

## Full Time 351

### Chapter 351: Action Begins

That night, everyone was quite resentful. The main problem was Chen Gu; he was such a killjoy. So many girls came up to chat, but he'd coldly dismiss them in just a few words. A bunch of vigorous young men, in the prime of their lives, just sitting in a nightclub drinking.

What's so good about this crappy drink? Isn't every bottle in my cellar better than what they have here?

By the time it dragged past ten o'clock, with Chen Gu there, everyone realized there really was no chance. So, they egged each other on and pushed Qiao Shuangyi forward. You stirred up this mess, you fix it!

Qiao Shuangyi approached with a forced smile. "Brother Chen, you look tired. Why don't you go back and rest?"

Chen Gu stood up. "Sure, I'll head back."

"Great, great, I'll arrange the car for you. We'll finish the rest of this booze."

Chen Gu had long seen through his little scheme and revealed a smile. I told you guys you'd have a better time if I didn't come, but you just wouldn't listen.

"Alright, I'm off," he said.

No sooner had Chen Gu stepped out of the nightclub's main entrance than Qiao Shuangyi became aggressively extravagant. "The most expensive drink you have here – bring me ten dozen!"

If looks didn't cut it, money would have to compensate, and that worked too.

「...」

When Chen Gu came out, he suddenly caught sight of a familiar figure heading towards him with an intimidating air. He quickly ducked to the side. As soon as the person dashed into the nightclub, he hurriedly came out, got into his car, and left.

Back at the hotel, he still felt a bit "scared after the fact"; he'd nearly been caught. Right, right, right. In the future, I should hang out less with bad students like Qiao Shuangyi.

Wang Chengqian charged into the Great H and dragged Qiao Shuangyi and a few others out...

With heads drooping, Qiao Shuangyi and the others were thoroughly scolded by Wang Chengqian, cursing inwardly, Who betrayed us?!

「...」

There weren't many people from Huai Shan Branch School; they all fit into one bus.

After driving for two hours, the bus had already entered an uninhabited area. A few more hours passed, and it slowly made its way into a military-controlled zone.

Eventually, it stopped at a modern military base.

By this time, the freshmen had a sneaking suspicion that this so-called "military training" was no simple matter.

The only ones in the know were Chen Gu and Bai Zhijin. Chen Gu wasn't one to gossip. Bai Zhijin didn't mix with the other students at all, still maintaining his "integrity" by not initiating conversation with those students from wealthy and noble families. Throughout the journey, he sat quietly in a corner by himself, so naturally, no information leaked out.

After entering the base, Wang Chengqian negotiated with a colonel to get weapons.

The base allocated an entire barracks to them. Given that Wang Chengqian likely had some military background, he swiftly set up a command center within the barracks.

"Okay, sit down everyone, we don't have much time," he said.

Once all the students were seated, Wang Chengqian waved his hand. WHOOSH! A holographic image appeared in the middle of the group.

This thing looked quite grotesque—somewhat like a lizard but with grayish-brown skin. Its limbs resembled those of an insect, and underneath each arm grew four slightly shorter claws.

It was clearly a beast, yet it stood upright like a person.

Its mouth bristled with fangs, and its eyes were blood red.

Some of the freshmen showed expressions of fear on their faces.

"These are Subterraneans, the targets of our freshman military training mission," he explained.

About the Indigenous Reservation, these freshmen from illustrious families had all heard something or other. However, Wang Chengqian went over it in detail again before getting to the main point: "Our task is not to eliminate the Subterraneans; we can't do that. Our mission is to figure out the current strength of the Subterraneans, to prepare for the military's cleanup operation.

"In simple terms, we are a reconnaissance team," he said.

Then, with a twist of his hand, he presented a full view of the Subterranean's image to the students.

"This is an ordinary male Subterranean warrior. Their physical condition is about one and a half times that of a normal human male. Whether it be strength, speed, or agility, they are all superior to our elite warriors."

WHOOSH!

The image vanished, replaced by one of a seemingly aged Subterranean adorned with various rough gemstones on its neck, head, and wrists.

"This is a Subterranean Shaman," Wang Chengqian explained. "Compared to the Subterranean warriors, they are even more dangerous. They possess special abilities, similar to a combination of our own Quantum Wizards and Nuclear Explosion Nuns."

"As of now, we still do not know the source of the Subterranean Shamans' abilities. However, the most powerful Shaman we have encountered is equivalent to our Fifth Energy Level."

"Male Subterraneans are warriors with low status within their tribes, while females are Shamans who can awaken special powers and hold high status."

Then, he opened another holographic map. "This is wilderness area number 64 on Maoshi Star that we plan to infiltrate."

On the map, mountains undulated, and dense vegetation covered the ground. Under the shelter of shrubs and grass, pitch-black caves were exposed.

"We will divide into four groups, working together with a scouting team from the military to infiltrate from four different directions. Remember, your duty is to scout, to ascertain the enemy's strength, and not to engage recklessly!"

Wang Chengqian was also going to personally participate this time. Originally, there were twelve students, meant for groups of three. Now that one had died, he had to fill the spot.

Qiao Shuangyi immediately raised his hand. "Teacher, I want to be in the same group as Chen Gu."

Wang Chengqian gave him a glance, the brash teacher feeling he'd lost some face. What? You actually want to be grouped with Chen Gu? Am I, a dignified Fifth Energy Level teacher, not worthy of your allegiance?

"This mission is extremely dangerous. Are you sure you want to be in the same group as Chen Gu?"

Hurry into this teacher's embrace, cling to my thigh! A Fifth Energy Level master will protect you!

"I'm sure," said Qiao Shuangyi, oblivious to Wang Chengqian's hints. "Please grant my request, Teacher."

"Alright," Wang Chengqian waved his hand. "You two will be in one group."

The rest of the grouping proceeded as normal, with many students wanting to be in Teacher Wang Chengqian's group, satisfying his vanity to a great extent.

However, what slightly annoyed Wang Chengqian was that Chen Gu was almost as sought-after as he was!

After all, Chen Gu was Third Energy Level, second only to Wang Chengqian among those present.

Lin Xiaochen, unable to secure one of the two thigh-hugging spots beside Teacher Wang, quickly latched onto Chen Gu's thigh instead, filling up Chen Gu's group.

When the groups were finally formed, Bai Zhijin was left over.

Bai Zhijin looked calm on the surface, but his eyes, filled with unwillingness, humiliation, and anger, betrayed his inner turmoil.

The remaining group had only two people, yet they didn't take the initiative to invite Bai Zhijin.

Although they were freshmen, their families had prepared some items for them, knowing about the military training. Bai Zhijin, with no backing, was clearly the weakest among them and a potential drag.

Wang Chengqian had no choice but to assign him to that group.

The two freshmen, though reluctant to have Bai Zhijin, were also the ones picked last and had no choice.

Yet Bai Zhijin, inwardly seething with rage, walked over and sat down firmly beside the two. He had already silently vowed: During the mission, I'll definitely show you all what I'm made of!

"Alright, collect your weapons. Get ready. We'll set off after lunch," he declared.

Chapter 352: [Volunteer Spirit] Three-in-One

The colonel at the military base did Huai Shan Branch School a big favor, specially instructing the mess hall staff to prepare a lavish lunch. Afterwards, the mess hall staff seemed to have discovered a new continent: it was all eaten!

Damn, that was enough food for an entire company!

Chen Gu remarked that he could still eat more. The military was great; their food was substantial, all high-calorie, none of that overly refined nonsense.

「In the afternoon」

After a brief rest, the group set out.

The convoy of heavy armored combat vehicles slowly departed the military base, accompanied by four elite reconnaissance squads from the base. They sat upright in the vehicles, cradling their weapons, their expressions cold, eyes fixed forward, emanating an undisguised disdain for these newcomers.

Yet these newcomers had already grasped the difficulty of this unfortunate "newcomer military training." Each one felt uneasy and, to a large extent, pinned their hopes on these battle-hardened elites. Naturally, their morale was diminished by more than a notch.

Even though they were all powerful professionals, most were like flowers raised in a greenhouse, possessing an innate fear of the battlefield.

As for Chen Gu... he, of course, felt nothing towards these elite scouts and certainly wouldn't be intimidated by them.

Every Mecha pilot he had fought alongside in past battles was far more elite than these soldiers.

At that moment, he began to ponder again, To start with such a military operation... what kind of talents does Huai Shan Branch School actually want to cultivate?

Half the time spent on-campus learning, half the time interning off-campus. Heh, all off-campus internships are probably like this, right?

PHEW— He let out a quiet breath, thinking back to his college days in his past life, and couldn't help but grumble internally, Damn it, for others, university meant sleeping in, occasionally failing a course, and maybe even getting a chance to date some female underclassmen. Why is Huai Shan Branch School so terrifying?

When it came to female underclassmen, he couldn't help but think of Shangguan Yuqing and that other one, shaking his head with some 'dread.' I certainly don't want to be another Zhao Ji.

Inside the heavy armored combat vehicles, the atmosphere gradually grew tense. Wang Chengqian observed coldly, knowing his students were already at a psychological disadvantage, which came as no surprise to him. However, the students' ultimate potential differed from that of these soldiers.

With repeated training, they were bound to soar to great heights eventually.

Meanwhile, most of these scouts could only be foot soldiers; very few would ever become Mecha pilots.

Yet, seeing how inept his students were, he couldn't help feeling somewhat peeved.

Qiao Shuangyi and Lin Xiaochen sat on either side of Chen Gu. Qiao Shuangyi was his usual carefree self, while Lin Xiaochen felt the pressure from the warriors opposite them. He also had the pride of a second-

generation elite and stubbornly held on for a while but eventually yielded, lowering his head to stare at the tips of his shoes, no longer daring to meet their gazes.

Just then, Chen Gu's phone suddenly rang!

The leader of the reconnaissance squad turned sharply toward him, his gaze fierce, about to reprimand him, but suddenly his expression changed!

It was indeed inappropriate to even think of answering a phone before such a military operation. That was why the squad leader had wanted to berate him.

The reason the scouts immediately adopted the intimidating air of battle-hardened veterans to cow these arrogant newcomers was due to their own considerations: such missions were the least desirable. These individuals, despite their important status, were greenhorns on the battlefield. Ostensibly, their role was support, but in reality, it was protection, significantly increasing the risk to their own lives.

If they didn't establish their dominance from the outset, and if these novices, in their arrogance, refused to follow orders on the battlefield, they would undoubtedly be dragged down by them, potentially to their deaths.

And taking a phone call before a battle was undoubtedly a huge rookie mistake!

However, he swallowed the reprimand that was on the tip of his tongue because he remembered: this was a restricted military zone. Civilian signals couldn't get through!

Therefore, the caller at this moment had to have a military background.

The squad leader judged from this that the newcomer before him might be the child of a military family. It wouldn't be wise to make an example of him, lest he inadvertently offend one of their own, so he held himself back.

Chen Gu also knew it was inappropriate to answer a call at such a time. He glanced at the caller ID, intending to hang up, but the name displayed left him no choice but to reluctantly answer.

This phone number had been provided by the military and, like his regular private number, was linked to his personal account.

Anyone who knew this secure military phone number would undoubtedly be military personnel. The caller at this moment was Bai Yunpeng.

"Marshal Bai."

The ears of the reconnaissance troopers pricked up instantly. Marshal Bai? Could it be \*the\* Marshal Bai?

Bai Yunpeng's voice was booming, loud enough for everyone nearby to faintly hear, "Chen Gu, I just heard you're headed to Maoshi Star to deal with the Subterraneans?"

"Yes, I'm on my way to the mission location," Chen Gu replied, tactfully implying, "If you have something to say, say it quickly. I'm busy here."

Marshal Bai grumbled, "The principal kept this under such tight wraps! I only got the news too late, leaving me with insufficient time to prepare."

He paused, then continued, "Let me tell you, the commander of Maoshi Star's garrison forces, General Ling Yitong, is an old subordinate of mine. And old subordinates, of course, need looking after. Since you're going, you have to protect this reconnaissance unit for me. They're Ling Yitong's elites; he'd be heartbroken to lose even one. I'm telling you, that old fellow is the most miserly when it comes to his soldiers..."

Chapter 353: [Volunteer Spirit] Three-in-One\_2

"Marshal Bai..." Chen Gu was also at a loss. "I'm not some great powerhouse above the Sixth Energy Level. With four squads, four reconnaissance teams, I can take care of one team at most. Do you expect me to be responsible for the other three as well?"

Bai Yunpeng had been helping out often, and Chen Gu felt he owed him a favor. Otherwise, he wouldn't have outright agreed to look after this particular team—he would protect these warriors in battle, but he wouldn't have made the promise in advance.

If I fail and one or two of them get killed or injured, wouldn't I, Great Actor Chen, lose face?

Bai Yunpeng was taken aback. "Oh, you guys are divided into four groups? Okay, okay, just do your best."

"Got it, Marshal Bai."

After hanging up with Marshal Bai, Chen Gu suddenly felt the atmosphere in the vehicle was a bit off. The scouts from the team across from him were looking at him with glowing eyes, leaving Chen Gu baffled. "What's wrong?" he asked.

The team leader scurried over to him, squatting at his feet and looking up. "Are you—are you the recently legendary 'Volunteer Soul' Chen Gu?"

Chen Gu was also stunned. "'Volunteer Soul'? What the heck is that?"

"The one who wreaked havoc outside Witch Star and foiled the Insect Race's conspiracy? The warrior king who would rather sacrifice himself to secure a glimmer of survival for his comrades?"

By the time Chen Gu was halfway through his call, the scouts had already confirmed that Marshal Bai was indeed \*the\* Marshal Bai, because everyone in the military knew their big boss, Ling Yitong, was his man.

Although Chen Gu's military exploits were strictly confidential, there were too many witnesses, and inevitably, rumors had started circulating within the military.

Of course, truly confidential information, like Chen Gu being a multi-profession combatant, wouldn't be evident to ordinary warriors and remained strictly classified.

Near Capital Star, such gossip and tales spread the fastest. A person from Capital Star who hadn't heard a few "classified tales" would be embarrassed to call themselves a Capital Star resident!

The scouting teams had all heard the legends about Chen Gu. He hadn't expected to have unwittingly achieved the status of 'a legend in his own absence.'

"The 'Volunteer Soul' is a title everyone bestowed upon you!"

Legends born from the ranks naturally required resounding titles that carried weight!

Chen Gu was torn between laughter and tears. This title... it's awful, he thought. It's comparable to the naming skills of the screenwriters of those third-rate scripts I watched in my previous life.

But no matter how tacky it was, the frontline warriors liked it.

"Yes, that should be me," Chen Gu confirmed.

The team leader, who had already secured a prime position—half-squatting at Chen Gu's feet—immediately grabbed Chen Gu's thigh with both hands the moment he heard the confirmation. "Hero, please look out for me!"

"Er..." Chen Gu thought for a moment. Since he had already promised Marshal Bai, he responded, "Don't be so formal. We'll help each other out."

Lin Xiaochen watched, flabbergasted. What's happening here? These guys are supposed to be elite veterans, tough-as-nails soldiers! Why the sudden shift from arrogance to obsequiousness? Where did their earlier imposing manner go?

Qiao Shuangyi shot him a smug look, his expression clearly saying: See that? Now you know what an incredible patron \*I\* found for us, don't you?

On Bai Yunpeng's end, after hanging up with Chen Gu, he immediately dialed Ling Yitong's private number and blurted out, "Are the troops for the follow-up sweep ready?"

Ling Yitong sounded somewhat puzzled. "We're in the middle of deployment. The reconnaissance troops will need at least seven days to get a clear assessment of the Subterraneans' strength, so..."

"Things are different now," Bai Yunpeng interrupted sharply. "Immediately assemble all available forces and prepare to mobilize! Chen Gu is with this batch of new recruits. His participation could create an invaluable strategic opportunity! We absolutely cannot miss it!"

Ling Yitong was still skeptical. "That 'Volunteer Soul'? He's quite good, yes, but to say he alone can carve out an excellent strategic opportunity? Isn't that overestimating him a bit?"

Bai Yunpeng flared up, not mincing words even with his old subordinate. "Ling Rice-Brain! Am I the Marshal, or are you? Do I listen to you, or do you listen to me? Just follow my orders! If you bungle this strategic window, I'll have your head!"

With even that old nickname thrown at him, what else could Ling Yitong do?

"Yes, Marshal! I will carry out the order resolutely!"

And so, various units were rapidly assembled and swiftly moved into their designated areas.

Ling Yitong dared not harbor any resentment towards his old superior, but he still grumbled inwardly about Chen Gu: Why is Marshal Bai so confident in that kid? No matter how capable one person is, they can't possibly decide the outcome of a major battle alone... Hmph, well, my goddess Aviloya is an exception, of course.

**RUMBLE! RUMBLE! RUMBLE!**

The heavy armored fighting vehicles came to a halt outside Wasteland Zone 64. From here, they would need to proceed on foot to their respective mission locations.

When disembarking, all the scouts, weapons in hand, stepped down first with their heads held high, while the new recruits followed meekly behind.

Even in Wang Chengqian's vehicle, only Wang Chengqian himself, a Fifth Energy Level combatant, could walk side-by-side with the team leader. The two new recruits he had brought along trailed behind the warriors.

The warriors felt a small measure of relief. The initial show of force worked, they thought. These recruits are intimidated. They shouldn't cause any trouble on the battlefield.

But as soon as the last vehicle stopped, its driver, a nimble scout, zipped out, hurried to the passenger door, and respectfully pulled it open.

This fluid sequence of actions perfectly demonstrated the superb qualities of an elite scout.

Chapter 354: [Volunteer Spirit] Three-in-One\_3

"Your Excellency, let me open the door for you!"

The squad leader inside kicked the door open. "Get lost! I'm here. Your Excellency, be careful not to hit your head."

Then, while everyone was bewildered, wondering if some high-ranking military officer had boarded the vehicle mid-journey, Chen Gu stepped out.

"You all... COUGH, don't do this." Great Actor Chen also felt quite helpless. The soldiers were simply too enthusiastic. This wasn't just because Chen Gu had promised to "look out for" them. More importantly, it was because of Chen Gu's accomplishments that he had now become a true idol to these rank-and-file soldiers.

"Did you hear that?!" The squad leader fiercely berated the driver who had tried to curry favor. "His Excellency said you are not to do that anymore!"

Then he turned to Chen Gu, gestured for him to proceed, and said with an obsequious smile, "This way, please. Mind the stones on the ground. My young soldiers are inexperienced, so please don't mind them. I've already disciplined them."

Chen Gu: "..."

The onlookers were stunned. Even Wang Chengqian couldn't comprehend how, merely by traveling a short distance, one of his own new students had become "Your Excellency" in the eyes of these typically arrogant and battle-hardened soldiers.

The other recon scout squads were even more puzzled. What are you all doing?! Your fawning is disgusting! You're a disgrace to our Maoshi Star Garrison Force!

A squad leader strode forward and shoved aside the squad leader next to Chen Gu. "What do you think you're doing?!"

Chen Gu's squad leader, named Han Zhuangzhi, rolled his eyes and retorted, "None of your business! We're of equal rank! I'm willing to serve His Excellency. What's it to you? It's not just me; our entire squad feels the same!"

His scouts all stepped forward in unison, nodding earnestly.

The opposing squad leader was dumbfounded. How much money did he pay to bribe you all? Have you sold your dignity and your souls?

But Han Zhuangzhi bragged with a smug grin, "You bunch of idiots! You don't know, do you? His Excellency is the 'Soul of Volunteer Warriors'! Marshal Bai personally certified it, and His Excellency said he'd look out for us!"

The surrounding soldiers all turned to look at Chen Gu, a flame of what could only be called adoration igniting in their eyes.

Then several squad leaders simultaneously cursed Han Zhuangzhi. "Han Big Head, you dog! What incredible luck!"

"Come on, let me trade with you..."

"Dream on!" Han Zhuangzhi quickly shielded Chen Gu. "Your Excellency, let's go! Quickly!"

The recon scout squad completely forgot about Qiao Shuangyi and Lin Xiaochen. They swiftly escorted Chen Gu away, while the soldiers left behind gnashed their teeth in envy of Han Zhuangzhi, seething with jealousy.

Wang Chengqian and his new recruits were still utterly bewildered. Chen Gu... What in the world is going on?

But when the recon scouts looked back at them, they felt even more indignant. What virtues or abilities does that Han Big Head possess to be assigned to His Excellency, the 'Soul of Volunteer Warriors'? In what way am I not better than him, yet I have to lead this bunch of misshapen jujubes?

Poor new students from the Huai Shan Branch School. Any one of them, if put out in the world, would be a second-generation scion whom everyone would scramble to curry favor with and befriend. Yet, in the eyes of these grunts, they were merely "misshapen jujubes."

"Move out!" The squad leaders, simmering with resentment, issued the command through clenched teeth.

...

"Alright, alright, that's enough!" Chen Gu finally lost his temper on the road, unable to bear it any longer. "If you keep this up, it's going to affect the military operation!"

This outburst sobered Han Zhuangzhi and the others. They calmed down and regained the formidable composure of elite soldiers.

Han Zhuangzhi glanced at the map. "Brother Chen, another thirty kilometers and we'll reach the entrance."

Chen Gu nodded, observing the surrounding terrain. "Be careful. The closer we get to those entrances, the more dangerous it will undoubtedly become. The Subterraneans might have a low level of civilization, but they've been fighting humanity for so long, they must be extremely cunning."

"Yes, sir!"

Upon entering Wilderness Sector 64, one could frequently see holes dotting the ground. However, these openings were quite small, unsuitable for human entry.

The Subterraneans had a peculiar physiology. Their average height and weight weren't less than humans', but their bodies could undergo a kind of "compression," allowing them to squeeze through narrow tunnels.

Their claws were extremely hard and sharp, capable of chiseling through rock, and they could dig through soil with astonishing speed.

For Chen Gu and his team to enter the Subterranean world, they needed a suitable point of entry and exit.

Han Zhuangzhi ordered his soldiers to form a perimeter, protecting Qiao Shuangyi and Lin Xiaochen in the center. Of course, the 'Soul of Volunteer Warriors' didn't need their protection.

They advanced rapidly for ten kilometers. If Qiao Shuangyi hadn't been a Professional, he would have collapsed by now. Even so, he was panting heavily, sweat pouring down him.

But at that moment, Chen Gu, at the very front, suddenly stopped. The entire team halted in perfect unison with his movement. Only Qiao Shuangyi and Lin Xiaochen failed to stop in time, awkwardly bumping into the backs of the soldiers protecting them.

"What's wrong, Brother Chen?" Qiao Shuangyi asked, gasping for breath.

Han Zhuangzhi shot him a glare. "Quiet!"

Chen Gu scanned his surroundings. He hadn't activated his Professional skills during the journey, merely proceeding as an ordinary person, albeit one whose physical constitution was vastly superior to Qiao Shuangyi's and the others'.

However, Griffin Wester's memories had endowed him with exceptionally strong tactical acumen. To an ordinary person, this terrain might seem unremarkable. To seasoned scouts like Han Zhuangzhi, it merely felt somewhat "dangerous."

But in Chen Gu's eyes, this was a natural hunting ground for beasts!

It was perfectly suited for them to hunt.

Chen Gu believed the Subterraneans wouldn't overlook such excellent terrain. It was unquestionable that less developed civilizations would learn hunting techniques from beasts.

Chapter 355: [Volunteer Spirit] Three-in-One\_4

Chen Gu activated his "Radiation Field," and an invisible force spread outward. Han Zhuangzhi and the others were completely unaware but vaguely sensed that Chen Gu was doing something. To them, his "Militia Soul" persona seemed even more mysterious and powerful.

Qiao Shuangyi and Lin Xiaochen were professionals. They knew Chen Gu was employing a professional skill, yet they couldn't discern which one he was using! This indicated that Chen Gu's strength as a professional far surpassed theirs.

Both Qiao Shuangyi and Lin Xiaochen were quite confident in their professional abilities. And why not? They were scions of powerful families! When they awakened or advanced, their families would deploy vast resources to provide them with additional materials. The addition of an extra piece of a super life's remains, versus one less, could result in two entirely different professionals.

Compared to other professionals of the same Energy Level, they possessed a significant advantage. They had always assumed Chen Gu was just an "ordinary professional." After all, Chen Biotech wasn't a major company, and the Chen family wasn't wealthy. What valuable resources could they have possibly found to aid Chen Gu? But now, both of them finally understood: in Chen Gu's view, \*they\* were the "ordinary professionals."

After Chen Gu advanced to the Third Energy Level, the range of his "Radiation Field" increased to one hundred meters! In the Star Sea, such a range wasn't significantly different from the previous fifty meters. But on a planet's surface, having one hundred meters completely under his control was terrifying.

Chen Gu clearly "saw" a dozen or so grotesque and savage lifeforms concealed in several locations ideal for ambush hunting—Subterraneans.

He patted himself down, finding a few high-explosive grenades. After a moment's thought, however, he put them back and turned to Han Zhuangzhi. "Want to earn some military merits?" he asked.

There was little point in Chen Gu dealing with these Subterraneans himself, but for Han Zhuangzhi and his team, it represented a considerable haul of military merits. These lower-ranking warriors weren't like Mecha pilots; they genuinely had to accumulate such military merits to advance.

Han Zhuangzhi's eyes lit up; he understood his idol was offering him an opportunity. He quickly nodded. "Yes!"

Chen Gu nodded. "Choose two more people."

Han Zhuangzhi immediately called two men over. "Aside from me, these are the best fighters in our team!"

Chen Gu gave Han Zhuangzhi an appreciative look. If Han Zhuangzhi had chosen his two closest friends just then, Chen Gu wouldn't have shared more significant military merits with him in the future.

Chen Gu nodded, marked the three ambush points on the map, and instructed, "Target these three positions. Launch simultaneously—one single-soldier missile for each!"

"Yes, sir!"

The garrison troops, being stationed closest to the Capital Star, were already exceptionally well-equipped, and the reconnaissance team was naturally even better supplied. Each squad member carried four of these single-soldier missiles, each only about the size of a bowling pin.

The advanced positioning and tracking system activated. Han Zhuangzhi and the other two were ready in no time.

WHOOSH! At Han Zhuangzhi's command, three single-soldier missiles launched simultaneously, each streaking toward its target.

BOOM!

BOOM!

BOOM!

Three successive explosions rocked the ambush sites. Although fired simultaneously, the missiles impacted at slightly different times due to the varying distances to the ambush points.

When the missile at the first ambush point detonated, severed limbs and chunks of Subterranean bodies flew into the air. The Subterraneans at the other two ambush points were instantly alerted.

They scrambled to escape, their extraordinary resilience on full display. By the time the second single-soldier missile landed, the Subterraneans had already bolted from their hiding spot. However, they hadn't gotten far enough, and the explosion killed them all.

But as the third single-soldier missile struck its target, those Subterraneans had already leaped more than ten meters away. The explosion's shockwave slammed into them, hurling them dozens of meters. They crashed to the ground but weren't killed instantly. They struggled to their feet, attempting to flee!

But Chen Gu had anticipated this. He swiftly advanced, raising his rifle to fire.

He had already switched to Griffin Wester's memories. With "High-Energy Combat Art" activated, any high-tech weapon in his hands could unleash its maximum lethality, and the energy rifle he wielded was no exception.

ZAP—

ZAP—

ZAP—

Energy bullets accurately struck the struggling, fleeing Subterraneans. Given their formidable physiques, Chen Gu decisively switched the energy rifle to maximum power output.

Thus, each shot blasted a large hole through the Subterraneans' bodies, leaving them unequivocally dead.

Chapter 356: Change of Leadership Just Before Battle (Long Chapter)

"WOO-HOO!" Han Zhuangzhi and his two companions cheered, their excitement unmistakable. Securing such a catch was just too easy; all they had to do was listen to their idol and fire the missiles!

The warriors behind him didn't get a chance this time and all showed looks of envy.

Chen Gu said, "Everyone will get their turn; there will be more opportunities in the future."

The warriors smiled; their idol was truly magnanimous.

Han Zhuangzhi gave Chen Gu a thumbs up. "Brother Chen, what great marksmanship!" He admitted to himself that he couldn't match this skill, even though he was already the best marksman in the team.

"And what sharp reconnaissance instincts," another soldier chimed in with effusive praise.

Reconnaissance instincts were ethereal and hard to define, yet they undeniably existed.

Chen Gu was not originally from a reconnaissance background, but when he arrived here, he sensed something was amiss. In terms of "reconnaissance instincts," he had outperformed the regular reconnaissance soldiers. At this point, everyone truly acknowledged his superiority.

However, Qiao Shuangyi and Lin Xiaochen, from beginning to end, didn't see anything "remarkable" in this battle involving Chen Gu—apart from his professional capabilities.

They felt this couldn't even be considered a battle; three missiles had resolved the issue.

It was only when they all passed through the area that the two of them, now in the midst of it, began looking around and suddenly realized the danger therein!

If it weren't for Chen Gu, they would have walked into this area unguarded. If the three ambushes had launched simultaneously... even if they had escaped with their lives relying on their professional abilities, more than seventy percent of the ordinary warriors would have likely perished here.

Such a trap, almost "fatal by design," would have led to a bloody battle for the warriors. But with Chen Gu's involvement, it suddenly turned into... a war-merit harvesting machine!

Qiao Shuangyi, the carefree one, glanced around and casually remarked, "I heard the Confederation is considering equipping all land forces with personal radars."

Han Zhuangzhi and the others didn't react much. Firstly, they weren't aware of the Qiao Family's confidential connections with the military and considered the musings of a student to be largely hearsay and therefore unreliable.

Secondly, they also knew about personal radars. They sounded great in theory, but in reality, they weren't very useful. Carried by soldiers, the radar's scanning range was limited. There were simply too many obstructions on the ground.

In open environments, the effective range might seem large, going up to hundreds of meters. But on actual battlefields, which are rarely so open, the effective range could drop to just thirty meters, or even less than ten meters on complex planetary surfaces or in environments with additional interference.

Within the army, there was a preference for combining war satellites with squad-level radar drones, merely equipping ordinary soldiers with a receiver.

Personal radar? Hmph, expensive and not very useful.

But while the speaker had no serious intentions, the listener took note. Chen Gu knew that Qiao Shuangyi wouldn't speak without basis, and he decided to keep it in mind to later tell Zhao Ji and see if the Tao Family was interested. This was a huge prize, but the army lacked funds... The matter of funding was still hard to predict.

As they passed through the trap area, Chen Gu still led the way. It wasn't long before a large white tree appeared ahead, its dense foliage concealing a hole seven to eight meters in diameter.

「...」

In the base, various reconnaissance squads transmitted live footage from their helmet- or chest-mounted cameras back to the command room.

The base's commander, Colonel Ex, was closely monitoring the situation with his staff. At that moment, however, Colonel Ex stood respectfully beside a middle-aged general. The general was not tall but possessed a sturdy, broad frame, a square face, and thick, silkworm-like eyebrows. Authority emanated from him as he stood with his hands behind his back.

The commander of Maoshi Star's garrison troops, General Ling Yitong!

He had been harshly rebuked by his former superior, Bai Yunpeng, which made him take the matter seriously and personally rush to the front lines, where he coincidentally ran into Director Xue.

Director Xue had claimed she was leaving but doubled back halfway. She only intended to make the freshmen believe that no "super expert" was present, aiming to achieve the best training effect.

But this new batch of recruits were all precious talents, so how could she not secretly look out for them?

The two of them fixed their gaze on the screens. There were four large screens, representing four squads; each screen was divided into many small squares, each representing a warrior.

Chen Gu's squad was starting to enter the cave, with the warriors wearing infrared imaging masks.

General Ling Yitong kept his eyes on that squad's screen, pondering something.

On his way here, he had already conducted an investigation into Chen Gu. He knew that Chen Gu, in addition to possessing strong personal combat abilities, was also considered a "tactical master" and was in charge of the 745 Research Institute.

However, General Ling Yitong had different opinions regarding this second identity.

Representing a certain group of people, he did not recognize the achievements obtained in the game "Infinite." Nor did this group accept Chen Gu's battle record there—such as the one against Zhao Zhenhuai. Accordingly, they also denied all recognition of the accolades Chen Gu received afterward.

Chapter 357: Change of Leadership Just Before Battle (Long Chapter)\_2

However, the tactical manual issued by Chen Gu's Researcher 745 had already proven its value in actual combat. Generals like Ling Yitong did not have much opposition to Chen Gu serving as the president of the research institute.

But they all strictly emphasized to their own troops the need to use these tactical manuals flexibly, adapting them to actual conditions without blindly implementing them.

Now, Ling Yitong found himself in a dilemma.

Chen Gu was someone his "big boss" valued, yet Ling Yitong felt that Chen Gu might not be up to the task. However, he couldn't express his doubts openly without offending Marshal Bai.

After some thought, Ling Yitong issued a series of commands, "Send Zheng Zhixing to support Han Zhuangzhi's group. Have Han Zhuangzhi hold his position and wait for Zheng Zhixing to arrive."

"Yes!"

Director Xue frowned, somewhat unclear about Ling Yitong's intentions.

Ling Yitong certainly had his own agenda. If there was anyone who could, through their own strength, create an opportunity for a comprehensive surprise attack to eradicate the Subterraneans during reconnaissance, Ling Yitong placed more faith in his own subordinate, Zheng Zhixing, than in Chen Gu.

Since Marshal Bai insisted he make arrangements in advance to seize the so-called "opportunity," and he didn't trust Chen Gu to create such an opportunity, he decided he might as well dispatch his own man to see if there was a chance.

Within the base, a flying vehicle rapidly deployed. Aboard it sat an upright soldier of slight build, with a hawk-like nose and penetrating eyes. He knew the mission he was on was of grave importance. Yet, he felt no fear; instead, a sense of anticipation welled within him.

If I can prove myself in this operation, I can catch Marshal Bai's attention—it's an excellent chance to make a name for myself!

In Ling Yitong's staff, Zheng Zhixing was acknowledged as the top tactical master.

Chen Gu's squad, which had already entered the cave and advanced several dozen meters, suddenly received Ling Yitong's orders. What does this mean? everyone wondered.

But holding their position on the spot was clearly not a wise choice. After discussing it with Han Zhuangzhi, the squad exited the cave and waited outside the entrance.

The flying vehicle was fast, delivering Zheng Zhixing in a matter of minutes. After exchanging salutes with Han Zhuangzhi, Zheng Zhixing unceremoniously declared, "From now on, I'm taking over command of the entire team!"

His rank was much higher than Han Zhuangzhi's, so Han Zhuangzhi had no objections. "Yes!"

Zheng Zhixing swept his gaze over everyone, his eyes lingering on Chen Gu for a moment before he waved his hand. "Move out!"

During the ten or so minutes they had waited, the other three squads had already encountered sporadic ambushes by the Subterraneans. Fortunately, the seasoned scouts managed to eliminate the ambushers without much trouble and continued to push forward.

Back at the command center, Ling Yitong had already formed a clear picture. The Subterraneans have detected our movements, he thought. They're likely trying to use delaying tactics to obstruct our teams.

The addition of one person to Chen Gu's squad didn't significantly alter its overall strength, keeping it roughly on par with the other squads.

Zheng Zhixing indeed had a knack for tactics. Under his command, Chen Gu, who had been at the vanguard, was pulled back. Han Zhuangzhi and another warrior took the lead instead. He still directed the soldiers to keep the three new recruits protected in the center.

Chen Gu kept his Mind Belief active, sensing for any surrounding danger.

Suddenly, they arrived at a fork with three smaller caves leading in different directions.

Thanks to Mind Belief, Chen Gu had a subconscious feeling that they should take the far-right cave.

Zheng Zhixing pulled up the map and studied it carefully. "We'll take the far-left one," he decided. "Based on our initial intelligence, the Subterraneans' main encampment is likely in one of four locations."

He circled four spots on the map.

"That's why four squads were dispatched," he continued. "Given our current position, our primary task is to scout Location Three."

He pointed to one of the marked locations. "Taking the left path is the quickest route to Location Three."

Chen Gu kept his opinion to himself. Zheng Zhixing's reasoning was sound, yet Chen Gu's Mind Belief strongly suggested the left tunnel would be empty.

So, the squad executed the order, advancing into the left cave entrance.

Ling Yitong, observing from the rear base, nodded in approval. He was clearly satisfied with Zheng Zhixing's decision; his subordinate hadn't disappointed him.

By now, the squads had advanced several hundred meters underground, pushing signal transmission to its limits.

Everyone was prepared for this eventuality; the scouts had already deployed signal relay devices.

These devices not only relayed signals back to the command center but also allowed the squads to communicate with each other.

However, the other three squads had already encountered repeated resistance from the Subterraneans. One team had already faced three ambushes, the most of any squad. Yet, Chen Gu's team had not run into a single Subterranean.

Did we take the wrong path? Han Zhuangzhi couldn't help but wonder.

Zheng Zhixing stated confidently, "Not necessarily. It's possible the Subterraneans are feigning weakness to lure us deeper. Their main encampment could be just ahead!"

Chen Gu mentally rolled his eyes. Fine, let's keep going, he thought.

After advancing about four hundred meters underground, the video feed in the command center suddenly distorted and flickered. The signal had become extremely unstable.

"General, the subterranean magnetic interference is intense," a staff officer reported.

However, this unit had been stationed on Maoshi Star for an extended period. They had conducted numerous extermination campaigns against the Subterraneans and were thus highly experienced in handling such situations, for which they were well-prepared.

Chapter 358: Change of Leadership Just Before Battle (Long Chapter)\_3

The squad up ahead immediately adjusted their equipment, activating anti-interference mode, and the image gradually stabilized.

At that moment, three squads encountered a new wave of stubborn resistance.

Subterraneans burst out from the surrounding caves, fearlessly charging at the warriors. For the first time, the squads suffered casualties.

After this wave passed, Ling Yitong had all squads tally their losses: a total of six dead and four wounded.

However, Chen Gu's squad remained eerily calm; the Subterraneans were seemingly indifferent to them, with not a single one appearing.

Han Zhuangzhi, observing along the way, suggested again, "Commander, there are very few signs of Subterraneans along this path. We might have taken the wrong one."

Zheng Zhixing glared at him but still stuck to his own judgment. "Continue forward."

But doubts had begun to grow in the warriors' minds. When we followed "Volunteer Spirit," we racked up battle merits even before going underground. But with you in command, we've been in these caves for so long and haven't even scored a single kill. It's still true that in this era, the army holds the 'lowest' status, and infantry can only accumulate battle merits kill by painstaking kill. No enemies mean no battle merits; this trip will be for nothing!

The squads pressed on for several hundred more meters. Back at the command center, the screen twisted and flickered again. Despite the soldiers' attempts to rectify it, moments later, the monitors SIZZLED and then all went dark.

The staff officers were helpless. "General, the interference is too strong."

This was expected. Ling Yitong shook his head. "Get ready for support. From here on, they're on their own."

...

In the other three squads, as they constantly advanced, the new recruits gradually became involved in combat. Their professional abilities were an excellent complement to the reconnaissance squads.

Soon, the new recruits also began to achieve kill merits. Unexpectedly, the first new recruit to kill a Subterranean was Bai Zhijin!

This privately thrilled him. These Subterraneans are just 'beasts,' he thought. Killing them doesn't create any psychological burden.

"Sure enough, these rich second-generation kids are nothing special! I can definitely stand out at Huai Shan Branch School and prove to everyone that someone from an ordinary family can also soar to great heights!"

...

The caves were rife with treacherous terrain, often evoking the saying, "One man can guard a pass against ten thousand."

The advance of the other three squads was very slow, as such places were surely ambush spots for Subterraneans.

Relying on advanced technological weaponry and the professionals' unpredictable abilities, they always managed to break through. In Chen Gu's group, however, it was different. Each time, everyone prepared as if for a major battle. Zheng Zhixing would appear adept at arranging tactics, then instruct the three new recruits to prepare for coordinated action.

Yet, after they charged through, the area behind would be completely empty, without even a shadow of a Subterranean.

War was indeed cruel. If it were possible to avoid conflict, that would be best.

But the war had begun. For many years, the Human Race, in its fight against the powerful Alien Insect Race, had been promoting the concept of 'glory.'

Moreover, accumulating battle merits for promotion was, aside from the college entrance exams, currently the second most equitable path to advancement for ordinary people.

So, finding the path consistently empty, the warriors were becoming increasingly frustrated.

What's more, they knew the fighting was intense on the other three fronts. This stark contrast made them feel even worse.

Han Zhuangzhi was about to persuade Zheng Zhixing to change their route for the third time, but just as he began to speak, Zheng Zhixing shoved him aside. "Continue forward!"

Helpless, Han Zhuangzhi quietly approached Chen Gu. "Brother Chen, what do you make of this situation?"

All along the way, Chen Gu had kept "Mind Belief" active and hadn't sensed the faintest hint of danger. Zheng Zhixing seized command the moment he arrived, he thought. But it really should belong to Han Zhuangzhi, not him. Zheng Zhixing hasn't targeted me in any way, so I can only shake my head and observe for now. In fact, as the inwardly timid Great Actor Chen, I actually feel this situation... isn't too bad.

Finally, after another two hours, the cave tunnel they were in came to a complete dead end!

Ever since Zheng Zhixing had chosen "go left" at that fork, they hadn't encountered a single enemy. Their journey had been a constant cycle of "vigilance," "prepare for battle," and "danger cleared," wasting a great deal of everyone's energy for nothing.

By this point, Zheng Zhixing had nothing more to say and could only order stiffly, "Retrace our steps. Search for traces of the Subterraneans."

The entire squad was demoralized, feeling they had followed the wrong leader—a leader who wasn't even their own choice but had been suddenly parachuted in from above.

A sense of grievance welled up in the warriors. I did nothing wrong, yet I'm being unjustly implicated!

Initially, this squad had been the frontrunner, securing a large amount of battle merits before even entering the underground.

Furthermore, the fact that Subterraneans had set up ambushes outside the caves indicated that some key secrets of their race were definitely hidden within.

Qiao Shuangyi and Lin Xiaochen sensed something was amiss and were rather puzzled. Why does everyone seem to have such a strong opinion of Zheng Zhixing? Isn't he just a bit unlucky? There were three tunnels; it was a 33% chance. He just didn't pick the right one, that's all.

#### Chapter 359: Change of Leadership Just Before Battle (Long Chapter)\_4

In reality, from the perspective of accountability, Zheng Zhixing, as this team's highest leader, had to bear the consequences for his decisions. A mistake was a mistake, regardless of whether his subjective judgment caused it. Since he enjoyed the power, he had to bear the corresponding responsibility.

Moreover, choosing one of those three cave entrances seemed like a matter of luck to ordinary people like Qiao Shuangyi. For the warriors, however, it was not so simple. This was a time to test the commander's 'battlefield instinct'!

Clearly, Zheng Zhixing was not up to par in this regard. For a staff officer renowned for his tactics, this was an even more critical error.

Fortunately, Han Zhuangzhi and others still did not know that Zheng Zhixing had been sent by the general to assist Chen Gu tactically. Otherwise, their objections would have been even greater.

Furthermore, the legends of Chen Gu's 'Volunteer Soldier's Spirit' didn't mention the 745 Research Institute, so no one yet knew of his status as its director.

Retracing their steps, they naturally encountered many other forks. Zheng Zhixing stood at a particular fork with two cave openings: one leading back the way they had come, and the other descending deeper underground.

Zheng Zhixing pondered for a moment and was about to speak when Han Zhuangzhi interjected, "Why not consult Chen Gu? He's a professional; he has special abilities to find the enemy."

Zheng Zhixing gave him a cold look but completely ignored his suggestion. He knew why the general had sent him. If he wanted to catch Marshal Bai's attention and secure a more promising future, he naturally had to accomplish things even Chen Gu could not!

What future could a military unit have if it began to fracture due to individual ambitions?

Zheng Zhixing pointed to the cave leading deeper underground and said, "We'll go this way."

From beginning to end, he never asked for Chen Gu's opinion.

By now, even Qiao Shuangyi had noticed. He quietly sidled up to Chen Gu. "Brother Chen, does that guy have a problem with you?"

Chen Gu was also somewhat baffled. He was sure he'd never met Zheng Zhixing before, right? So why did this man seem so wary and hostile towards him?

The Great Actor Chen shrugged his shoulders. "Let him be."

It was unclear whether Zheng Zhixing was genuinely unlucky, but the path he chose still didn't yield a single Subterranean.

The group advanced roughly four to five kilometers and arrived at yet another dead end.

This time, Han Zhuangzhi's dissatisfaction boiled over. He asked Zheng Zhixing bluntly, "Back the way we came? Again?"

"Hmph!" Zheng Zhixing wasn't in a good mood either and had little patience for a mere team captain like Han Zhuangzhi.

On the way back, Han Zhuangzhi approached Chen Gu again, inquiring, "Brother Chen, if it were you, which one of those three caves at the beginning would you have chosen?"

Chen Gu glanced at Zheng Zhixing ahead of them and whispered, "The one on the left."

Han Zhuangzhi nodded.

By their second time backtracking, the warriors were thoroughly exhausted. Zheng Zhixing ordered them to rest on the spot and eat to replenish their energy.

Chen Gu put down his backpack—it was the largest of everyone’s, and it was filled with... food.

High-calorie individual rations.

Chen Gu ate twenty portions in one go. Of course, he was still not full. However, he had only brought one hundred portions. Considering he had no idea how long the mission would last without resupply, he repacked his backpack.

Zheng Zhixing ate only one portion. Regarding Chen Gu’s appetite, he had a single thought: Wasteful.

After eating, Han Zhuangzhi stood up and asked, "What do we do next?"

Zheng Zhixing glanced at him coldly. "You are a soldier. Your job is to follow orders."

Han Zhuangzhi couldn’t offer a retort and sat back down, fuming.

By now, Zheng Zhixing also vaguely sensed that his initial choices might have been wrong. Thus, during this second retreat, when they encountered diagonal cave forks, he no longer led everyone headlong into them. Instead, he had them pass through quickly. Within an hour, they were back at the first three caves.

Han Zhuangzhi stepped forward, wanting to suggest they take the right one.

But Zheng Zhixing ordered without hesitation, "The middle one! Move out!"

Chapter 360: Seizing Power (Long Chapter)

"You..." Han Zhuangzhi was already speechless. He held back his anger but still didn’t dare to challenge authority. "How about we ask for Brother Chen’s opinion?"

"No need. What does a freshman know about combat?" Zheng Zhixing rejected without hesitation.

Han Zhuangzhi and his warriors were speechless. The reputable "Volunteer Soldier's Spirit" didn't understand combat?

Did Zheng Zhixing really think Chen Gu understood nothing? Of course not. But to achieve his own goal, he had to exclude Chen Gu from the decision-making process for this operation; otherwise, Marshal Bai would undoubtedly attribute all the credit to Chen Gu.

"Advance in the original formation!" Zheng Zhixing urged. Han Zhuangzhi and the others, having no choice, could only proceed towards the central cave entrance.

However, this time, they finally saw some hope, as traces of the Subterraneans frequently appeared along the way.

Their claws were sharp, leaving easily discernible marks wherever they passed.

After several hundred meters, the space ahead suddenly opened up, revealing a huge cavern.

It was pitch-black, surrounded by dozens of cave entrances, and the ground was uneven, strewn with large, scattered boulders.

Zheng Zhixing was already suffering from "choice paralysis." So many cave entrances, which one to choose? He couldn't even pick the right one out of three before; his chances seemed even slimmer this time!

Suddenly, a hand reached out from the side and pressed down on him. A low voice whispered, "Careful! Something isn't right!"

It was Chen Gu.

Zheng Zhixing glanced at him discontentedly. However, Han Zhuangzhi and Qiao Shuangyi had great faith in Chen Gu and immediately crouched down, each finding cover and remaining vigilant.

Through Chen Gu's Mind Belief, the vast cavern ahead felt filled with various threatening "malice."

I see, he realized. After ascending to the Third Energy Level, the perception of Mind Belief has become somewhat more accurate. All my abilities have been correspondingly enhanced. It's just a pity that, unlike the last promotion, I haven't awakened any special professional skills.

Meanwhile, Zheng Zhixing, troubled by his "choice paralysis" and made somewhat complacent by not having encountered any Subterraneans earlier, didn't immediately realize that this was also an excellent spot for an ambush.

Alerted by Chen Gu, Zheng Zhixing also reacted and immediately found cover. However, in his heart, he felt no gratitude for Chen Gu's warning; instead, he was annoyed that Han Zhuangzhi and the others readily obeyed Chen Gu.

If it turns out there's no ambush later, I'll mock him harshly and make his face flush red! Zheng Zhixing thought viciously.

He had put on a good facade in front of Ling Yitong, but now his true nature was completely exposed.

Han Zhuangzhi didn't consult Zheng Zhixing. Instead, he cautiously moved next to Chen Gu and asked excitedly, "Brother Chen, are there battle merits to be earned?"

The past few hours had truly frustrated them.

Before Zheng Zhixing's arrival, everyone had already "lined up" as Chen Gu had previously instructed. The warriors at the front of the line, their eyes lighting up, were about to move closer.

But Zheng Zhixing's cold voice cut in, "No reckless actions!"

Chen Gu had already switched to his Radiation Field, clearly perceiving the situation within a hundred-meter radius.

Within perceivable range, there are two ambush spots. The number of individuals at these locations is smaller than the group outside, but these Subterraneans feel like the 'elite.'

Han Zhuangzhi quietly explained to Zheng Zhixing that earlier, outside the cave, they had easily broken the Subterraneans' ambush by following Chen Gu's guidance and arrangements, using only personal missiles.

However, Zheng Zhixing remained unmoved, coldly stating, "Advance in pairs, covering each other."

Chen Gu, feeling helpless, pulled back the somewhat angry Han Zhuangzhi. He told him the two ambush locations he had sensed and cautioned again, "There might be more ambushes further ahead. Be extremely careful!"

Han Zhuangzhi nodded but hadn't yet had a chance to speak when Zheng Zhixing, feeling his authority as commander had been undermined, lashed out at Chen Gu, "You're misleading the warriors!"

"Can you guarantee one hundred percent that, aside from those two spots, there are no other ambushes?"

"What if the warriors only guard the two locations you mentioned and are ambushed from elsewhere? Can you bear that responsibility?"

"Don't think you're somebody special now. When it comes to warfare, you're just an elementary school student with much to learn!"

Chen Gu was also infuriated. He knew that on the battlefield, a military unit could only have one supreme commander. So, even though he had sensed Zheng Zhixing's hostility earlier, he hadn't made an issue of it for the sake of the group.

But now you're directly stepping on my face? What do you mean by this? Chen Gu was a student of Huai Shan Branch School, not Zheng Zhixing's subordinate; he didn't need to listen to him bossing him around.

He snorted coldly. "I guarantee that within a hundred meters ahead of us, there are only these two ambush spots! If anything goes wrong, I'll answer for the lives of any sacrificed warriors! Do you even understand what being a Professional means? You have an advantage but don't know how to use it. Instead, you're conservative and stubborn. Behavior like yours is what truly jeopardizes the lives of the warriors! You're an incompetent fool, arrogant and self-opinionated! An inept commander will be the death of his entire army!"

Zheng Zhixing, now furious, was older than Chen Gu and considered himself the most skilled and highest-ranking individual present. He immediately rushed forward and swung a slap at Chen Gu. "This isn't Huai Shan Branch School, you little brat! Do you want to drag us all to our deaths? I'll discipline you on behalf of your dean..."

Zheng Zhixing knew Professionals were powerful. However, this "knowledge" was merely hearsay; he had never witnessed a Professional in combat firsthand and thus lacked a true, clear understanding.