

Full Time 431

Chapter 431: [The Violent Bandit] Three in One

Chu Zheng's eyes flashed with an imperceptible brightness, her smile rippling even more. Today's training success rate had increased significantly.

Chen Gu saw this and nodded inwardly. After adopting a dual profession, the girl really had become much more cheerful, which was a good thing.

At the same time, in the hall where the device was located, Shi Chenghua stood to one side, enviously watching Fei Ji as she entered the device.

Both had undergone physical tests in the morning, meeting the standards. However, Fei Ji's results were slightly better.

Dr. Meng Ji stood with his arms folded behind the multitude of monitoring equipment, overseeing the orderly progress of the preparations.

Fei Ji, full of confidence within the device, buckled the chair's straps in cooperation with the researchers and then gestured triumphantly to Shi Chenghua outside, flashing a smile.

Subsequently, the airtight door descended uniformly and locked into place with a CLICK.

"Begin!" commanded Dr. Meng Ji, as the initiation procedure, already repeated several times, commenced once again.

Bright white light surged over everyone like a tide, including Shi Chenghua whose expression was somewhat complex.

Shi Chenghua and Fei Ji had always had issues with Chu Zheng. But were the two of them really that close? Perhaps not. Chen Gu only noticed the former, while Gong Shuxu, a Sixth Energy Level Psychological Spy, keenly observed the latter. Therefore, his confidence in them facing the Endless Realm was even lower, despite having used Psychological Spy techniques to mitigate their mental issues as much as possible.

On the monitoring equipment, the readings for Fei Ji's first initiation steadily climbed, quickly nearing a critical threshold. Crossing this threshold in certain data meant a mutation!

Then, that familiar alarm and red light appeared together: "Endless Realm invasion detected!"

Gong Shuxu immediately heightened his alertness. Just as Dr. Meng Ji was about to say something, the data on the monitors surged, turning blood red in an instant!

BOOM—

From within the device, a sound emerged, like an explosion or the growl of a colossal beast, followed by a cold, slimy, and frenzied aura that swept out wildly.

The researchers around felt as if a demon's tongue, drenched in foul saliva, had licked from their faces all the way to the backs of their necks!

"Ah!"

Several younger researchers screamed and fell to the ground, frightened by the aura alone, with the Mutant not even appearing yet.

Gong Shuxu's expression changed, and he swiftly stepped forward to block the entrance to the device. Dr. Meng Ji, shocked, exclaimed, "The Endless Realm has just invaded and she's already contaminated? Truly powerless against temptation, how much evil and greed must lurk in her heart..."

Some black, viscous fluid, like blood and carrying a foul stench, seeped out from the device.

Everyone knew that before the device was opened, the entire structure was completely sealed, making it impossible for any liquid to seep out. Clearly, this fluid was expelled by the Mutant using its abilities.

Then, as if finding a breach in a dam, the viscous fluid poured out rapidly, and soon the entire hall turned into a black pool!

「...」

Chen Gu suddenly sensed something. He looked down at his feet, and through the layers of the base's structure, seemed to directly see that black, viscous fluid!

Chu Zheng asked, "Instructor, what's wrong..."

An ear-piercing alarm suddenly resonated throughout the base!

Chu Zheng was taken aback. "It really is a mutation!"

Chen Gu grabbed her. "Quick, follow me."

Leading Chu Zheng away from the conditioning field and on high alert, they rode the elevator to the surface. A Bureau of Mystic Security special service team awaited them there, led by a Sixth Energy Level officer Chen Gu hadn't seen before.

The officer said, "According to the plan, take Chu Zheng away immediately!"

"Okay!" Chen Gu replied.

Chu Zheng suddenly grabbed Chen Gu, who was about to return to the base, her eyes filled with urgency. "Instructor, where are you going?"

"I'm going to check on Old Man Gong Shuxu and the doctor. They've been good to me; I can't just abandon them."

Chu Zheng grew anxious. "This Mutant is very powerful, isn't it? You could sense it in advance!"

Chen Gu feigned disdain. "I've killed more than one powerful Mutant! You go back first. I'll bring them to see you soon."

"No!" Chu Zheng clung to him tightly. "If you don't go, neither will I..."

THUD! The Sixth Energy Level officer knocked Chu Zheng out without any hesitation, then nodded at Chen Gu while carrying her away swiftly.

Chen Gu gave a wry smile. This officer, like Old Man Gong Shuxu, had a strong sense of responsibility and loyalty to the Bureau of Mystic Security, choosing to defend the bureau's interests first and foremost.

Chen Gu turned back and took the elevator downstairs. On the way, he encountered other staff retreating to the quarantine area. They couldn't provide any clear information but knew that Shi Chenghua and Fei Ji were in the device hall.

A notion struck Chen Gu, sparking a few possibilities in his mind.

「...」

Chu Zheng regained consciousness more than ten minutes after being placed in the vehicle. The Sixth Energy Level officer had not been heavy-handed. Her current physical condition, remarkably strong, was no less than Chen Gu's had been initially.

Seeing her indignant expression, the Sixth Energy Level officer knew what she was about to say and cut her off coldly, "Even if Chen Gu didn't volunteer to go back, the director had orders for him to handle this accident."

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Chu Zheng didn't understand. "Why? He's also a multi-class professional, very important to the Bureau!"

"Indeed, both of you are important," the Sixth Energy Level said indifferently. "But you've forgotten one thing: you and he are both special agents of the Bureau of Mystic Security!"

"You were sent out first not because you are more important than him, but because you are... too weak!"

"There is a powerful Mutant within the base. It's our natural enemy, the responsibility of our Bureau! If I weren't tasked with ensuring your safe return, I would have gone down with Chen Gu as well."

Chu Zheng was rendered speechless.

"Whether ordinary professionals or multi-class professionals, when facing Mutants, all serve as warriors of the Bureau!

"The Bureau invests tremendous resources in researching the paths of multi-class professionals, also to better battle Mutants. This is a matter concerning all of humanity.

"I would very much like to go down in Chen Gu's place, and I would also be willing for Chen Gu to take my place escorting you, but the Director-General would not allow it.

"Although she didn't say it explicitly, I know she actually trusts Chen Gu more. I've seen Chen Gu's record; operations against Mutants that he has participated in have never failed.

"This incident is not simple. The Director-General feels it's safer with Chen Gu going."

The Sixth Energy Level had to be frank about these things in front of Chu Zheng and his men, which made him quite uncomfortable. After all, for a dignified Sixth Energy Level to be considered less "reliable" than a Third Energy Level in the Director-General's eyes—even if that Third Energy Level was a multi-class professional—was quite a blow to his pride.

"I'm telling you this so that you'll cooperate with us and not cause trouble on the way because... yes, you really are very important.

"Although you're still very weak at the moment."

Chu Zheng did quiet down, looking at the Sixth Energy Level full of anticipation. "Instructor Chen... has he really never failed against Mutants? Will he definitely come back?"

"Definitely. At least the Director-General has confidence in him."

「That evening」

Chu Zheng, who had been anxiously waiting in the main Bureau building, finally received good news: the incident at the base had been resolved.

Soon, a detailed account of the battle was relayed back.

The slime Mutant was tough to deal with. Chen Gu and Gong Shuxu were both caught in a fierce battle, during which seven special agents died in action! Additionally, six researchers from Dr. Meng Ji's team also perished.

At the critical moment, Shi Chenghua suddenly mutated, preparing to ambush Chen Gu and Gong Shuxu from behind. However, Chen Gu had been prepared and eliminated Shi Chenghua with a counter-attack, ultimately claiming victory.

Ever since Chen Gu learned Shi Chenghua was also in the underground hall, he had been prepared for the possibility of two people mutating simultaneously.

Chu Zheng heaved a long sigh of relief. "Instructor Chen is truly amazing. No wonder the Director-General trusts him so much."

The simple, flat-chested girl didn't yet know the long history between Chen Gu and the Director-General; otherwise, her expression would have been quite a sight.

The contamination within the base required some time to be cleared. Chen Gu and the others were temporarily sealed inside, and Chu Zheng couldn't return right away either.

This made the flat-chested girl feel inexplicably anxious.

But Chen Gu, though tired, was in a rather good mood back at the base. Shi Chenghua had mutated, which at least meant the generator was now free. As soon as the cleanup was complete, he could advance.

When Chen Gu brought this up with Dr. Meng Ji, the doctor looked horrified and consulted him, "Chen Gu, maybe we should hold off for a bit?"

"I'm starting to suspect this generator might be cursed.

"The mutation rate is just too high! Think about it, we've only conducted a few experiments, and there have been three mutations already..."

Chen Gu glared. "What are you implying? That I'll mutate too? Don't jinx it!"

「The next day」

The cleanup team continued their work on the generator, as well as searching for and eliminating potential mutation risks throughout the entire base.

Chen Gu insisted on dragging Dr. Meng Ji over to conduct a contamination monitoring test for him. The final results showed an even lower level than the previous test.

Dr. Meng Ji, though still apprehensive, reluctantly agreed to Chen Gu's request.

「Three days later」

Once it was confirmed that everything in the base was normal, Chen Gu first had to attend a competition in the Alliance.

After defeating Lu Chang, "The Nightmare," last time, Chen Gu's reputation as a competitor had risen quickly within the Alliance.

This was one of the reasons the Behemoth Alliance attracted young people: achieving fame in a single battle.

One day you might be a nobody, and the next, your name could be all over global news reports.

Although many so-called "experts" stubbornly clung to old ideas, firmly believing that Energy Gathering Mechanical Species weren't suitable for Behemoth Alliance competitions and that Chen Gu was destined to fade away, many fans were already around the arena. They wore T-shirts printed with fighter jets, held Chen Gu's posters, and cheered as they entered.

At the same time, Chen Gu received data from the Alliance indicating that his merchandise was selling well, and he would get a share of the profits.

In the league, Chen Gu's momentum was excellent, but his mind wasn't on it at all. He wanted to advance to the Fourth Energy Level!

He carried this anxiety into his match.

Today's opponent was also strong, a mainstay in his club's team, who had consistently reached the top fifty in individual competitions in previous years.

Yet, sensing Chen Gu's anxiety, the Combat Rooster went berserk and critically injured the opponent's behemoth within three rounds.

Just like last time, it was over so quickly that the opponent didn't even have a chance to surrender.

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The moment of victory was met with thunderous cheers within the arena, as the fans chanted in unison, "Encore match, encore match, encore match!"

It was like an "encore" at a performance, signaling that the audience hadn't had their fill and wanted the players to put on an impromptu additional match.

After defeating Lu Chang in the last match, everyone's expectations for Chen Gu had indeed risen, and his performance with Combat Rooster today didn't disappoint. But the victory came too quickly—everyone hadn't had their fill.

The manager for today's matches gave a wry smile and shook his head. How easy could it be to set up an encore match at this time? Where could he find an opponent? Any renowned and skilled player, who would be willing to compete? Encore matches only entail appearance fees without points, and to those star players, the fees don't even count as pocket money. There's no benefit in winning, and losing... of course, only has downsides.

But the calls from the fans outside were growing louder, already affecting the subsequent matches. The players about to go on stage either good-humoredly shook their heads with wry smiles or secretly gritted their teeth. They were all aware that the upcoming matches would be tough—Chen Gu had set the bar too high right from the start, whetting the audience's appetite to a level not easily satisfied.

Seeing no response from the Alliance, the audience would normally just sit down and let it go. In ordinary matches, audiences often clamored for an encore, hoping to see an extra match for free, but the Alliance would have to cough up real money for it.

So, many times, after a noisy demand for an encore went unanswered by officials, the clamor would simply fade away. Fans wouldn't push too hard, understanding that the Alliance couldn't afford encores for every match.

But today, with an official response slow in coming, the viewers wouldn't accept it. They truly hadn't had their fill and had exceptionally high expectations for the encore match.

The entire audience stood up, clapping their hands and chanting in unison, "Encore match, encore match, encore match..."

The event manager broke into a cold sweat and had no choice but to announce over the broadcast system, "We are currently arranging an encore match. Please continue to watch the following main events for now."

The crowd cheered at this, finally relenting.

Chen Gu left the stage smoothly. Indeed, the audience's interest in the subsequent matches was clearly lacking, and the atmosphere grew quite cold at one point.

Backstage, the event manager was hurriedly phoning players. However, none of the star players who happened to be on Capital Star were willing to come. They had watched the match and, frankly, weren't confident they could defeat Chen Gu.

As for non-star players, few were willing to come either. After all, who would want to get beaten up for nothing?

The manager slumped in his chair, feeling doomed. Once all the main events ended, the disappointed audience would likely cause a significant disturbance. The Alliance certainly wouldn't consider his difficulties and would undoubtedly use him as a scapegoat.

Just at that moment, his assistant suddenly remembered, "Boss, that person... Have you forgotten? He's sure to agree!"

"Who?" the manager asked. Then, he suddenly remembered. "You mean him?"

The manager thought for a moment. This is probably inappropriate... But he immediately grabbed the phone and called the person. At a time like this, who cares about appropriateness? I just need to get through this crisis!

Before the last of tonight's seven main events, Chen Gu received a dossier on his opponent for the upcoming encore match.

"[Infamous Player] Sisizaro?"

This man was notorious in the Alliance. Alcohol abuse, promiscuity, insulting reporters, assaulting referees, and more—in his four or five years in the Alliance, he'd accumulated quite a record of misdeeds.

Last season, after a defeat in a team match, he had barged into a teammate's home with an illegal weapon. He did this because while he had won his part of the match, his teammates had all lost, and he felt these "useless teammates" had dragged him down.

Afterward, he faced severe punishment: he spent half a year in jail, was kicked out of his club, fined ten million Starshields, and was banned by the Alliance for a long time.

His ban was lifted only last week, allowing him to return. However, he had already missed the registration period for the new season. This meant that, under normal circumstances, he would miss the entire season. He currently resided on Capital Star.

[Infamous Player] Sisizaro was very talented. He was originally selected in the first round as the fourteenth pick, an extremely high ranking, and his subsequent performance had always been impressive. If not for that, the Alliance would have shown him the door much earlier.

Now jobless and fined ten million Starshields, Sisizaro was truly destitute. The five hundred thousand Starshield appearance fee for an encore match, an amount Sisizaro would normally scoff at, was now desperately needed to address his pressing financial situation.

As Chen Gu received this information, a holographic projection above the arena also displayed the arrangement for the encore match.

Seeing that the opponent was Sisizaro, the entire venue erupted in thunderous cheers.

[Infamous Player] had a terrible reputation among fans. They deeply despised him and couldn't wait to see him taught a harsh lesson.

Consequently, the seventh main event, originally intended as the grand finale and featuring a star player, garnered little attention. Everyone was too busy eagerly discussing the upcoming final encore match!

The star player entered the stage with a resigned expression, promptly and neatly defeated his opponent to earn points, and then left the arena to Chen Gu and Sisizaro.

Still, it had to be said, [Infamous Player] truly lived up to his name. While the host was introducing both players on stage, Sisizaro suddenly rushed out from nowhere, snatched the microphone from the host's hand, and shoved the elderly host aside.

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Then, holding the microphone, he made a fierce gesture with his other hand towards the audience, "I know you all fear me!

"I can smell the scent of fear emanating from your bodies.

"Together with this corrupt and degenerate Alliance, you want to drive me out of this arena!

"I'm telling you, you're wrong! You can't do it! I'm back, and I will continue to dominate this arena with my ferocity and strength!

"To hell with those hypocritical pre-game introductions, Chen Gu! Come out here, and let me show you what a real giant beast fight looks like!

"When the match is over, don't go crying back to your mother!"

After speaking, he forcefully threw the microphone onto the stage and arrogantly walked towards his connector.

In the stands, a chorus of boos and curses rose up. Many spectators gestured obscenely at him. Some in the front rows were so agitated they wanted to rush into the arena to teach the thug a lesson with their fists, but it took all the security guards' strength to stop them.

"Outlaw" Sisizaro was quite pleased with the "effect" he had created, believing that even if he couldn't participate in subsequent matches, his popularity would last for a while after tonight. He was a thug, but no fool. He knew what his persona was. Only by maintaining this persona could he continue to stand tall in the Alliance. Only by maintaining this persona could he keep the popularity going, and with it, the money. Otherwise, he would quickly be forgotten. His crimes were fodder for his fans' conversations; as long as his fans were talking about him, he wouldn't be out of a job. And when his professional career was nearing its end, he could easily clean up his image by playing the "prodigal son returns" card, preferably with a boost from his child. Even after retirement, he could still land the status of an Alliance "veteran," commentating and analyzing matches, continuing to make money.

Chen Gu, on the other hand, didn't really care whether Sisizaro was truly a bad person or genuinely "ferocious." If he knew Sisizaro's plans, he'd care even less. Everyone has their own way of making money.

Yet, he was feeling restless now, and Sisizaro had picked this very moment to act ferociously and clash with him...

Thus, amid the cheers of the audience, Chen Gu made his entrance. He entered his connector and swiftly snatched control of his body from Combat Rooster, just as before.

The Combat Rooster again trembled and hid in the corner.

Both sides were ready. Without waiting for the referee's announcement, Sisizaro eagerly roared first, "Begin!"

Then his giant beast, "Bonecrusher Shark," charged at Combat Rooster with a roar.

This behemoth, over a hundred meters long, had a body like a shark and powerful hind legs like a dinosaur. Its upper body sported four massive claws. The front pair were like mantis arms, and the back pair were long like chain spears.

This beast blended strength with cunning, much like Sisizaro himself. It was in perfect harmony with him and had torn apart many giant beasts on the battlefield.

But this time, as it surged forward, it found its opponent approaching with a warrior's footwork that should not be seen on a giant beast. Bonecrusher Shark roared as it tore and bit, displaying considerable technique for a giant beast fight.

However, Combat Rooster, taking advantage of the momentum, spun in the air, neatly evading Bonecrusher Shark's attack. While suspended, it angled its massive body and struck one of Bonecrusher Shark's eyes with a claw.

SQUELCH!

The claw crushed the eyeball, then stabbed ferociously deep into the brain and twisted!

At this point, Bonecrusher Shark was actually already dead, but the rage in Chen Gu's heart had not yet been vented. Combat Rooster landed and grabbed Bonecrusher Shark's huge body with both claws, flipping over and slamming the hundred-meter-long behemoth behind it with force.

BOOM!

With a loud noise, the whole stadium seemed to shake for a moment.

Countless bones in Bonecrusher Shark's body shattered. Many gashes were torn open on its hide, blood gushing out profusely.

Combat Rooster refused to stop. It flipped again, somersaulting above Bonecrusher Shark, then stretched out its hind claws to stomp down from mid-air.

CRACK!

Combat Rooster's claw severed the giant head of Bonecrusher Shark!

Then, Chen Gu, controlling Combat Rooster, just as Sisizaro had earlier declared "Begin!", bypassed the referee and directly declared for himself, "Victory!"

Chapter 435 Fourth Energy Level (Three-in-One)

Inside the connector, Sisizaro, still reeling from immense pain, struggled to break free from the device, gasping for air. He lay sprawled on the floor, staring out at Chen Gu, his eyes blazing with venomous hatred.

"Well done!" The stadium erupted in cheers. Many spectators stood up, waving their fists vigorously, their faces flushed with excitement.

Sisizaro, the villain despised by the entire Alliance, had finally received his deserved punishment.

This tiebreaker match couldn't exactly be said to have satisfied the audience, as Sisizaro, that good-for-nothing, lost too quickly, being unilaterally crushed.

But such a "bad guy gets his comeuppance" scenario was loved by all, so they felt this additional match was indeed worthwhile.

Sisizaro and his behemoth were both carried off. As Sisizaro was taken through the passage, he was greeted by a chorus of boos from the stands on both sides and a deluge of debris raining down upon him.

Sisizaro's hatred grew even stronger, blaming everything on Chen Gu. He certainly wasn't about to reflect on whether his arrogant pre-match provocations were wrong, let alone realize that if one wants to climb over others to reach the top, one must be prepared to be overpowered in return.

All he knew was that he was finished, and Chen Gu was the root of it all.

The medical technology of this era was highly advanced. Behemoths that were seriously injured, or even killed, in matches could ultimately be saved, albeit at great expense.

The more serious the injury, the higher the medical costs.

For typical competitors, their clubs purchased expensive annual insurance, so these medical costs were covered by insurance companies.

But Sisizaro had been expelled and had no such insurance.

He caused so much trouble that most of his salary had gone to paying fines. The last fine was ten million, a large part of which he had paid with loans.

And this time, his Razor-Shark had died so thoroughly that its resurrection would cost at least tens of millions!

He couldn't produce that sum. Without his behemoth, he would be kicked out of the Alliance for good. The millions in loans he still owed would be a burden that would surely crush him for life, leaving him unable to ever stand tall again!

Chen Gu walked off the competition platform, letting out a long breath. It was finally over. Tomorrow, he could enter the generator and happily advance to the Fourth Energy Level.

However, as he was driving the rented behemoth truck and preparing to leave the stadium, he was surprised to see a group of people waiting for him at the exit.

"Chu Zheng?" Chen Gu was surprised. The Sixth Energy Level expert assigned to protect her and his special operations subordinates were also there.

Chu Zheng approached with a smile. "Coach, I'm going back with you," she said.

The Sixth Energy Level expert looked rather helpless. "She strongly insisted on this," he explained. "Actually, our original plan was for her to wait until after tomorrow to go back."

Tomorrow, Chen Gu is supposed to prepare for his advancement—what if he mutates...

Chen Gu also smiled, feeling that this experiment hadn't been a complete waste after all. Of the three students he'd trained, at least one had a conscience. As for Shi Chenghua and Fei Ji... it was best not to mention them.

Chu Zheng insisted on riding in the same vehicle as Chen Gu. The Sixth Energy Level expert and his subordinates took another car and followed behind.

The behemoth truck started. After it had driven only a few hundred meters, a figure suddenly appeared in front. Chen Gu slammed on the brakes.

The figure had already charged forward, yanking open the door and climbing in, pressing a modified plasma jet pistol to Chen Gu's head.

It was Sisizaro.

Chen Gu wasn't surprised. After all, the guy had a long history of misdeeds.

Sisizaro gritted his teeth, his face contorted with rage. The overpowered weapon in his hand inflated his confidence. "You think you're so tough, huh?" he snarled. "Show me how tough you are now!"

As he spoke, he repeatedly jabbed Chen Gu's forehead with the pistol.

But when Sisizaro challenged him like that, Chen Gu readily agreed, "Alright then, I'll show you just how tough I can be!"

Then... there was no 'then.' Sisizaro didn't even see the Third Energy Level professional move before a sharp pain shot through his wrist; the bone was already broken.

The overpowered weapon fell into Chen Gu's hands.

Then, as if by magic, Chen Gu produced a pair of handcuffs and cuffed him to the truck's frame.

"AH—" It was only then that Sisizaro let out a scream of pain.

Chen Gu shrugged. "You wanted to see it. I'm usually an agreeable person. But now you're screaming and shouting. It's quite annoying."

Sisizaro immediately bit his lip hard, not daring to make another sound.

Chu Zheng, on the side, covered her mouth to stifle a giggle.

From the car behind, the Sixth Energy Level expert opened his window and leaned out. "Do you find it interesting to bully an ordinary person like this?"

"I don't find it interesting either," Chen Gu replied. "But the issue is, I can't just stand by and let an ordinary person bully me, can I?"

The Sixth Energy Level expert shook his head and contacted the police.

Because of this delay, it was already past one in the morning when they returned to the base.

Dr. Meng Ji had not yet gone to bed. He was engrossed in some research materials. He had routed the surveillance feed from the base's main gate to his room and glanced at it from time to time. Only when he saw Chu Zheng safely return to the base in Chen Gu's vehicle did he silently switch off the monitor and return to his documents.

News of Chen Gu's two swift victories had already sparked heated discussion on the Interstellar Quantum Network the previous night. Its popularity even surpassed the news of a celebrity's affair that broke around midnight.

The next morning, even more explosive news broke: [Thug] Sisizaro, unable to accept his defeat, had ambushed Chen Gu with an overpowered weapon after the match. Chen Gu subdued him and handed him over to the police!

Chapter 436 - Fourth Energy Level (Three-in-One)_2

The whole internet exploded in an instant. "You bring an overpowered weapon to confront someone who's barehanded, how is that brave?" And to think, this resulted in his arm being broken and him being sent to the police station—such an outcome was indeed very satisfying.

All that celebrity cheating scandal crap, the same old stories get old after a while. It's our "Iron Fist of Justice" Chen Gu's gossip that's really interesting. That's right, the fans have already given Chen Gu a mighty and powerful nickname: Iron Fist of Justice. Thanks to Sisizaro the "Thug" for his outstanding contribution to this nickname.

In the past, after every competition, Chen Gu liked to eat breakfast while browsing the news online the following morning, mainly to listen to how critics and fans praised him. The more sycophantic the review, the more he enjoyed it.

But today was different. He didn't look at anything, controlling his emotions to remain as still as an ancient well. After finishing a breakfast that was very beneficial to professionals, he took the elevator down to the deepest part of the base, the generator hall.

Today was just an ascension, not an experiment, so there was no need to prepare so early. When Chen Gu arrived, all the preliminary work had just finished.

Dr. Meng Ji had stayed up late delving into his research the night before and looked a bit listless this morning. Also, because this wasn't part of an experiment, he couldn't muster much energy, nor did he plan to use any of those terrifying mental stimulants.

Seeing Chen Gu arrive, Gong Shuxu gave him a slight nod, encouraging him, "Stay true to your heart, and keep it up!"

Dr. Meng Ji, on the other hand, waved his hand casually, "Ready? Let's start quickly. I still have other things to do after this."

"Okay," Chen Gu walked towards the generator.

The doctor's attendance was already quite flattering, as it was a favor considering their private relationship. Had it been anyone else, the doctor would not have wasted time presiding over it, likely sending a senior researcher at most, or perhaps not even inquiring.

Chu Zheng wanted to come too but was forbidden from approaching the generator by the powerful beings protecting her.

All the materials needed for the ascension had been delivered the day before, and researchers were now transporting these items inside. Some were small but extremely heavy and required mechanical arms to move.

Chen Gu quietly observed and felt quite relieved. The materials provided by Aviloya were all slightly more than the normal amount required. Although not by much, they didn't seem stingy.

Compared to the preparations Chen Gu had made himself on several previous occasions, this was far inferior, but compared to other professionals, it was still extravagant.

Once all the materials were in place, Chen Gu sat inside the generator. Two researchers helped fasten the locks for him and then stepped out. The airtight door closed and locked, and Dr. Meng Ji's voice rang out, "We are about to start."

Chen Gu took a deep breath and responded, "Okay."

Energy began to flow through the circuits, and the light slowly brightened.

Even though it was his fourth time experiencing this, Chen Gu was still very nervous. Every professional took the process of ascension seriously and did not treat it lightly or claim to be "experienced," considering that even Ninth Power Level professionals only go through it nine times.

And no matter how well prepared, the risks were always extremely high.

As the light reached its peak, the substances in the generator were decomposed into countless tiny particles, which then merged into Chen Gu's body through the constructed energy pathways.

Chen Gu experienced the pain again. Though it was intense, it was still bearable.

What made this time different from the past was the vague sense of a mysterious "structure" that Chen Gu felt while integrating these mystical particles.

It seemed to be a structure of the universe on another layer, different from the study of advanced technological achievements.

Or perhaps, it was a structure of atoms on a different level than technology.

It was profoundly mysterious. Chen Gu only had a vague and subtle feeling, and he couldn't even tell if this feeling was right or wrong, so he found it hard to describe clearly.

But this feeling sparked immense interest in Chen Gu, and he strived to accurately capture and remember it, which shifted his focus. With his attention diverted, the physical pain became easier to handle.

These subtle changes couldn't be reflected in the monitoring equipment outside.

All Dr. Meng Ji could see were the monitoring data on the instruments, with Chen Gu's various indicators climbing steadily closer to the red line standards.

Once past these red lines, it either meant failure of ascension or indicated an anomaly.

The very experienced doctor, with arms folded, said, "The Endless Realm is coming soon..."

No sooner had he finished speaking than the alarm sounded, "Invasion from the Endless Realm detected!" Gong Shuxu tensed his body, eyes fierce as he stared at the generator.

Inside the generator, Chen Gu also felt the pure malice coming from the Endless Realm. However, this time was somewhat different from before. He braced himself for the corrosion and temptation. Before long, a powerful entity appeared in his "vision."

But what baffled him was that following the first one, a second, then a third, and then a fourth appeared in succession.

Just like with Basler the previous time, these malevolent entities were gathering in the distance, seemingly communicating with one another. In Chen Gu's perception, it sounded like incessant, ghostly babble, utterly beyond comprehension, though he could tell they were pointing at him and saying something about him.

Chapter 437 - Fourth Energy Level (Three-in-One)_3

When Basler last mentioned this situation, Chen Gu had ignored it. But now that it was his turn, he was naturally more perceptive. These beings in the Endless Realm, when polluting and corrupting targets, adhere to a 'first come, first served' principle. For instance, if a demonic entity discovers a target first, other beings generally won't intervene until that demonic entity has failed. Even if another creature of desire subsequently discovers the same target, it will wait until the demonic entity has failed before considering whether to act.

However, for such a large group to gather, pointing and whispering, was something he had never heard of before.

This gave Chen Gu a sudden epiphany: Those beings Basler saw last time... they might not have been pointing and whispering at Basler. Perhaps, through Basler, they were pointing at me and whispering, just as they seem to be doing now!

This thought jolted him, and this emotional 'tremor' seemed to transmit clearly to the Endless Realm outside.

The evil beings gathered in the distance abruptly scattered. Though he knew it was impossible, the effect was truly as if a 'tremor' from Chen Gu had caused them to disperse...

Chen Gu felt increasingly that something was odd. What was even stranger was that the Endless Realm did not fade away.

The boundless darkness still enveloped him. It seemed as though there was nothing around him, yet also as if countless eyes were watching him from the shadows.

After an indeterminate amount of time, a pure 'darkness' suddenly appeared before Chen Gu.

This perception was very strange; the Endless Realm was already an endless darkness, but this particular 'darkness' seemed especially distinct.

He advanced, vast and slow, seemingly as boundless and limitless as the entire Endless Realm itself.

This time, Chen Gu remained alert. He silently uttered in his heart: The Evil God has come again.

The distinct presence before him, though invisible, was undoubtedly an Evil God; he just didn't know if this was the same one he had encountered during his previous promotion.

Outside, Dr. Meng Ji and the others were sweating profusely. An Evil God! The Evil God had appeared again! How did this kid always manage to stir up such a huge scene every time?

On Gong Shuxu's order, everyone except for himself and Dr. Meng Ji retreated from the generator hall.

In contrast to their tension, Chen Gu and the Evil God seemed remarkably calm. Chen Gu felt the Evil God was carefully observing him, and he wished to observe Him in the same way—however, he couldn't see anything. He could only rely on his senses, yet couldn't perceive Him accurately.

Chen Gu was also puzzled: Why hadn't He taken action yet?

Suddenly, a ripple spread from the darkness before him.

Chen Gu immediately tensed up: Is the Evil God finally going to make a move?

But after waiting for a while, there was no follow-up action. He had combated entities from the Endless Realm before and knew their methods of temptation and corruption—their methods were never this nonchalant.

Chen Gu had just begun to relax, his doubts easing, when a second ripple rolled in, almost identical to the first.

Chen Gu tensed up again... and then, once more, there was no continuation.

After this happened three times, Chen Gu was utterly baffled. He took the initiative to move forward, wanting to directly face the temptation and pollution, because the longer he delayed here, the risk of unforeseen transformation would undoubtedly increase.

But as he approached, that pervasive, boundless dark presence vanished in an instant!

He came quietly and left without a sound.

Chen Gu furrowed his brows, suspecting some kind of trap or conspiracy. It didn't make sense for such a powerful Evil God to appear every time he was promoted, only to do nothing.

Could it be that an extremely covert contamination is lurking in my body, waiting for me to reach a higher Energy Level, climb to a higher position, and then suddenly detonate to cause maximum damage?

That was the most significant possibility Chen Gu could think of.

Outside the generator, the Endless Realm invasion alarm finally began to fade. Gong Shuxu and Dr. Meng Ji relaxed simultaneously, then exchanged wry smiles and shook their heads. "This guy, he's always so scary."

Dr. Meng Ji was filled with even more regret. "In the future, I'm never going to oversee this kid's promotion again; it's too much for my heart."

He shouted through the communication channel into the generator, "I'm going to open the generator now! Don't move. The appearance of the Evil God is no small matter. I'm going to perform the highest security level contamination check on you. If you don't behave, Elder Gong Shuxu will deal with you!"

Gong Shuxu helplessly glared at the doctor, who was posturing with borrowed authority.

At this moment, Chen Gu was full of doubts. He was somewhat worried, Will I pass this check? Yet he also hoped, If there truly is a seed of contamination planted by the Evil God within me, I hope the doctor can detect it.

"Alright." Torn, Chen Gu simply replied in a low voice.

Dr. Meng Ji, on the other hand, was quite at ease. After opening the generator, he personally went in with some portable instruments to examine Chen Gu.

This wasn't the first time an Evil God had appeared. Dr. Meng Ji, having accompanied Chen Gu and witnessed many grand scenes, had grown accustomed to such events.

Chen Gu's acting skills helped him conceal his inner turmoil so well that neither of his good friends noticed.

Dr. Meng Ji personally conducted the examination, and his work was swift. Within an hour, the results were out. The doctor looked at the data with some dissatisfaction. "Your mental purity is 97.44%. You've fallen quite a bit compared to before."

Chapter 438 - Fourth Energy Level (Three-in-One)_4

This decrease of over one percentage point was only in comparison to Chen Gu's own previous data.

But in reality, for someone who had just been promoted, such purity truly made him a "white lotus emerging unsoiled from the mud."

Gong Shuxu came in, helped Chen Gu unbuckle the safety lock, then smiled and patted him on the shoulder. "Congratulations, you've reached the Fourth Energy Level."

Chen Gu responded with a smile, "I was lucky; the promotion process was thrilling but safe."

Dr. Meng Ji was about to discuss the Evil God's appearance with him when his phone unexpectedly rang. It was the Director-General. Even more surprisingly, her first question was about Chen Gu's condition: "Has he completed the promotion?"

"Yes, I've personally checked. His spiritual purity is 97.44%, with no issues at all, and it should also gradually increase further."

Aviloya said, "Ask him if he has awakened a new profession."

This was Aviloya's true intention, but she stubbornly refused to call Chen Gu herself; she disliked talking to that kind of person!

Dr. Meng Ji did as instructed. Chen Gu didn't hide anything. "Not yet. Awakening a new profession doesn't have a fixed timetable. Based on my past experience, it could happen the moment I step out of the generator, or it could be sometime after the promotion."

"Have him report to the Bureau immediately once he awakens a new profession," Aviloya instructed before hanging up.

Dr. Meng Ji shrugged at Chen Gu, who nodded in understanding.

As they walked out of the generator hall, Chu Zheng threw herself at Chen Gu, giving him a congratulatory hug. Unfortunately, due to the difference in their builds, Chen Gu felt nothing.

"Instructor, you succeeded!"

Chen Gu said with a smile, "It's just as expected."

Just as Dr. Meng Ji approached, intending to speak, Chu Zheng's expression turned cold. She turned and walked away, showing him her back.

The day after advancing to the Fourth Energy Level, while training Chu Zheng, Chen Gu also tested his current strength in the Professionals' Training Facility.

With the empowerment of "The Past of Four Hundred People," all his professions had reached the strength of the Fifth Energy Level. The only exception was the memory of Milna Katerina, the Nuclear Explosion Nun, which had become somewhat "inessential."

This saint of the Atomic Holy Church, originally at the Fourth Energy Level, no longer received any boosting effect from the memory empowerment.

Although Chen Gu was well aware that all these character memories from "The Past of Four Hundred People" would eventually meet this fate, Milna Katerina's memory had been tremendously helpful to him. In the early stages of his career, relying on the Nuclear Explosion Nun's techniques, he had overcome many life-threatening dangers and turned defeats into victories. Now, this particular memory's value to him was truly just that—a memory.

Meanwhile, Chu Zheng diligently followed the training plan Chen Gu had arranged for her. She had improved rapidly in recent days and could now smoothly execute skills from two different professions. Although she still needed more practice transitioning between them, she was not far from being combat-ready.

At noon, twenty volunteers arrived along with a shipment of supplies.

These individuals were all in situations similar to Chu Zheng's. However, this time, Gong Shuxu would be their instructor, training them according to the plan Chen Gu provided.

Chen Gu focused on training Chu Zheng. He had no objections to this arrangement.

The position of "Chief Instructor" for this cohort was crucial. Future multi-profession operatives under the Bureau of Mystic Security would largely be drawn from this training group.

Aviloya evidently trusted Gong Shuxu more than Chen Gu.

Moreover, of the three students Chen Gu had previously trained, only Chu Zheng had succeeded. The other two developed psychological issues and became Mutants. Assigning Gong Shuxu, the Psychological Spy, as instructor should help address the students' psychological problems more effectively and prevent such outcomes.

Chapter 439 - Clash of the Titans

While everyone at the base, including Chen Gu, was engrossed in training to enhance their strength, Chen Gu quietly anticipated his next Beast League competition.

This time, the Alliance had contacted Chen Gu in advance. After some discussion, they made certain arrangements.

It was only after this reminder from the Alliance officials that Chen Gu realized he had, unbeknownst to himself, already topped the individual ranking list—undefeated since the start of the competition!

For this match, the Alliance heavily promoted it. Chen Gu's opponent was [Son of the Sun] Ling Tianzhi. Ling Tianzhi was tied for first place with Chen Gu, also holding an undefeated record, and was recognized by the Alliance as one of the top five strongest players.

Now, only the two of them remained tied for the lead. This showdown would directly determine the true number one in the individual competition.

Ling Tianzhi had been in the Alliance for three years. Hailed as the top draft pick of his year, his talent was highly regarded by all, and his club spared no resources in cultivating him.

In these three years, his progress had been visibly substantial. This year marked his first time participating in the individual competition, and he had achieved such a dream start that almost all fans were brimming with expectations for him.

Chen Gu, on the other hand, was a classic dark horse. Initially underestimated, he had now become immensely popular, his fame rapidly approaching that of the star players.

With such a hype-worthy match, it would be a colossal waste if the Alliance didn't promote it effectively.

Thus, various promotional campaigns ran rampant before the match, catapulting fan anticipation to its peak.

Fans were taking sides. The Alliance's official website featured a special poll for the match's outcome. Current voting indicated that over seventy percent of fans still favored [Son of the Sun] to win.

Although everyone also liked [Justice Iron Fist], he had, after all, been in the Alliance for a very short time. Many believed there was still an element of luck to his achievements.

On the day of the match, Chu Zheng completed her training with exceptional seriousness, overachieving to an unbelievable extent. Afterwards, she approached Chen Gu with a beaming smile, "Instructor, take me with you to the match tonight."

Chen Gu shook his head. "Stay safely at the base. You're the Bureau of Mystic Security's treasure now. I can't bear the responsibility if anything happens to you."

Chu Zheng pouted. "It's just going out to watch a match. With my current strength, I'll be fine even if I encounter danger..."

Chen Gu scratched his head, wondering how to persuade the determined girl. Just then, the training area door was pushed open. Kang Gesi, the Sixth Energy Level expert responsible for Chu Zheng's protection, walked in with a stern face. "The Director-General just called," he announced. "He specifically instructed me not to let you out tonight."

Chu Zheng's temper flared. "Why!"

Kang Gesi, the Sixth Energy Level expert, glanced at Chen Gu before replying, "The Director caused a major disturbance within Star State territory. He killed two of their Eighth Energy Levels and razed their Dongdian Military Academy to the ground, thoroughly venting his anger."

Chen Gu was dumbfounded. He could only exclaim in genuine admiration, "The Director is truly mighty!"

Two Eighth Energy Levels! Star State must be reeling from this loss.

And Dongdian Military Academy holds a status in Star State comparable to our Tiangong Military Division, not just a mere Huai Shan Branch School. This is a blatant slap in their face.

The entire Star State must be in an uproar, undoubtedly howling for revenge.

Kang Gesi continued, "Star State has been making frequent moves. A large number of their agents and spies are entering our country through various channels. The Director-General's directive is for us to maintain a low profile for the time being, so the Bureau of Mystic Security doesn't end up taking the blame for the trouble the Director stirred up."

Chu Zheng still didn't understand. She had only been a minor operative before and knew nothing about the Huai Shan Branch School, let alone the significance of someone like the Director.

"What does this have to do with me..."

Kang Gesi had to explain further, "Indeed, it has nothing to do with you, but it has everything to do with Chen Gu."

Chen Gu could only manage a wry smile. "The Director's actions... well, they do involve me to some extent. Mmm... In fact, I'm quite sure I'll be one of Star State's primary targets for retaliation."

It wasn't that I was overestimating myself; I truly played a pivotal role in this incident.

Chu Zheng was stunned. Instructor, is he really that audacious? Ninth Power Level masters clashing, and he, merely a Third Energy Level at the time, dared to intervene?

Chen Gu could only offer another wry smile. "I didn't want to get involved either. It was purely coincidental."

Kang Gesi stated firmly, "So, you should understand this is non-negotiable. Stay put in the base tonight!"

Chu Zheng fell silent, puffing up her cheeks in sullen anger.

Chen Gu quickly got ready and then drove away from the base.

Tonight's match was still at Immeasurable Stadium. It was a larger venue with more advanced facilities, suitable for such a high-profile contest.

By noon, numerous fans had already gathered outside the stadium. When Chen Gu arrived, over a million people were already congregated there!

These were all people who hadn't managed to buy tickets.

The Alliance's match tickets were sold in advance, even before the competition began. Due to the Alliance's immense popularity, it was difficult to get tickets even for the least popular matches as their dates approached.

This particular match, featuring [Son of the Sun] Ling Tianzhi, had sold out even before the season began. However, those who had bought tickets back then hadn't anticipated just how important this match would become.

Consequently, scalper prices for tickets skyrocketed before the match. Even the most distant seats, jokingly dubbed "rooftop tickets" by fans, had seen their prices increase a full forty times!

Chapter 440: Clash of the Titans_2

Even so, there was still a large crowd of fans at the entrance, shouting, "High prices for tickets!"

As soon as Chen Gu drove up in his truck, it immediately caused a huge commotion.

Today, the monster truck he was driving was not the one he had rented before but one specially prepared by the Alliance, adorned with posters of Chen Gu and Combat Rooster.

From now on, this truck would belong to Chen Gu.

So when the fans spotted the truck from afar, they knew he had arrived, and they swarmed over.

Although the Alliance dispatched a large number of security guards, they were but a drop in the bucket compared to the sheer number of fans.

Chen Gu was also startled and quickly elevated the magnetic levitation truck, soaring over the heads of the crowd to rush into the stadium. Any further delay, and a stampede could have occurred.

After entering the stadium, Great Actor Chen was practically floating with smugness. Heh, I'm a superstar now too!

However, a phone call brought him back to reality. "I'm in your VIP box; hurry up, everyone's waiting for you."

Chen Gu feigned ignorance and said brashly, "I'm sorry, who are you?"

"I'm your star daddy!" Gao Mengjiu dealt a verbal knockout blow. Chen Gu retorted furiously with "idiot, idiot," then settled Combat Rooster down and headed to his own VIP box, ready to teach this foolish friend a lesson with his fists.

But when he pushed open the door to the VIP box, he saw that almost all his good friends were there.

Ossosa and Zhao Ji had even traveled thousands of miles to be there.

Bai Yunpeng, of course, couldn't miss out; he was even more excited than Chen Gu.

In the corner sat his true family members: his granddaughter Chen Qingyu and grandson Chen Zili.

By Chen Zili's side was Yang Yaoyao, who seemed rather inconspicuous in the VIP box.

Man Suling, the she-wolf, sat elegantly on the couch with a glass of red wine, gazing affectionately at Chen Gu, as if she wished she could swallow him whole.

Man Suling's heart overflowed with tenderness. Everything felt like it was getting better, moving in the direction she hoped. Before, I was a little worried. If I got together with Chen Gu—me, a big star, finding an 'ordinary person' from outside the entertainment circle—I worried he'd feel pressured, that he'd be attacked by my fans. But now he's a superstar too! The final barrier between us is gone!

Even superstars can be such dreamy little girls.

Zhao Ji and two others rushed over, mercilessly mauled Chen Gu's hairstyle, and then burst into laughter together. "Who would've thought that you, this idiot, would become the most famous among us?"

Bai Yunpeng, his anger visible, waved Zhao Ji and the others away and then attentively fixed Chen Gu's clothes and hairstyle. "You're a superstar now," he advised. "You have to pay attention to your personal image. Stay away from these detrimental friends in the future! They're bad for your career as a star."

Bai Xianya shook her head. The hairstyle Uncle gave him is so tacky...

She stepped forward and, with a few deft touches, substantially elevated Chen Gu's image and demeanor.

A glint of murderous intent flashed in Man Suling's eyes. Hmm?

Chen Gu looked around. That unfilial son of mine isn't here,

he thought, feeling a slight pang of disappointment. He made an exception and had a couple of drinks with Bai Yunpeng, chatted with everyone, and then excused himself to prepare for the match. Today was his first time headlining the final act.

Among the seven matches, apart from Chen Gu and Ling Tianzhi's heavyweight battle, there was also an important three-game team battle. The two clubs involved were currently ranked eleventh and thirteenth on the points table.

But the fans had little interest in such matches today, viewing them merely as an "appetizer."

Fortunately, the players from these two clubs were very skilled, and the battle was fierce. Otherwise, the arena would have seemed somewhat subdued.

The final result was that the team ranked eleventh proved to be slightly stronger, winning by a score of two to one.

As the matches progressed one by one, the final, climactic battle loomed ever closer. The cheers of the audience in the arena grew louder and louder. Outside, millions of fans watching on giant screens were even more boisterous than those inside.

「In the reserve base.」

Chu Zheng sat cross-legged on her bed. In front of her, a holographic projection showed the live broadcast of tonight's matches.

She had prepared a pile of snacks. Every time she opened a packet, she would shout, "Go, Coach!" Snacks, give me strength! Blessings for the Coach!

Everything in the base was operating normally when suddenly, a dark figure appeared in an empty corridor. He quietly made his way to a cabin entrance, pulled out a compact hacking device, and attached it to the security door.

The device began to operate, and it wasn't long before, with a HISS, the security door opened. He entered and swiftly shut down some of the base's external security systems.

The moment these security devices were deactivated, several agents, concealed by professional abilities, instantly rose from the jungle. They advanced rapidly to the base's main gate, forced it open, and stormed in.

「Back at the stadium.」

"Next up is the highly anticipated showdown!" the on-site host's voice boomed, his highly evocative language stirring the crowd's atmosphere to a fever pitch.

"Please welcome—[Justice Fist] Chen Gu!"

"Please welcome—[Son of the Sun] Ling Tianzhi!"

The two contestants made their entrance to thunderous applause, their supporters incessantly shouting their names.

Ling Tianzhi, though young, was very composed and had always presented himself in the Alliance as a "gentlemanly, scholarly, and responsible" figure.

He wouldn't provoke his opponent at the start like Sisizaro. On the contrary, he approached politely and offered Chen Gu his hand. The atmosphere before the match was quite friendly.