than before.

It let out a roar to the sky, its mind becoming more active once again. Its mechanical eyes rattled as they turned, beginning to assess the comparative strength between them, wondering whether it could rebel and escape.

But Chen Gu shook his head slightly at it, "Foolish!"

The Combat Rooster immediately felt this judgment forcibly crammed into its brain, deeply engraved there.

Rebelling against its master was the ultimate folly!

The Combat Rooster humbled itself, making a mewling growl as it brought its huge head close to Chen Gu, requesting him to mount its back.

Gong Shuxu watched this scene with secret envy. Say what you will, but the abilities of these detestable "Brain Domain Hackers" can sometimes be really useful.

Chen Gu showed an expression of disgust. Only after several persistent pleas from the Combat Rooster did he reluctantly mount its back.

Then he gestured to the others, "Come on up."

The twenty-meter-long metal behemoth had no trouble carrying a few people on its back.

Although the Combat Rooster was reluctant, it dared not defy its master and dejectedly allowed the others to also climb aboard.

Chen Gu then urged it on, and the Combat Rooster dashed toward the direction of the third victor.

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There was a narrow fissure in the open ground, hundreds of meters deep, with an entrance to an underground cavern. But now, that entrance was blocked by a large swarm of bugs.

Above the fissure, various bugs were also packed tightly together.

A group of native mechanical species was guarding a victor, effectively sealed within this fissure.

However, the Crawling Troop Nest Beetle, responsible for transmitting orders, had received no new commands for some time. It was intently working on modifying and tuning some powerful Blazing Mammoth Bugs, Giant Ghost Claw Bugs, and Piercing Arrow Bugs.

Its body had swollen to over a hundred meters, but it was only able to work on four giant bugs at a time.

It had already spent several hours, but there were fewer than twenty newly modified bugs surrounding the Troop Nest Beetle.

The native mechanical species were also very powerful and numerous. Those of their kind previously chased away by the Combat Rooster had all finally gathered around this third victor.

The Troop Nest Beetle continued to faithfully execute the Empress's orders. It had to modify over two hundred new bugs before they could begin the final hunt for the victor.

But at that moment, on the endless rock plain, a mechanical behemoth was already charging over. The Combat Rooster, its body ablaze with excitement, shone with both red and blue gleams, roaring as it charged into the swarm of bugs.

Chen Gu had intended to use the previous tactic of venturing alone, using his "Quantum Wizard" power to bring out the third victor.

But Gong Shuxu refused. He argued that the Empress had likely made preparations, and besides, his own strength had mostly recovered.

Thus, they decided to charge. The Combat Rooster's strength had greatly increased, and it was eager to display its power before its master. However, it quickly realized this wasn't much of a charge, nor an opportunity to showcase its might; from start to finish, it was a one-sided slaughter.

The old man on its back somehow managed to make the surrounding bugs not attack at all!

What the Combat Rooster needed to do was to use its claws and sharp teeth to carve a path through the dense swarm, then rush to the side of the third victor.

This third victor had originally been almost equal in strength to it, but after devouring another victor, the Combat Rooster's strength had far surpassed its opponent.

It charged almost unhindered to the third victor, who had no time to resist before being bitten, and then it turned around and charged back out!

Only then did the Troop Nest Beetle complete the transformation of one hundred and eight large bugs. Upon discovering the third victor had been abducted, it immediately sought instructions from the Empress. The Empress exploded in anger, hissing and screaming for the swarm to pursue.

This time, even Chen Gu couldn't help but admire. A high-level "Psychological Spy" was simply a game-breaking BUG in team battles. When they charged, even the Troop Nest Beetle was affected by Gong Shuxu's skill, mistaking them for allies.

It wasn't until the victor was taken away that it realized what had happened.

The Insect Race was incredibly fast, but the already enhanced Combat Rooster was even faster. As the Combat Rooster pulled further away, the only members of the Insect Race that could keep pace were the Rift Rush and the Void Devouring Insects in the sky.

At this moment, the Empress also realized that her previous command had delayed their opportunity. She immediately corrected the error, urging the other two swarms to quickly finish their battles.

The Empress reasoned that since this professional was already entangled by the insect swarm, they couldn't possibly appear at the other two locations.

On the other two battlefields, the insect swarm immediately launched a furious attack. However, the remaining extraterrestrial mechanical species were very strong. One group, aided by the Empress's earlier orders that had slowed the swarm's assault, had already broken out of the encirclement. The swarm was now desperately chasing them.

Chen Gu also knew time was pressing. He patted the wildly dashing Combat Rooster, "Eat it!"

Delighted, the Combat Rooster continued running while quickly gulping down the third victor, whom it had once fought alongside.

Another surge of red light began to flow inside the Combat Rooster, and the speed of its frenzied run actually became faster and faster, absorbing the benefits quicker than before.

The pursuing Dread Mosquitoes and Void Devouring Insects tried to keep up, but found their prey only grew faster and pulled further ahead.

With their limited intelligence, they couldn't understand how something running on the ground could possibly be faster than them flying in the air.

Eventually, the Dread Mosquitoes and the Void Devouring Insects lost track of them.

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This extraterrestrial mechanical species victor was especially powerful, and it had the largest following of its kind.

They numbered about one-third of the surrounding Insect Race swarm.

The victor remained calm from beginning to end, coolly using its roars to direct its subordinates, resisting wave after wave of the Insect Race's assaults.

The Insect Race always fought without regard for casualties, typically relying on a colossal nest behind them to send a constant stream of reinforcements.

But this time was different; they had no support. The number of insects in combat plummeted rapidly. By the time the Empress's new orders arrived to press the attack, the swarm discovered its numbers were already roughly equal to those of the extraterrestrial mechanical species.

At that moment, the victor roared furiously, and the counterattack began! It led the charge, being the first to break out. With such a powerful leader, the Insect Race was instantly torn open, and the breach kept widening.

Chapter 305: The Insect Race Is Utterly Defeated (2)

The Insect Race knew only to fight to the death, not retreat, leading to a frenzied mutual slaughter with the otherworldly tribes.

The victor was in a frenzied rage. It had battled other Energy Gathering Mechanical Species before. Typically, by this point in a battle, an opponent at such an absolute disadvantage, with no possibility of victory, would inevitably collapse and flee. But not these insects!

The victor had slain hundreds of large insects, yet the "morale" of the Insect Race remained unaffected. They continued to hurl themselves at their enemy, regardless of the consequences.

The slaughter continued unabated. Gradually, only a small remnant of the Insect Race was left, surrounded by the otherworldly mechanical species.

But they were still fighting! If the otherworldly mechanical species even slightly retreated, the insects would counterattack!

The victor was thoroughly enraged. It leaped high, landing amidst the last insect cluster and unleashing a ferocious assault. The red light on its body intensified with the battle, and even its frame began to expand. By the time it had single-handedly slaughtered the last of the Insect Race survivors, its stature had increased by a full meter from the start of the battle.

With this final victory, the victor's prestige within its species reached its zenith. It leaped onto a high boulder and let out a tremendous roar towards the sky. The surrounding otherworldly mechanical species echoed in unison, all prostrating themselves on the ground. This was their king!

The victor was filled with pride, surveying its domain. Suddenly, a massive shadow swooped down. Enraged, the victor swiped and bit, charging to meet the threat. However, it was shocked to find that its greatly increased strength was as feeble as a newborn cub's against this new opponent.

This shadow, another Energy Gathering Mechanical Species, measured twenty-three meters in length—nearly twice the victor's size—and possessed even more formidable strength. With a single claw, the attacker pinned the victor to the ground. Then, it bit down, and with a sickening CRUNCH, the victor's sturdy mechanical spine snapped.

The otherworldly mechanical species, which had been roaring in adulation for their king, were all stunned into silence. For a moment, not a single one dared to step forward to rescue their king.

They couldn't even comprehend how this massive Energy Gathering Mechanical Species had managed to ambush their king so silently. Such a colossal figure should have been detected the moment it drew near!

The Combat Rooster, clutching the fourth victor in its beak, leaped from the boulder and sprinted away without a moment's pause.

It left only the stunned otherworldly mechanical species on the ground.

The fourth victor, having just led its forces to annihilate the Insect Race swarm and reached the peak of its existence, whined miserably in the Combat Rooster's beak.

Chen Gu lightly patted the Combat Rooster again and said, "Eat up."

The Combat Rooster immediately began to devour it, and soon, not even a whimper remained from the fourth victor.

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On the wasteland, a vast swarm of the Insect Race relentlessly pursued, their lines stretching far behind them. Viewed from high above, the ground appeared to be draped with a black cloth more than ten kilometers long.

Ahead of them, a group of equally swift otherworldly mechanical species fled at high speed.

This group of otherworldly species clearly belonged to the same tribe. Their bodies were slender, agile, and swift, which allowed them to escape from the numerically superior Insect Race.

Leading the pack of otherworldly mechanical species was the fifth victor. Its form was similar, but having been blessed by a Super Life, it now resembled a Super Life form.

It glanced back contemptuously at the futilely chasing insect swarm and let out a long howl. Its kin behind it seemed to understand, quickly joining in with a chorus of howls.

Tens of kilometers ahead lay massive meteorite craters, some still burning with flames—the site of their arrival from beyond the heavens.

For beings with the speed of the otherworldly mechanical species, a distance of tens of kilometers was a matter of about ten minutes. They had already reached the craters. At the bottom of these pits, points of light were beginning to shine.

These were Starships of strange design!

They looked very battered but were still operational. Their design style was drastically different from that of both humans and the Insect Race, yet possessed a unique beauty.

Each year, at a set time, these warships would travel between the two planets. They were always punctual, never missing a journey, and had operated this way for countless years.

The native mechanical species on this planet had therefore gradually adapted to a life of concealment. This allowed them to better ambush the otherworldly mechanical species and weaken their forces.

After each "Proving," the otherworldly mechanical species would retaliate by mercilessly slaughtering the native mechanical species. Seizing this opportunity, the victors from the otherworldly mechanical species would join forces to eliminate the victors from among the native species.

This window of opportunity was short. They needed to hurry back, or the "ferries" wouldn't wait. The ferries departed strictly on schedule, and any otherworldly mechanical species left behind would be stranded on this planet.

This year, an unforeseen swarm of insects had emerged from nowhere. But it no longer mattered; the time had come, and the ferries were about to depart.

As the engines roared to life, a Starship's hatch slowly opened. It was empty inside, with no sign of any living crew, as if pre-programmed to make these scheduled trips between the two planets.

The fifth victor craned its neck and let out a loud call, urging its group to board quickly. It stood guard at the rear, ready to teach any pursuing insects a final, harsh lesson should they catch up.

However, the insects were a step too late. By the time they reached the edge of the meteorite craters, even the fifth victor had managed to leap through the half-closed hatch and into the Starship.

The hatch sealed completely. The insects frantically hurled themselves at it, but the Starship's engines now spewed scorching light. The insects melted one by one in the intense heat as the Starship slowly ascended.

Chen Gu and his companions, riding their Combat Roosters, arrived just in time to see the Starship ascending from afar. He couldn't help but feel a sense of incompleteness.

Its Combat Rooster had already devoured the other three rival victors, sparing only this last one.

The Combat Rooster could sense that its rival had not perished at the hands of the Insect Race but was aboard one of those departing Starships. Enraged, it roared at the ever-ascending vessel.

Chen Gu decided against risking Quantum Teleportation to board the Starship and continue pursuing the fifth victor. There are several reasons, he thought. Our primary goal is to prevent the Insect Race from capturing these victors. As long as they don't fall into the insects' clutches, it's an acceptable outcome even if the victors themselves escape. Second, the Starship is ascending too quickly. Using Quantum Teleportation to catch up now could lead to positioning errors; I might not materialize where I intend. What if I make a mistake and appear right in the Starship's engine exhaust... Finally, I can see these Starships have very unusual designs; they're clearly of mysterious origin. I'd rather not risk an encounter over something relatively trivial.

Gong Shuxu let out a long sigh of relief—the operation was a success! He contacted Bai Yunpeng through the military satellite overhead. "Marshal Bai," he said, "please arrange our retreat route."

Chapter 306: The Insect Race Is Utterly Defeated (3)

Bai Yunpeng's voice carried a hint of exhaustion. "The Mecha kind's massive uprising has also caused us great damage. I will arrange support as quickly as possible. You'll have to wait a bit. As for you all, I'm not worried."

Gong Shuxu was somewhat displeased. He wasn't part of the military, and this time, he felt as if he was merely "helping out." The mission was complete, yet they weren't swiftly arranging an extraction and retreat. What, do they really not regard a Sixth Energy Level practitioner as someone important?

Ma Shuwen sighed softly beside him. "Don't blame Marshal Bai. We can all imagine that the entire planet is probably in chaos right now. He must be putting out fires everywhere. But the resources we have on this planet are very limited to begin with. Marshal Bai, being a soldier, would naturally prioritize support for those forces on the verge of collapse."

"As for us..." At this point, almost everyone suddenly realized an incredible truth—they had "grown" during the battle!

It wasn't that their professional abilities had increased, but rather that the entire team's strength had grown immensely because they had gained a powerful Combat Rooster.

Not only could it fight and run, but even those flying insects couldn't catch up to them! It was safe to say that, for the short term, they were truly secure on this planet.

Everyone instinctively glanced at Chen Gu—it was all his doing. Looking back, from the moment this guy arrived on this planet, or rather, from when he boarded the transport ship on Witch Star, it was as if he had activated a cheat, constantly achieving one legendary feat after another.

It was only then that everyone could "casually" lie on the back of the giant beast, watching the huge swarm of the Insect Race rage impotently against the Starship fleet that was gradually breaking free from the planet's gravity.

"Heh heh heh..." Everyone laughed happily.

But at that very moment, a swarm of pitch-black Skyrocketing Insects suddenly burst forth from nowhere! They were so crazed they seemed to disregard their own lives, furiously chasing the Starships and continually firing powerful acid cannons!

However, the Starships did not retaliate. Each time they were attacked, a shimmering, mirror-like energy shield would materialize at the point of impact.

The shields steadfastly blocked all the attacks.

Chen Gu and the others, watching from below, were also stunned. Seeing the pitch-black Skyrocketing Insects, they exclaimed, "Mutant Insect Race! It's Boles! He's nearby!"

Ma Shuwen, filled with hatred, immediately began scanning the surroundings, but the area was open and empty. They had no idea where Boles was hiding.

Seeing that their long-range attacks were useless against the Starships, the Skyrocketing Insects resorted to ramming themselves into the vessels!

BOOM.

BOOM.

BOOM.

One by one, the massive Skyrocketing Insects crashed into the Starships. The energy shields couldn't fully protect them. The front halves of the Skyrocketing Insects were smashed to pieces, but the Starships also sustained damage.

Finally, after seven or eight Skyrocketing Insects had committed suicide attacks, one of the Starships began flickering with red and blue lights. Then, its flight path skewed, and it wobbled as it plummeted to the ground.

After the first Starship fell, a second followed. In total, six Starships crashed, while the remainder shot into the Star Sea and disappeared from view.

Only three of the Skyrocketing Insects remained in the sky.

The Insect Race around the crater, initially raging impotently, grew excited and rushed towards the Starship crash sites.

However, a vast swarm of pitch-black insects emerged from the surrounding underground caverns, surging forward like a tidal wave.

Ma Shuwen was worried. "If that Victor happens to be inside one of those crashed Starships, how are we supposed to stop the Insect Race?"

Six Starships had crashed, and at most, they could only secure one.

But Chen Gu was brimming with confidence, smiling as he patted the Combat Rooster beneath him.

Ma Shuwen suddenly understood and laughed along. "Thank goodness for you."

The Combat Rooster remained motionless, its eyes intently fixed on a Starship plummeting from the sky. And, as luck would have it, that very Starship came crashing down not far ahead of them, kicking up a sky-filling cloud of dust as shockwaves and flames swept through the area.

Before the dust had even settled, a hatch creaked open, ripped apart from the inside. The victor leaped out, moving as swiftly as lightning towards the Combat Rooster!

In fact, this was no coincidence. The victor could also sense the Combat Rooster. Since the Starship had already crashed, its first priority was, of course, to try to influence the Starship's crash location and then launch a surprise attack on the Combat Rooster.

It was inherently fast, a trait its species was known for. After receiving the blessing of a super life form, speed had become its sharpest weapon.

Over a distance of several hundred meters, this fourth victor streaked like a bolt of faint blue lightning, its fiery glow trailing a long line of flame.

It arrived beside the Combat Rooster and suddenly began changing directions continuously. The Combat Rooster was momentarily bewildered, as if its opponent could attack from any direction.

Chen Gu suddenly raised his palm and grasped at the void!

An indescribable power suddenly burst forth. It seemed to have been an ambient force permeating the entire space before, but the moment Chen Gu clenched his fist, this power abruptly manifested, surging towards the victor from all directions.

The victor was caught off guard and immediately bound, its large, elegant form frozen mid-pounce, unable to move in the slightest.

Gong Shuxu stated calmly, "Entanglement Control."

After Chen Gu's Energy Level had advanced, he could easily control objects with which he had no prior connection.

Then Chen Gu ordered the Combat Rooster, "What are you waiting for?"

The Combat Rooster roared and lunged, leaping into the air and biting the suspended victor.

Then an awkward situation arose. With the victor still caught in Chen Gu's Entanglement Control, the Combat Rooster's bite failed to pull the victor down. Instead, it found itself suspended mid-air along with its prey.

The Combat Rooster, reluctant to let go, dangled its massive body in mid-air, looking rather comical.

Chen Gu did it on purpose; the Combat Rooster needed frequent disciplining. The Combat Rooster turned its eyes towards its master, its expression pitiful and pleading.

Chen Gu smiled slightly, then released his grip. The Combat Rooster, still clutching its prey, tumbled to the ground. As it devoured its final opponent, it was genuinely awestruck: The master is truly powerful!

Betraying the master would indeed be the most foolish act imaginable.

Watching the Combat Rooster swiftly devour the unfortunate victor who had nearly escaped, Gong Shuxu said, "Let's go. The two insect factions are about to clash."

Ma Shuwen was indignant. "Boles, that scum!"

Dou Zhanqiong clenched his teeth but still advised, "Now isn't the time to punish this traitor. Rest assured, the military won't let him get away with it."

The group mounted the Combat Rooster. With a light pat from Chen Gu, the Combat Rooster obediently turned and galloped away.

Chapter 307

On a certain hillside, Boles, who had already mutated into something resembling a hybrid of human and Insect Race, stood tall against the wind. His huge nostrils flared slightly, and he quickly picked up the scent of Ma Shuwen and his companions. He turned to look at the people fleeing the battlefield and noticed the gigantic Energy Gathering Mechanical Species. He was clearly somewhat tempted.

But in the end, he turned his head back, facing the endless sea of insect creatures before him. These insects are a bigger prize, he thought.

Sacrificing dozens of Mutant Skyrocketing Insects was the price paid to ensure the starships' downfall. With the starships present, the swarms would relentlessly try to seize them, effectively pinning them down and preventing their escape.

As for whether there were any victors inside those starships, the Insect Race didn't know.

「...」

Some thirteen hours later, Chen Gu and the others received a message from Bai Yunpeng: "The aircraft coming to your aid will arrive soon."

After exchanging information with Bai Yunpeng, Chen Gu learned that the Insect Race had begun their retreat after losing all their victors.

They initially aimed to retrieve as many Insect Race members from the planet's surface as possible, but they encountered fierce resistance from the human military forces and the Mutant insect swarms.

The Mutant insect swarm, in particular, grew stronger as they fought, becoming a force on the planet that could not be ignored.

The main swarm gave up, and their fleets in the Star Sea withdrew. The space around the planet was now under the control of human fleets.

After the aircraft picked up Chen Gu and his group, they were taken to a mothership in the Star Sea.

However, the warriors who came to welcome him were horrified at the sight of the enormous Combat Rooster.

This creature had grown to twenty-five meters after devouring the last victor!

Chen Gu assured them he would control the Combat Rooster. The warriors knew Chen Gu was a hero of this battle and held him in high respect and trust, so they agreed not to lock the Combat Rooster in a cage.

Chen Gu requested a separate, massive chamber to share with the Combat Rooster.

But soon after, Gong Shuxu came knocking on his door, carrying the highest-level security shackles.

Chen Gu rolled his eyes helplessly but cooperated and put them on. Gong Shuxu sat down beside him with an indifferent expression. "From now on, I'll be with you until you have completed all the tests at the agency," he stated.

"If you truly have mutated, I will kill you myself. But until then, any action against you is an action against me. This is the promise of a Sixth Energy Level Psychological Spy!"

Chen Gu looked at him in surprise. Of course, Chen Gu knew of the animosity between Psychological Spies and Brain Domain Hackers; it was all clear in Isabella Wu's memories.

Moreover, Chen Gu could also sense that Gong Shuxu had clearly been somewhat distant towards him when they were working together on the planet.

Yet, he never expected that Gong Shuxu, while now detaining him, would also vow to protect him.

Gong Shuxu turned his head away, intentionally presenting his cold back to Chen Gu. Chen Gu couldn't help but smile.

This mothership was part of the first wave to withdraw from the battle, taking Chen Gu and his companions back to the rear command base.

Half a day later, Chen Gu received a video call from Bai Yunpeng. "We've mostly figured it out," Bai Yunpeng reported. "Those extraterrestrial Energy Gathering Mechanical Species originated from Planet 62N-41."

This was the primary option for retreat and establishing a defensive position after the transport ship Chen Gu had been on was attacked.

The planet housed a military reserve fulcrum base, fully equipped with weapons and supplies. If Chen Gu hadn't firmly believed that the Insect Race's actions were highly unusual and that they shouldn't proceed according to the enemy's apparent intentions, the transport ship would have "safely" retreated to that fulcrum base.

Chen Gu was quite surprised. "Didn't the military conduct a thorough survey of the entire planet when they established the fulcrum base?" he asked.

Bai Yunpeng replied, "Of course, we conducted a comprehensive survey back then, but nothing was discovered."

"Only after this battle did we discover a very well-hidden underground base on Planet 62N-41. We don't know which civilization's ruins it is, but all its equipment is operating perfectly. Its technological level is extremely high, which is how it evaded our detection.

"Those Energy Gathering Mechanical Species, on the other hand, were hidden even deeper underground and almost never appeared on the surface."

Chen Gu fell into deep thought. This feeling... it's as if a powerful force is orchestrating everything from behind the scenes, he mused.

The Energy Gathering Mechanical Species on Planet 62N-41 continuously multiplied, then used the mysterious base's "ferry" to travel to the super-lifeform's planet. Victors of the "Grand Examination" would then receive rewards from this super-lifeform. The existence of the mechanical species on both planets seemed to be entirely for this plan. They operated with such secrecy, they wouldn't even emerge on the planets' surfaces. If it weren't for this battle, humanity would still be unaware of them. Therefore, the powerful force dictating all this was almost without a doubt... that super-lifeform!

Bai Yunpeng continued, "We currently speculate that the Insect Race wanted to obtain the genetic chains of that super-lifeform. However, they only found clues on Planet 62N-41 and didn't know the super-lifeform's actual location.

"So, they planned to attack Planet 62N-41 but discovered our fulcrum base was already established there. To avoid attracting our attention, they attacked the transport ship you were on at a critical time and location."

Chen Gu added, "After pursuing the transport ship and landing on Planet 62N-41, they only needed to dispatch a small number of Insect Race to besiege the fulcrum base. The remainder could then search

for that hidden base, take the ferry to the super-lifeform's planet, and once the Grand Examination concluded, harvest these victors to obtain the genetic chains."

The Insect Race were no fools; they knew that directly attacking the super-lifeform would likely result in a devastating defeat with nothing gained. As for how the Insect Race obtained information about the super-lifeform, that remained a mystery.

Bai Yunpeng nodded. "That appears to be the case."

After a pause, he added, "We've already started withdrawing our troops from the planet's surface. Once all our personnel are clear, we'll use starships to bombard the planet from the Star Sea, eliminating the remaining Insect Race and those Mutant insect swarms."

Under normal circumstances, the most straightforward solution would be to use a planet-destroying weapon to annihilate the planet. However, with a super-lifeform hidden within, such an action would undoubtedly enrage it, leading to catastrophic losses.

However, both Bai Yunpeng and Chen Gu knew that news of a super-lifeform on this planet would soon spread. Ambitious individuals within humanity would inevitably organize "hunting fleets" and return.

Humanity's historical encounters with super-lifeforms, however, have always been marked by horrific casualties. Even successful hunting fleets ultimately paid an extremely heavy price.

It was simply because super-lifeforms were so incredibly valuable that people were continually willing to take such risks.

Chapter 308: Each Raises the Stakes (1)

Chen Gu ended his call with Bai Yunpeng and roughly understood the cause of this "accident." He then sat there in silence, carefully recalling the whole process again in his mind, and couldn't help but reveal a bitter smile.

He had been inexplicably dragged into this...

However, the next moment, Chen Gu suddenly showed a strange expression because he realized he was actually on the verge of being promoted!

It had been less than a month since he had advanced to the Second Energy Level, but this accident had involved him in constant battle, and he used his skills quite frequently.

After returning, as long as I methodically go to the training field to accumulate skill counts every day, I should be able to gather enough to advance to the Third Energy Level in about thirty days!

The reason my expression is strange, Chen Gu thought, is that once I return, I probably won't be free anymore. First, I'll have to face a rigorous inspection from the bureau. Then, my biggest task will likely be to cooperate with the Director-General on research.

And given my current "suspicious" state, it's very difficult to predict whether the bureau will even approve my promotion to the Third Energy Level...

SIGH... Chen Gu sighed inwardly. He looked at Gong Shuxu, who still posed as someone "who disdained befriending a 'Brain Domain Hacker,'" with his back turned to him. Chen Gu smiled again before turning over to sleep. He was truly exhausted from the recent events.

The Combat Rooster, being confined here, was obviously depressed and irritable. It was even full of suspicion toward Gong Shuxu, but now it also came closer to Chen Gu and lay down next to him.

Soon, both man and beast fell asleep. Gong Shuxu quietly turned to look at the two, his eyes slowly revealing a trace of sympathy and helplessness.

「...」

Aviloya's fingers hovered back and forth over a holographic button; pressing it would connect the call to Chen Jixian.

She had not immediately informed Chen Jixian that Chen Gu was still alive.

Up until now, I've been considering whether to hide the fact that Chen Gu is alive, she mused, and have him change his identity to cooperate with the Bureau of Mystic Security on various experiments.

Because I can imagine that some of these experiments will definitely not be aboveboard.

This has nothing to do with my personal preferences; I've even taken into account my "entanglements" with Chen Gu. When considering the whole picture, I deliberately gave more consideration to Chen Gu for the sake of "balancing" my personal likes and dislikes.

This matter is of great significance. I need to set aside my subjective feelings and even forsake all norms of morality, law, and ethics, considering it entirely from the perspective of the greater good.

If I couldn't do this, I wouldn't have been able to sit so steadily as the Director-General of the Bureau of Mystic Security for so many years.

But there's one person I can't get around: Bai Yunpeng.

Just at that moment, her secretary outside reported, "Director-General, Marshal Bai Yunpeng specifically sent someone to inform us that he has already set out with his niece for Yi-Mao Military Harbor to personally welcome Chen Gu's return."

Aviloya sighed lightly, knowing this was Bai Yunpeng's way of making his stance clear: When Bai Yunpeng speaks, he means it!

She moved her finger and pressed the button.

After Chen Jixian returned to Empire River Star, he kept the news of Chen Gu's "death" confidential. The battle was still ongoing at that time, involving some classified matters, so he couldn't speak of it yet.

Everyone in the sub-bureau could sense that their Director was under a cloud these days, but no one knew why.

In the past few days, Chen Jixian had been trying to convince himself: He and I don't actually share any father-son affection. His coming and going is like any other passerby in my life; I shouldn't have such a strong emotional response.

But I just can't feel happy.

Although he usually had his eyes half-closed, appearing discontent, these past few days Chen Qingyu's album was ready to be released, and she had even started some preliminary promotions, chirping at home every day about these matters.

That inevitably involved "Grandpa."

Chen Zili didn't say anything, but his little face was filled with jealousy, occasionally bursting out with, "When is he going back to school to attend classes?"

Without Grandpa's protection, I feel like I can't hold my ground, Chen Zili thought. In school, a second-generation kid with backing and one fighting alone are entirely different.

Chen Jixian had a grim face and hadn't wanted to go home these past few days, working overtime at the bureau every day.

The phone rang. When Chen Jixian saw it was the Director-General, he registered no particular emotional fluctuation and silently picked it up—then froze completely!

He's still alive?

He's still alive!!!

Chen Jixian suddenly stood up in his office with a SWISH, sprinting towards the door before the phone call was even finished. At the doorway, he realized something and reverted to his usual "half-dead" state.

After hanging up Aviloya's call, Chen Jixian sat back down at his desk, but the chair felt particularly unwelcoming today, seemingly urging him to leave.

He squirmed a few times, then simply stood up and started pacing the office. It felt to him as if over ten minutes should have passed, enough time to schedule a flight. But when he checked, only half a minute had gone by...

He lifted his eyelids slightly and called his secretary, "Arrange a flight for me to Capital Star."

「...」

The Yi-Mao Military Harbor couldn't be found on any ordinary civilian star chart. Bai Yunpeng stood in a spacious dispatch room; before him was a floor-to-ceiling window with an exceptionally wide view. Behind him, the military harbor's pilots worked intensely.

Between him and these staff members stood seven or eight soldiers with a distinguished and imposing bearing.

Watching the massive Landing Craft slowly descend, Bai Yunpeng couldn't help but look back at the people he had brought with him—four women and three men, including his niece, Bai Xianya.

Then he turned around, and on the glass of the floor-to-ceiling window, a nearly imperceptible smirk was reflected from the corner of his mouth.

Four women and three men, the men handsome, the women beautiful, each with their own style. There must be someone here to Chen Gu's taste, Bai Yunpeng believed.

Bai Yunpeng snorted inwardly with pride: I simply don't believe there's anyone in this world who can resist a military uniform!

Marshal Bai, unashamed in his old age, had started full-scale planning to win Chen Gu over to his side after reaching an agreement with Nan Zhendong, coming up with all means to "sweeten the pot."

Take today's welcome, for example, he schemed. Aside from my personal involvement to show how much we value him, the people behind me are just some "little tricks." But if, in the end, the military and the Bureau of Mystic Security make similar offers, these little tricks might just tip the scales in Chen Gu's heart.

The seven people behind him, including Bai Xianya, all in uniform and unwitting props in his scheme, were oblivious to this.

So it is said, those who play with tactics have crafty hearts.

Chapter 309: Each Raises the Stakes (2)

The enormous Landing Craft slowly entered the port. Bai Yunpeng led his team out to welcome it. The Landing Craft's gangway slowly extended as they stood waiting on the tarmac.

When Chen Gu emerged, secured in safety restraints and under the "escort" of Gong Shuxu, he was visibly surprised to see Bai Yunpeng. Bai Yunpeng, however, had already greeted him enthusiastically, giving him a warm embrace without any hesitation.

"Welcome back, our hero!"

Gong Shuxu wanted to warn him about potential contamination and advise against physical contact with a suspected Mutant. However, upon seeing Bai Yunpeng's military rank, his lips moved, but he ultimately said nothing.

Chen Gu was also somewhat moved. After all, the other man was a magnate from the Central Operations Room. His personal reception demonstrated that he was a man of his word, which reassured Chen Gu.

"Thank you, Marshal Bai."

After the brief welcoming ceremony, Chen Gu was still escorted by Gong Shuxu to a heavily defended convoy. The Bureau of Mystic Security then fully took over the subsequent transfer.

At an airport on Capital Star, Chen Jixian was astonished to find the Director-General herself waiting to greet him when he disembarked from the aircraft! His eyelids flickered upwards as several thoughts instantly crossed his mind.

He wasn't so arrogant as to believe that his position as the mere head of a branch in a remote region warranted a personal reception from the Director-General, Her Excellency Valkyrie, herself.

He calmly exchanged greetings with Aviloya. She tried to appear more "approachable," but her naturally aloof disposition made it difficult for her. After just a few words, an awkward silence fell between them.

Once in the car, Aviloya reverted to her usual self and got straight to the point with Chen Jixian. "Bai Yunpeng harbors treacherous ambitions," she said. "I suspect he intends to poach talent from our Bureau of Mystic Security!"

Indeed, the Director-General was no fool; she had already discerned the tactical magnate's true intentions from Bai Yunpeng's actions.

Chen Jixian asked, "Chen Gu?"

Aviloya nodded. "As a member of the Bureau of Mystic Security, you must help the Bureau protect our talent."

Bai Yunpeng was trying to bolster his own faction, and Aviloya was doing likewise.

Chen Jixian remained silent.

Most parents in this world share a common failing: they pin the dreams they couldn't achieve themselves onto their children, striving to raise them in the hope that they will accomplish what their parents could not.

For Chen Jixian, however, the roles were now reversed.

His adult son's lifelong dream had been to become a general, but a twist of fate led him to change careers. Now, his own "father" had the opportunity to join the military and fulfill that dream for him!

How could I possibly stop this? he thought. I should wholeheartedly approve and offer my full support!

Aviloya spoke in a serious tone. "Don't forget, you are now the Director of the Wuzhaoyin City branch! And..." Her voice softened slightly. "You come from the military; you know how dangerous army life is. The risks are far greater than working for our Bureau of Mystic Security."

Chen Jixian hesitated once more. Perhaps... I should still encourage Chen Zili to enlist after he graduates from college?

Aviloya felt she had said all that needed to be said, and silence once again settled in the car.

The convoy proceeded directly to the Bureau's headquarters. Aviloya led Chen Jixian inside, passing through multiple strict identity verifications, until they reached a vast laboratory in the deepest subterranean level. "This place was prepared especially for Chen Gu," she said. "Take a look."

"All examination procedures will in no way infringe upon any of his rights."

Then, Aviloya waved her hand, dismissing everyone present. "If there are no issues with his physical condition," she continued, "we will need his cooperation for some experiments to determine the reason he can hold multiple professions."

"This is of vital importance, as you should understand. He could change the entire history of Professionals!" Aviloya stated. "You are a Professional yourself; you should know this could immortalize his name!"

"If he goes to the military, it would be a tremendous waste."

Aviloya gave Chen Jixian some time to think before she continued, "Your upcoming promotion requires an enormous amount of resources. You would struggle to gather them on your own, even if you sold Chen's Biosciences. However, if you help the Bureau retain Chen Gu, we will provide all the resources you need."

This was a clear enticement, a promise of benefits.

Chen Jixian's eyelids lifted slightly. He looked around and asked, "Experiments?"

Aviloya immediately replied, "If you're concerned, you can accompany him throughout the entire process."

The more ethically questionable experiments would have to be abandoned. Given the circumstances, Aviloya had no choice but to settle for the next best option.

However, Chen Jixian still hadn't given his assent. Aviloya's brow furrowed slightly, and she made no further overtures.

The journey had been fraught with difficulties. Gong Shuxu performed his duties diligently, providing Chen Gu with the utmost "convenience" permissible within his authority. However, as Chen Gu was now a suspected Mutant, the security level assigned to him was extremely high.

The scope for Gong Shuxu's intervention was naturally limited. Getting him to break the rules was out of the question, not only due to the old man's principled nature but also because he was acutely aware that even a moment's carelessness in his work could lead to a cascade of disasters.

Furthermore, a massive, twenty-six-meter-tall Energy Gathering Mechanical Species insisted on staying close to Chen Gu, threatening to rebel otherwise, which further complicated matters.

This particular Energy Gathering Mechanical Species also had peculiar dietary needs, consuming strange and exotic items such as exceptionally high-grade Starship engine oil and expensive rare metals.

After considerable difficulty, they finally reached the outskirts of Capital Star, only to be forced to make a temporary stop.

Security on Capital Star was extremely stringent. The Bureau of Mystic Security had extensive experience dealing with individuals like Chen Gu. However, the Combat Rooster was another matter entirely. The Bureau had no prior experience transporting such a massive mechanical species into Capital Star while guaranteeing its safety en route.

Bai Yunpeng had actually been shadowing them the entire time. Whenever they encountered difficulties, Marshal Bai would casually remark from the sidelines, "Just leave it to our military. We aren't afraid of difficulties; we can solve any problem."

Gong Shuxu had already received a secret directive from the Director-General: during this journey, he was to strictly guard against military personnel and, at all costs, prevent them from interfering in any matter concerning Chen Gu.

Gong Shuxu also understood then: Bai Yunpeng truly harbored treacherous ambitions!

Consequently, regardless of the issue, old Master Gong would raise a hand in refusal, saying, "No need. Our Bureau of Mystic Security can handle it."

However, transporting such a powerful Energy Gathering Mechanical Species into Capital Star was something the Bureau of Mystic Security was truly at a loss to handle.

Fortunately, Gong Shuxu's grandson, who also worked for the Bureau, offered a suggestion. "Grandfather," he said, "ask my third uncle for help. He works at the Emperor Forest Club, and they transport giant beasts into Capital Star every year."

This Third Uncle, Gong Shuxie, was indeed Gong Shuxu's third son. The Emperor Forest Club was a premier club on Capital Star that organized behemoth combat tournaments and was one of the few qualified to participate directly in the official championships.

Gong Shuxu thought to himself that his third son's club usually transported ordinary behemoths, whereas this was an Energy Gathering Mechanical Species. However, with no other options available, he still called his third son.

Chapter 310: A Journey Full of Setbacks

Gong Shuxie immediately slapped his chest and assured them, "Rest assured, leave it to us. It's not like we're making it compete in the Beasts' Combat Championship. For an Energy Gathering Mechanical Species, just transporting it won't be any different from any other giant beast."

That very afternoon, the team from the Imperial Forest Club arrived—a group of true professionals. However, Gong Shuxu was too nervous to let them handle the creature. Using the equipment they brought, he personally helped secure the Combat Rooster into a sturdy cage.

Along with it, Chen Gu also went inside.

Gong Shuxie knew a bit about the situation, but his colleagues were at a loss. However, upon seeing the Combat Rooster, they shook their heads and casually remarked, "Why would anyone raise an Energy Gathering Mechanical Species? They eat so much and can't compete. It's just a waste."

"The key issue is that Energy Gathering Mechanical Species are temperamental and not very intelligent. They don't obey their owners' commands. Other than hunting for materials, they're pretty much useless."

"Maybe the thoughts of the rich are just different from ours, haha."

"And with those shackles on, what kind of rich person could it be?"

The Combat Rooster, in its cage, heard these discussions and let out a dissatisfied growl. Chen Gu gently stroked it to calm it down.

During this time, the Combat Rooster's intelligence had rapidly increased, and it had begun to roughly understand what the people around it were saying.

As a super lifeform that had once fled the battlefield but still held onto its pride, it felt quite dissatisfied with the way these people looked down on it.

Gong Shuxu asked his third son, "Is this cage reliable?"

At this, Gong Shuxie and his colleagues swelled with pride. They eagerly began to explain, "You can rest easy. This is the strongest cage we have ever built."

"It has six layers of defense, inside and out. Even the champion-size behemoths from the Beasts' Combat Championship would never be able to escape."

"The innermost layer is a super-tough flexible polymer, followed by a layer of dense alloy mesh. On the outside, there are armor alloy plates thirty centimeters thick. Additionally, there are three layers of super-pressurized ionization in between. It is impossible for anything alive to escape from it."

"Our Imperial Forest Club has transported over a hundred giant beasts without ever having an accident."

The group boarded a Landing Craft, preparing to enter Capital Star, with Gong Shuxie and his colleagues following along. The process was slow and took several hours. Chen Gu lay down in the cage and fell asleep.

Outside, Gong Shuxie and his colleagues took turns on duty. The high-tech cage allowed real-time adjustments to the super-pressurized ionization layers, which could be tailored to different beasts with different settings.

One colleague, after keeping watch for a while and feeling somewhat weary, stood up to pour a cup of coffee. As he turned around, he inadvertently flipped a switch.

The settings for the super-pressurized ionization layer began to rise...

The Combat Rooster felt somewhat uncomfortable in its cage, grunting twice. It looked over at its owner, then thought it perhaps unnecessary to trouble its owner over such a trifle, especially since its owner had a temper too.

It endured for a moment, but the discomfort intensified. Raising its head to look around, it finally located the source of its discomfort—the walls enclosing it.

Fury began to build in the Combat Rooster's heart. It raised a claw, from which a red glow emanated, and then it clawed at the wall.

Gong Shuxie's colleague had just poured his coffee and was humming a pop tune on his way back. He arrived beside the cage only to hear a CRACK! Suddenly, a giant metal claw appeared, less than two centimeters from his nose!

That is to say, had he been just a tad faster, the claw would have pierced right through his head. Or to be more precise, since the claw was bigger than his head, it wouldn't have pierced it; rather, his head would have exploded like a watermelon.

Cold sweat streamed down his temples.

Then it dawned on him. "The cage is broken!"

With a scream, he alarmed everyone. Gong Shuxie and the others ran over frantically. "What?!" They all saw the claw that had penetrated the cage!

"This..."

The Combat Rooster pierced through the "wall." Feeling a bit relieved but still somewhat agitated, it withdrew its claw and scratched at another wall.

CRACK!

CRACK!

CRACK!

Gong Shuxie and his colleagues stood outside, dumbfounded, watching as their supposedly impregnable cage was punctured again and again, creating large holes.

"Run!" someone shouted. "That terrifying mechanical behemoth is going to break out!"

Gong Shuxie turned and ran, only to collide head-on with his own father.

The old man, after all, was at the Sixth Energy Level and incredibly robust. Gong Shuxie, a mere mortal, was bounced right back and fell flat on his rear.

"What's the panic!" the old man scolded. Gong Shuxie scrambled up, using his hands and feet. "Dad, we need to go! The Energy Gathering Mechanical Species is about to break out..."

Gong Shuxu grabbed him by the collar and pulled him back, while the Combat Rooster continued its relentless destruction of the surrounding walls.

He asked coldly, "Didn't you guarantee that not even a champion-level behemoth could escape?"

Gong Shuxie said helplessly, "This thing, it's beyond the overall champion's level! Stop talking, Dad, let's hurry up and leave."

Gong Shuxu called out, "Chen Gu, control your pet!"

Chen Gu had already woken up and shouted from inside, "Knock it off!"

The Combat Rooster whimpered as if complaining to Chen Gu: I'm not causing trouble; there's something off about this thing.

Then, to Gong Shuxie's surprise, the rampaging Energy Gathering Mechanical Species actually calmed down and stopped trying to break through the cage.

This is impossible! An Energy Gathering Mechanical Species... how could it be so obedient?! This defies all common sense...

But the fact was, the Combat Rooster had calmed down. Inside the cage, Chen Gu thought of the terrible consequences this "little accident" could cause: We're still unable to enter Capital Star for the time being, right?

"Yes..." Gong Shuxu also felt helpless.

He glared fiercely at his son. "Go check it out! What's the matter?!"

He knew the Combat Rooster well. Though volatile, it was highly intelligent, far surpassing the average behemoth, and wouldn't throw a tantrum without good reason.

Moreover, he was somewhat disappointed in his son. Although Gong Shuxie and his colleagues had boasted greatly about the strength of this cage, he doubted it could truly contain the Combat Rooster.

They would have been able to enter Capital Star smoothly as long as there were no complications on their way.

And yet, such an incident happened at this very moment.

Gong Shuxie called back his colleagues, still shaken. Upon inspection, they found the source of the problem: the voltage in the super-pressurized ionization layer was too high. This had caused discomfort to the Energy Gathering Mechanical Species inside, so it went berserk.

A few colleagues whispered among themselves, "How high did it go?"