

## Full Time 581

### Chapter 581: Killing Two Birds with One Stone\_3

And then the filming started immediately, with the first scene being Chen Gu's. It ended up being retaken seven or eight times...

The problem was not with Chen Gu, but with those supporting actors.

Yu Mozi looked at Chen Gu with newfound respect and praised, "I didn't expect you to be such a talented actor."

Chen Gu: ???

You're the talented one; your whole family is talented! A fine director he is, how could he curse at people like that? This film emperor is clearly an idol-type actor!

Chen Gu was actually very tired too. What kind of sorry bunch are these supporting actors? Their acting is so exaggerated. Chen Gu could unapologetically say that in his previous life, even if they were just extras, they would have been berated by the director, pointing right in their faces.

The first scene barely made it through. By the second scene, Yu Mozi was about to lose it. He really hadn't expected a star player from the Behemoth Alliance to become the acting pillar of his own crew!

The rest of these people... although you all graduated from some no-name film academies and drama schools, you at least majored in acting, right? How can you be this bad?

What depressed him most was that one of them was his "junior."

Alright, our great Director Yu Mozi was also from a no-name school.

Yu Mozi was already calculating how much longer he could hold out; a little more of this, and he was prepared to throw down the clapboard and walk. But Chen Gu, the lead actor, suddenly kicked a prop aside and roared furiously, "Your acting is a pile of shit!"

"It's a complete insult to the acting profession!"

"Gao Mengjiu, get your ass over here to Daddy! If you don't replace this trash, then \*I\* am done acting!"

Chen Gu strode off, leaving everyone on set staring at each other in dismay. The so-called "actors" who had been shoehorned in by their financial backers, however, started muttering with mocking sarcasm.

"What's this nonsense? Just some celebrity, and he dares to bark in the face of capital? We'll teach him his place in minutes!"

"I'm calling my dad! We're replacing this lead actor!"

"A total set tyrant! A one hundred percent set tyrant! Where's my assistant? Call those reporters from the gossip rags immediately! I'm going to leak this!"

The set was in an uproar. Only Director Yu Mozi, who had initially looked down on Chen Gu, was now nearly moved to tears. Chen Gu's words had resonated deeply with him! For a moment, Yu Mozi even had the thought: As long as Chen Gu is in this crew, we can still keep filming.

But it was only for a moment. He knew very well that Chen Gu was taking on almost all the investors single-handedly; the outcome was self-evident.

Drawing on his many years of experience struggling in the entertainment industry, he could easily tell that even with that "pre-release promotional clip," Chen Gu's position as lead actor was likely no longer secure.

Chen Gu returned to his dressing room, with a furious Gao Mengjiu storming in after him. The moment he saw Chen Gu, Gao Mengjiu exploded, "There were so many people out there! Couldn't you have saved me some face? I'm a top agent too, you know! And you kept calling yourself 'Daddy' this and 'Daddy' that to me! Don't I have any dignity?"

Chen Gu was still fuming. "Those bums desecrated the profession!"

"Desecrated my ass!" Gao Mengjiu shot back, not holding anything back. "Those people were all pushed in by the investors! Otherwise, there'd be a funding gap of a hundred million. Are \*you\* going to cover that?"

Chen Gu paused, thought for a moment, and started to call Ding Zhou. However, before Ding Zhou could answer, he hung up and instead initiated a holographic video conference, pulling in Bai Yunpeng, Aviloya, and Ding Zhou.

Ding Zhou connected first, then Bai Yunpeng, with Aviloya being the last.

Chen Gu said apologetically, "Sorry, I know you big shots are all very busy. I wouldn't have bothered you if it wasn't necessary."

He then explained what had just happened and, before the higher-ups could start complaining, asked, "The 'kill two birds with one stone' plan we discussed before—are we still going ahead with it?"

"The set is stuffed with these connected individuals, every one of them more capable of ruining things than achieving anything. If the Digital Group really shows up, these people will undoubtedly cause casualties, possibly even jeopardizing our entire plan. Who will bear responsibility for that?"

Ken, listening on the side, was utterly confused. What 'kill two birds with one stone' plan? What Digital Group?

He had sensed from the start that there was something fishy about the Bureau of Mystic Security suddenly making a large investment for Chen Gu to shoot a movie, but his clearance level wasn't high enough to be privy to matters concerning the Digital Group.

Bai Yunpeng remained Chen Gu's staunchest supporter. Although he sensed Chen Gu might be using the situation to his advantage somewhat, he still stated, "This is indeed a problem."

"Don't worry, Chen," Bai Yunpeng assured him. "This is a very important part of our elaborate trap—our 'Net Above and Snare Below' plan—against the Digital Group. We won't let those connected individuals jeopardize the entire operation."

"However, funding is indeed tight."

For the production of this movie, the military and the Bureau of Mystic Security had indeed formulated a 'kill two birds with one stone' plan. The first objective was, naturally, the publicly stated one: the live broadcast had been too influential. To counteract this, the best option was to capitalize on the broadcast's material and shoot a film, essentially turning the live broadcast into pre-release promotion for the movie.

The second objective, secretly decided upon by Chen Gu, Bai Yunpeng, and Ding Zhou, was to 'lure the snake from its hole.'

Once the movie project was announced, the Digital Group would undoubtedly learn of it. They would never take such a thing lying down—because if the movie succeeded, it would turn their previous Purification operation into a complete joke.

Chapter 582: Killing Two Birds with One Stone\_4

One could say that this movie was essentially a blatant mockery of them.

Therefore, it was highly likely that the Digital Group would take some action against the film crew; this was a ploy to draw the snake out of its hole.

Ding Zhou said helplessly, "If we drive these people away, we won't have the money to finish this movie. We'll dispatch more capable special agents to protect you around the set..."

Chen Gu suddenly interrupted him, "I'll make up for the shortfall in funds!"

Gao Mengjiu was shocked and looked at Chen Gu, Has this kid gone mad?! Chen Gu's face was fierce, and his teeth were clenched. That's a full hundred million! He does have money now, but spending it like this is still painful.

But his professional ethics, forged across two lifetimes, wouldn't allow him to tolerate these so-called "actors." If this were his previous life and he lacked the means, encountering such a film crew, the most he could have done was quit and turn a blind eye. But now, he could afford to be "willful."

Ding Zhou fell silent; Chen Gu had rendered him speechless.

However, Ding Zhou felt very uncomfortable. Most of these investors were brought in by me, and I promised them certain benefits, such as procurement and construction contracts with the Bureau of Mystic Security. In this regard, these investors wouldn't actually lose out; they might even make a small profit. Slipping a few people in would be an extra gain. This was the benefit I hinted they could reap. In fact, it was a favor I extended to them. I have no faith in this movie. Since it's doomed to fail, what's wrong with trading a few roles for favors? Didn't you, Chen Gu, also stuff Chen Qingyu into it?

It could be said that large projects often end up this way. They might start with good intentions, but everyone involved exercises their "subjective initiative," twisting the execution to benefit themselves. Ultimately, the entire project can become unrecognizable.

But what Ding Zhou failed to understand was Chen Gu's core grievance: poor acting should be addressed through training, learning, and humbly accepting feedback. Chen Qingyu could do this, but Ding Zhou's connections couldn't. That was what Chen Gu found most intolerable.

Aviloya pondered for a moment and said, "Alright."

Then she added, "If it loses money, the one hundred million Starshield you invest can be converted into promotion resources. When it's time for your promotion, the Bureau will compensate you in installments."

Chen Gu was stunned. Why is this old woman suddenly being so "considerate" of me? His first reaction wasn't gratitude but wariness.

There's a conspiracy! I must be careful! There's no such thing as unmotivated kindness in this world...

Seeing his expression, Aviloya's temper flared. "Chen Gu, you seem very reluctant. If you are, then forget it; the Bureau won't force you."

"N-no, I'm not reluctant," Chen Gu hurriedly said. Whatever plots and schemes there might be, at least the one hundred million Starshield has the Bureau's backing; it won't be a complete loss.

"HMPH!" Aviloya snorted and abruptly ended the conference call.

Chen Gu pondered for a moment, then a grin spread across his face. At least for now, I have the Director-General "backing" me!

He patted Gao Mengjiu on the shoulder. "Come on, let's go with Dad and kick that trash to the curb!"

Gao Mengjiu slapped him hard on the shoulder. "Are you crazy? That's a hundred million!"

Chen Gu chuckled. "Are you saying you have no confidence in Dad's acting skills?"

"Nonsense! Of course, I don't!"

Chen Gu: "..."

As the two of them headed out, Director Yu Mozi was packing his things. Chen Gu is the only reason I'm even remotely attached to this crew. If Chen Gu leaves, there's really no point in me staying.

But when Chen Gu came out, he pointed assertively at the hangers-on. "All of you, get out!"

"What?!" The hangers-on erupted, one after another spitting out threats, "You just wait!"

"You're impossibly arrogant!"

"There are too many of us; you can't afford to offend us all!"

Chen Gu also flared up. "I'll be waiting right here! Whatever revenge you've got, bring it on!"

The hangers-on grumbled as they left. However, one young man remained standing to the side. Once things calmed down, he cautiously approached. "Brother Chen, my name is Mao Yuanhui. I love acting, and I'd like to learn from you, if that's okay. Please don't send me away; I'm not troublesome like they are."

Chen Gu was somewhat surprised. He looked at Yu Mozi. "Director, how about giving him an audition?"

"Alright." Yu Mozi didn't have high hopes, but the kid has a good attitude. After being tormented by those hangers-on all day, I'm willing to give a sensible one like this a chance.

...

Outside the film studio, three surveillance sniper teams were positioned on three vantage points, concealed by optical camouflage devices.

The core snipers were three Guardians of Oath: Dora, Shang Qingye, and another Bureau of Mystic Security special agent, Qin Zhe.

Qin Zhe, the most experienced among them, was the first to spot something. He reported through the communication channel, "Nine o'clock. Yong'an Road, under the third streetlight. Subject in a white trench coat."

Chen Jixian, the commander behind the scenes, immediately ordered, "Action team, send someone to investigate."

Chapter 583: Exposure

"Captain," Shang Qingye's voice resonated within the channel. "No need to go; that's Bai Yunjing."

There was silence on the communication channel, as no one knew who Bai Yunjing was. Qin Zhe, adopting the stance of a seasoned veteran toward Shang Qingye, who had just been recruited into the Bureau of Mystic Security, said, "No matter who he is, in this weather, wearing a trench coat and sunglasses, he's obviously trying to hide his movements—that's very suspicious..."

Shang Qingye could only explain, "He stars in the recent popular drama, 'Love Above the Clouds.' But I don't think his getup is for hiding his movements—as you said, wearing a trench coat and sunglasses in this weather stands out too much. He's just recently become famous and is deliberately dressing this way. It might \*seem\* like he's trying to hide his movements, but I actually think he wants to attract paparazzi attention to increase his exposure..."

Meanwhile, the action team had already been dispatched. Before they could reach the man in the white trench coat, a few maglev motorcycles suddenly rushed in from a side street, one executing a drift stop right in front of him. Various pieces of camera equipment were already rolling, and then, before the man in the white trench coat could react, they swiftly sped away.

Chen Jixian rarely praised anyone in public. However, seeing that Shang Qingye, a newcomer, possessed such insight and analytical ability, he couldn't help but raise an eyebrow slightly and utter, "Not bad."

Qin Rui felt a bit embarrassed but kept silent.

Chen Gu's voice arose in the communication channel, "You must be patient. The Digital Group is well hidden and won't expose themselves so easily."

Then, Chen Gu added, "Send a team to keep an eye on Bai Yunjing!"

Shang Qingye was taken aback, and Chen Gu explained further, "When dealing with an organization of the Digital Group's caliber, we can't overlook any hint of suspicion."

"I've just checked. Bai Yunjing wasn't scheduled for filming today. His presence here is very likely just to increase his exposure, but as long as there's even a tiny bit of suspicion, we can't let it go."

"This is our only advantage against the Digital Group: we have strength in numbers!"

Everyone laughed at his words. Although Chen Jixian, their leader, was reluctant, he didn't show it on his face and still assigned the same team to covertly follow Bai Yunjing.

...

While a false alarm played out outside the film set, inside, Mao Yuanhui's performance brightened both Yu Mozi's and Chen Gu's eyes.

It wasn't that Mao Yuanhui was a genius actor. Rather, it was because the performances of those who had gotten in through connections had been so painfully bad. So, when someone young but with a normal level of acting ability suddenly appeared, it was hard not to feel a sense of "relief."

Yu Mozi checked Mao Yuanhui's records and couldn't help raising an eyebrow, smiling. "So he's a graduate from the Central Academy of Drama. No wonder he's at this level."

This school was one of the top three film academies in the Confederation, a place Yu Mozi had longed for but could never reach.

Mao Yuanhui said sheepishly, "My dad donated a building to the school and sponsored the graduation projects of an entire class. That's how I got in."

His honesty brought a smile to Chen Gu's and Yu Mozi's faces, while the other crew members stared at him with stars in their eyes. Oh, the envy of having a wealthy father, how wonderful!

"Alright, let's call it a day," Yu Mozi said. "Chen Gu, let's discuss which actors to invite to reassemble the cast."

Chen Gu waved his hand. "Director, you handle it. I'm not familiar with this circle."

This circle, in this world, I am not familiar with.

Yu Mozi paused. "But you're a major investor..."

Chen Gu joked, "I brought a connection myself." He pointed at Chen Qingyu, who adorably came to Chen Gu's side and said softly, "Grandpa has got my back."

Before Yu Mozi could think of which actors to approach, Gao Mengjiu's phone rang. Man Suling's highly recognizable voice came through, "I heard that Chen Gu unleashed his domineering aura and sent all those connections packing? Teehee, that's my idol, so radiant with every move! Mhm mhm mhm, so now are you short on actors? I can perform, no salary required, a free cameo—the kind where I play the female lead from start to finish. But I have one request, eh? There have to be more than six kissing scenes with the male lead, no body doubles!"

Gao Mengjiu hurriedly ended the call. The future diva's voice had such a penetrating quality that even without the speakerphone on, those nearby, including Director Yu Mozi, heard it.

His eyes lit up. "Is that really what she said..."

Chen Gu glowered at him. "Really my ass! No deal! I hold fifty percent of the investment in the film; I have the final say!"

Yu Mozi pleaded earnestly, "If Man Suling is willing to play the lead actress, your fans and hers will guarantee a good box office. At least we won't lose money..."

"No!"

Chen Gu sternly refused and walked away with a scowl.

But the thought was indeed tempting: it was an investment of a whole hundred million, after all. If he could ensure we broke even, what was wrong with sacrificing a bit of his image? It wasn't unacceptable. Six kissing scenes for a hundred million—that's almost twenty million per kiss. At that rate, his own worth... would he be the Confederation's top male escort?

Chen Gu quickly shook his head, trying to discard these terrifying thoughts.

After stepping out, he spoke with Chen Jixian. "Is there a problem with Bai Yunjing?"

"At least, nothing has been found yet."

Gong Shuxu also joined the conversation. "Chen Gu, you need to find a way to increase the film's exposure. The bigger the hype, the more ashamed the Digital Group will feel, prompting them to make a move."

Chen Gu thought for a moment and reluctantly said, "Alright."

Old Man Gong Shuxu just had to say the words; he made it sound so easy. How do you increase a film's exposure? It all comes down to spending money.

Without paying for promotional articles or hiring internet skills to create buzz, how could you get any exposure?

But the entire investment was only two hundred million Starshields, and the budget for early promotion was zero. Everyone had originally thought that with the livestream providing a foundation, there would be nothing to worry about.

After Chen Gu ended the call, he couldn't help but let out a long sigh, looking up at the sky. For a moment, he was utterly bewildered: How did this whole affair become so convoluted?

No, I need to think this through carefully...

At first, it was to counter the influence of the livestream. The military and the Bureau of Mystic Security—represented by Ding Zhou at the time—wanted me to make a movie.

They didn't know that in my past life I was a Best Actor... Okay, I'm talking to myself now, no need for self-deception. A small-time actor—but at least the king of extras, right?

To persuade me to participate, they tempted me with a five-hundred-million-Starshield mega-production.

I'm afraid Ding Zhou had already decided back then that the 'five-hundred-million mega-production' title was just to coax me, right?

Hmm... wait a second. Then who was the genius who came up with the plan to 'lure the snake out of its hole' and 'kill two birds with one stone'? Using this blockbuster to draw out the Digital Group, making them attack the film crew, then grabbing their tail to trace them back and take down the entire Digital Group?

It seems... it was me?!

And it seems the person in charge at the Bureau of Mystic Security back then wasn't Ding Zhou anymore; it had switched back to Aviloya?

Oh my god! No wonder that woman's eyes were filled with such encouragement and delight when I proposed this plan!

...So, I basically tied a noose and put it around my own neck?

Because of my professional integrity, I couldn't stomach the garbage Ding Zhou tried to force into the film, so I took on half of the investment myself. If the movie project fails, I'll lose a hundred million?

Although the Bureau of Mystic Security was there with career advancement resources as a safety net, a loss is still a loss.

And for me, a Best Actor... alright, the king of extras, to have my very first work in this life flop... Doesn't the king of extras have any pride?

Chen Gu sighed and realized that the two threads he had summarized actually converged:

The first thread: to provoke the Digital Group into action, they needed to increase the movie's early exposure.

The second thread: to avoid taking a loss, all kinds of promotional work had to keep up, which also meant increasing exposure.

Now, a golden opportunity was right in front of me: the young diva who came with her own massive following... but it required me to sacrifice my dignity.

Chen Gu let out a long sigh, looking up at the sky. This is definitely not because I think that little she-wolf has fame and beauty, and that I wouldn't be at a loss if something happened between us. I'm a man of principle! This is purely... purely because life compels me!

...

After an intense negotiation lasting precisely... three minutes and forty-seven seconds, Man Suling, the singing sensation and rapidly rising star, decided to join the cast of "Glory of the Warrior." She would take the lead actress role, pairing up with Chen Gu, the new star of the Behemoth Alliance, as an onscreen couple, cruelly preparing to shower the public with their affection.

Once this news was announced, it indeed significantly increased the movie's exposure. Heated discussions erupted among fans of both stars, quickly spreading to music fans and the entire fanbase of the Behemoth Alliance.

Number 21, on the Interstellar Quantum Network, "witnessed" far too much discussion about this movie and its so-called "pre-promotional trailer." Even though he had already transformed into a special, eternally-living entity on the network, he was still so angry his code practically glowed red!

He also unhesitatingly forwarded various "infuriating" online comments to the inbox of every "Digital."

He didn't need to fan the flames; these comments were enough to make any "Digital" explode on the spot.

Soon, a new chatroom was established. Protected by Number 21, it ensured their absolute safety on the Interstellar Quantum Network, allowing them to speak their minds freely.

"Creator 0, we must not let this movie be released! If it is, I'd rather disembowel myself!"

"This is an outright mockery of us! Our plan failed, but the Bureau of Mystic Security didn't achieve a true victory either. They can't find us. This round can, at best, be called a draw. How dare the Bureau of Mystic Security make a movie about this and arbitrarily alter the final outcome?"

"Let me go! I'll level the entire film set!"

Creator 0 finally appeared. "Shut up, all of you!"

"All of you, think calmly, and you'll understand that this is likely a trap."

"Besides, even if the movie is really released, so what? Aside from the Bureau of Mystic Security and us, who else would know it's mocking us?"

"Since no one else knows, what harm does it do us?"

"Let the Bureau of Mystic Security indulge in their fantasies. We won the first round, the second was a draw, so we're still in the lead. And in the third round, we'll win again!"

The chatroom gradually quieted. Creator 0's words made sense; they had merely been blinded by anger. Once they calmed down a little, they could see that there was likely some conspiracy hidden behind this movie.

But within the following twelve hours, the crew of "Glory of the Warrior" announced the movie's main villain: Zero!

And they also announced subsequent projects, including the development of a major game based on the movie's plot, where the ultimate boss would be the film's main villain, "Zero."

During an interview, Chen Gu, the movie's star, smiled at the camera and said, "Please trust me, once the movie and the game are released, the fans' daily routine will become 'eat, sleep, beat Zero,' HAHA!"

The Digital Group lost it! They couldn't take it anymore!

Chapter 584: Octoped Specter

"Number 21."

"What's up?"

"I have a plan."

After Number 21 reviewed the plan, he rejected it. "Zero has already ordered us not to walk into a trap."

"Zero is our God! Our God sits high above and may not care about some upstart's audacity. However, the followers of our God will not tolerate any desecration! To maintain the dignity of our God, some sacrifices are worth it!" the other person argued fervently.

Number 21 fell silent for half a second before swiftly altering the plan. "To uphold the glory of our God! It's not yet certain who the prey is and who the hunter is."

"Excellent, assist me!"

"Of course."

During this period, every time Chen Gu won a competition, he seized the opportunity to promote his movie.

In the Beast League, he advanced triumphantly. However, because he had missed several matches, his point total was lower, and he was currently ranked third. But all his fans believed that once Chen Gu completed the missed matches, he would immediately return to the top of the leaderboard.

Director Yu Mozi's casting was proceeding smoothly. After Man Suling joined, many fans on the Interstellar Network began speculating about the two of them as a couple—which was certainly good for promoting the movie, though Chen Gu always suspected Man Suling herself was fueling the speculation behind the scenes.

Those whom Chen Gu had sent packing weren't going to give up so easily. Their families also tried through various channels to apply pressure to the film crew and Chen Gu.

For instance, many approached Ding Zhou.

Ding Zhou showed respect for and deference to Aviloya's decision. However, the incident also made Ding Zhou, who previously had little ambition for power, feel a sting of "humiliation." Even though he was the highest-ranking deputy director, a mere special agent could overturn his decision on Aviloya's word alone!

Something quietly took root in Ding Zhou's heart. Whether it would flourish and grow strong in time remained to be seen.

Others, using the power they wielded, covertly investigated Chen Gu's background, only to realize they had hit a steel plate. They swiftly retracted their encroaching hands.

If they hadn't, those hands would surely have been cut off.

The Principal, Bai Yunpeng, the Qiao Family, the Shangguan Family, and even the Shang Family all turned out to have close ties to him. These behemoths, upon noticing someone prying into Chen Gu's affairs, quickly and unanimously released a message: "Chen Gu is our close partner! To move against him is to make an enemy of us! You should carefully consider your own strength."

Not long after, the inside story of the An Family's downfall was also unearthed. Though the details were vague, it was known that their utter annihilation was at the hands of a high Energy Level powerhouse acting on Chen Gu's behalf.

These individuals became even more terrified, hastily instructing their children not to provoke that little demon. Some who didn't listen were severely disciplined by their families.

Mao Yuanhui's family had also learned of these developments.

The entire family was beaming with joy. Mao Yuanhui's father had always felt his son wasn't pursuing a proper career. Mao Yuanhui was his youngest son, with an older brother and two older sisters, and was pampered by the whole family, especially his two sisters. His father had hoped his youngest son would venture out and start his own business, offering his full support, but the son was set on becoming an actor. Although he had paid a hefty sum for his son to study acting, he deeply disapproved in his heart. Even in this era, in the eyes of these genuine magnates, actors were still considered "players"—a derogatory term.

Yet, the gap between "magnates" like the Mao family and the true "aristocratic families" or "powerful elite" was as vast as the gap they perceived between themselves and actors.

But unexpectedly, his son had latched onto Chen Gu's coattails!

Old Master Mao immediately handed his son a card. "Go talk to Chen Gu tomorrow. The Mao family is willing to increase our investment. There's forty million here, plus the ten million we originally invested. We can give it all to him."

Mao Yuanhui was taken aback. "Dad, this movie might flop..."

"Short-sighted!" Old Master Mao waved his hand dismissively. "Go tomorrow and tell him! You must do your utmost to get this done, to show Mr. Chen Gu the Mao family's unwavering support!"

Mao Yuanhui, still puzzled, conveyed the offer to Chen Gu the next day, only to be unexpectedly and firmly refused.

This left Mao Yuanhui even more baffled. Who would turn down free money?

When he returned home and gave the bank card back to his father, Old Master Mao sighed to himself. Indeed, latching onto such a powerful connection isn't easy; they clearly look down on us.

Feeling somewhat dejected, he patted his youngest son's shoulder. "From now on, get along well with Mr. Chen Gu. Treat him as your own elder brother."

"Okay."

The team surveilling Bai Yunjing had been recalled. After several days of covert observation, the Bureau of Mystic Security had investigated Bai Yunjing thoroughly, from top to bottom, and confirmed he was not a suspect.

The Special Actions Squad held a meeting.

"Do you think the Digital Group will actually hold back and not make a move against the film crew?"

"That's certainly a possibility," Chen Gu said thoughtfully. "We also need to be wary of them creating a diversion and attacking a different target instead."

Gong Shuxu nodded. "I'll communicate this with Headquarters. We can't afford to lower our guard in other areas either."

Chapter 585: Octoped Specter\_2

"Everyone hold on a bit longer," Chen Gu summarized. "People from the Digital Group are extremely crazy and highly self-confident. I always feel that faced with such humiliation, they wouldn't endure it in silence."

Mao Yisheng struggled to finish his training for the day. He was still in the developmental stage of this season's league. He'd only had four opportunities to play, achieving two wins and two losses—a passable performance. It wasn't outstanding, but he was still considered worth cultivating.

However, the club's results this season had not skyrocketed as everyone anticipated.

The wealthy heir invested a hefty sum of money. However, the performances of the two star players signed for exorbitant prices, "Thunder" Meng Guangzhi and "Storm" Kostia, were disappointing. Their form had noticeably declined compared to the previous season. This was especially true for Kostia. His win rate barely hovered around 60%, and he was gradually losing his star player aura.

Mao Yisheng also found it frustrating. Despite the two star players' obviously poor form and the presence of several other strong players in the club, he hadn't received many opportunities.

After Battle Fire Club moved to Capital Star, the wealthy heir purchased a plot of land and was in the process of building a brand-new training base.

It was expected to be completed by the end of the season. Until then, they rented a training facility that seemed a bit cramped. Kostia had not yet left when Mao Yisheng departed.

The star player was also working hard, but the rigorous training didn't seem to bring much improvement to his form.

Everyone in the club knew Kostia was under immense pressure.

Kostia was the last to leave the training grounds, not until nine o'clock in the evening. He drove his luxury car back home.

It was a mansion he had recently purchased on Capital Star, with a total price of seventy million Starshield! Even though he had just signed a major contract, affording such a residence was still a financial strain for him.

His wife was at home playing with their four children. Seeing him return, she warmly greeted him with a passionate kiss. They had a good relationship. His wife wrapped her arms around his waist and asked, "Have you had dinner yet, dear? I can make you something."

Kostia shook his head. "I ate at the club. How was your day?"

"The kids have been very well-behaved," his wife smiled happily, then suddenly remembered. "Oh, by the way, a man named Fertos called this afternoon. He asked you to call him back, saying he has something very important."

Kostia remained outwardly calm. "Oh, I see. I'm going to take a bath upstairs. You play with the kids."

"Okay."

Once upstairs, Kostia's face suddenly turned ashen. He entered the bathroom, turned on the shower, and using the sound of the water as cover, dialed a number he hadn't contacted in a long time.

"What do you want from me!" Kostia growled. "We're even! We're even—do you remember what I told you last time? And you still dare to call my home! Don't push me too far, or I swear, you'll regret it!"

Fertos, on the other end of the line, sounded very calm, his tone lazy. "Don't be so tense, my brother. You never answer your phone when I call, so I had to try your home number. Relax, I'm not after your money this time. I've got something good for you. I'm on Capital Star now. Come out and meet me; we'll talk face to face. It's genuinely a good thing."

"You're on Capital Star?" Kostia was instantly on alert.

His past was very dark. He had lost his father at a young age, and his mother was chronically ill. As a teenager with no other options, he joined a local gang, and Fertos was his boss.

During his first few years as a Behemoth Alliance player, he hadn't thought much about his past connections. But as he became more successful and gradually developed into a star player, he began trying to rid himself of Fertos's control.

Most of his income from the early part of his career went to the gang, as "repayment" for the gang's help back then.

This was something he dared not let anyone know, not even his current wife.

It was only after joining Battle Fire Club that he used his signing bonus and advance salary to pay Fertos a large sum of money. Fertos had agreed at the time that they would be "even," and he wouldn't bother him anymore. But just a few months later, Fertos was hounding him again.

But Fertos knew his home phone number. This clearly meant he also knew where Kostia lived. With Fertos on Capital Star, refusing to meet him would undoubtedly put his family at risk.

"Fine!" Kostia agreed through gritted teeth. He then put on his jacket, said a quick word to his wife, and dashed out the door.

A little over ten minutes later, he met the gang boss, Fertos, in a hotel near his house.

"Don't be nervous," Fertos said, opening his arms. "This time, it's something that will benefit you. Come, let me introduce you. This is Mr. Fu Qianping. I'm just a middleman. Mr. Fu is the one who wants to speak with you, so you two can talk it over."

After saying that, Fertos actually excused himself and left the room.

Kostia was filled with doubt as he looked at Fu Qianping, a gentleman of about fifty, dressed in a three-piece suit.

"Hello," Fu Qianping said with a slight smile. "Let's get straight to the point. I'm here to help you."

"I know your current situation is difficult, and your performance on the field isn't meeting expectations."

Kostia snorted. "You want me to throw a match? Impossible!"

Fu Qianping shook his head. "You underestimate me. We've carefully analyzed your matches. We believe your personal skill hasn't declined, but your behemoth... it has reached its limit."

Chapter 586: Octoped Specter\_3

This situation is very common in the Behemoth Alliance. The behemoths genuinely fight, and each battle results in injuries. Although they receive excellent treatment afterward, once decline sets in, it's steep and abrupt.

The understanding between a player and their behemoth takes years to develop. While it's not impossible to switch behemoths, building a new rapport is a lengthy process.

"We can help you enhance both your behemoth's strength and your own," Fu Qianping said.

Kostia was disbelieving. "This is a problem for the whole Star Sea. If it could be solved, someone would have done it by now."

Fu Qianping took out a sealed metal briefcase. "I own a very special biological science lab. This is our latest achievement; it has undergone dozens of live trials, and the effect is absolutely reliable."

"The bigger dose is for the behemoth, and the smaller one is for you."

"After use, I guarantee that you and your behemoth will see a significant increase in strength. You might even become the strongest combination in the entire Alliance!"

Kostia frowned, still doubtful. Fu Qianping continued, "Do you have a better option? In your current state, that rich kid Ken will definitely abandon you next season."

Kostia asked, "Why choose me?"

Fu Qianping smiled slightly. "Of course it's about money. Have you forgotten who your next opponent is?"

"Chen Gu?"

"He's the most popular individual player right now, undefeated since joining the Behemoth Alliance. If you use our potion and beat Chen Gu, our product will make a spectacular entrance."

Fu Qianping spread his hands. "You get it now, right?"

Kostia took the briefcase. "I'll think about it."

"You don't have much time. If you don't use the potion before the match, you'll miss your chance. We will send someone to retrieve the potion, and then we'll sponsor Chen Gu's next opponent instead."

Kostia nodded, carrying the briefcase as he left.

Fertos walked in with a grin. "So, who should I bet on to win the next match?"

Fu Qianping said indifferently, "As long as you ensure Kostia uses our potion, you can bet on him winning with confidence."

Fertos raised his eyebrows. He knew the extent of Fu Qianping's capabilities. Otherwise, a powerful gang leader like himself wouldn't have traveled all the way to Capital Star just to act as a "middleman."

"Chen Gu is in the limelight, having never lost since joining the Behemoth Alliance. Kostia, on the other hand, has significantly declined this season. It's virtually impossible for him to beat Chen Gu, so the odds for Kostia to win in the next match's betting pool are astonishingly high."

Fertos nodded thoughtfully, then smiled cruelly. "Don't worry. I know Kostia well—he's my brother! I'll find a way to persuade him to use those potions!"

「...」

Two days before the next match, Kostia locked the briefcase in his car's safe. He didn't plan to use the contents. He just wanted to placate the other party and prevent them from harming his family.

But after getting home, he still felt uneasy. He immediately discussed taking the kids on a trip with his wife. He booked starship tickets for them that very night and sent them off on a spacecraft early the next morning.

As a result, he was late for club training that day. However, he made up for it by practicing three extra hours that evening, not leaving until half past nine.

However, he didn't head straight home. Instead, he visited a legal weapons store and spent a hefty sum on the most powerful energy pistol he could legally own.

When he got home, he received an email from his wife with holographic photos of her and the kids enjoying their day out. In one of them, they stood on a beach, laughing happily, with a dark-skinned man standing behind them, coldly watching the camera.

Kostia went cold all over. He recognized the man as one of Fertos's "brothers"—ruthless and often tasked by Fertos with handling "disobedient" people.

「...」

Chen Gu was woken up in the middle of the night by Dora. Big Rabbit was yelling excitedly on the phone, "They're here, they're here! They've come!"

Chen Gu was groggy. He had been filming all day and, despite feeling more fulfilled than ever in this era, he was also very tired. So, after taking a bath, he had gone straight to sleep.

He checked the time. It was two in the morning. "What's here?"

"Freelance mercenaries!" Dora said. "I just received news that someone posted a recruitment notice; they need a total of six top-tier teams for a mission within the Confederation!"

Chen Gu instantly became alert. "They want to use mercenaries?"

Then he added, "They're really considering using mercenaries?"

Big Rabbit was not pleased. "Hey, what's that supposed to mean? Are you looking down on mercenaries?" I'm a mercenary myself, you know! Mercenaries are very powerful, okay? Like me, for example!

Chen Gu quickly explained, "That's not what I meant. Even the highest-level freelance mercenaries are only at the Third Energy Level. What use could they possibly be? The Digital Group should be well aware of the Bureau of Mystic Security's strength. These mercenaries might just be a smokescreen."

Big Rabbit looked confused. The analysis seemed to make sense. So, what should we do next? Just ignore them?

Chen Gu pondered for a moment, then said, "You handle the mercenary situation."

Chapter 587: Octoped Specter\_4

"Me?" Big Rabbit was on the other end of the phone, fidgeting with her fingers; she didn't have much confidence in herself.

The next morning, the members of the Special Operations Team held another meeting. After some thought, Chen Jixian ultimately agreed to Chen Gu's plan but assigned Dora a deputy—an experienced special agent, as Dora was familiar with mercenary tactics.

After another day of filming, Chen Gu requested a half-day leave. He was scheduled to participate in the Giant Beast League the following evening.

Following previous practice, several key actors from the crew would attend Chen Gu's match in person. Man Suling, in particular, attended every match without fail—this was all part of Gao Mengjiu's plan to continuously boost the film's exposure.

To this end, he was willing to pay any price, even if it meant potentially throwing his "beloved daughter" Man Suling into the lion's den.

The rest of the cast couldn't rest and went on to film their own scenes.

Before the match, Chen Gu met with Mao Yisheng, who joked, "I'm here to plead on Kostia's behalf. Go easy on him in the match tonight. Just winning is enough; don't make our club lose too much face."

Chen Gu also laughed. "Nonsense. The worse he beats me, the happier you'll be. Only when the star players step down will you get your chance to shine."

Mao Yisheng's spirits immediately sagged. "Even if Kostia steps down, I still won't get a chance. There are several others ahead of me."

Chen Gu said, "If it really doesn't work out, just consider transferring next season."

"We'll see when the time comes." Mao Yisheng wasn't in the mood to discuss it. The two shared a coffee before parting ways to prepare for their respective matches, though it was highly unlikely Mao Yisheng would get to compete that evening.

However, as a newcomer, he needed to be ready at all times. If an opportunity to play arose, he had to seize it; otherwise, his chances of making a name for himself would be even slimmer.

He returned to his club's lounge but didn't see Kostia. He grabbed a staff member and asked, "Where's 'Tempest'?"

"He went to have a pre-match communication with his Giant Beast."

"So early?" Mao Yisheng muttered to himself but didn't dwell on it. Kostia had been under a lot of pressure lately.

Kostia's Giant Beast was an "Octoped Specter," possessing eight massive claws. It attacked with extreme speed and formidable power, like a sudden, violent storm.

He and this Giant Beast had been partners for ten years. In the early years, due to his lack of strength, the Octoped Specter often suffered severe injuries. This year, they had finally reached a "limit."

At this moment, in the dimly lit beast cage, Kostia sat cross-legged on the ground. The Giant Beast lay quietly beside him, as gentle as a large golden retriever.

In front of Kostia was a small holographic projection displaying his wife and children.

After a long pause, he finally rose silently and opened the metal briefcase. Inside were two vials, one large and one small.

He picked up the larger vial and injected it into the Giant Beast first. After waiting a moment, the Giant Beast suddenly began to writhe. Its already massive, hundred-meter body started to swell even further!

Blocks of powerful muscle bulged like boulders, and bone spurs grew out from its joints. The Giant Beast's massive jaws suddenly split open to behind its ears, its menacing fangs growing ever longer!

Kostia stepped back, watching the scene before him with a mixture of shock and uncertainty. Could everything Fu Qianping said be true?

The process continued for several minutes. Throughout, the Giant Beast roared ferociously. The staff outside, unaware of what was happening, knocked on the door and shouted inquiries. Kostia immediately responded over the comm channel, "It's nothing. I'm just trying out a new attack pattern."

Once the Giant Beast calmed down, Kostia examined his partner with delighted surprise. He quickly confirmed that the Giant Beast had fully recovered its peak physical condition, and its overall strength had surged, becoming several times greater than before!

His eyes burning with eagerness, he reached into the briefcase for the other vial and slowly injected it into his own body.

「...」

The broadcast cameras repeatedly focused on several famous actors in the front row of the audience, all gathered around Man Suling, the most well-known among them.

This had been arranged between Chen Gu and the Alliance to give the actors more screen time and increase the movie's visibility.

After the host announced the competitors, Kostia was the first to enter. Escorted by his Giant Beast, he walked out amidst the cheers of his many loyal fans.

Chen Gu, still in his tunnel, suddenly felt a sense of "danger"!

Gasps of astonishment rippled through the crowd. The Giant Beast was even more powerful than before—yet, it was still unmistakably recognizable as the same "Octoped Specter"!

"Kostia has genetically modified his own Giant Beast!" the host exclaimed in disbelief.

Chapter 588: A Two-Pronged Approach

Genetic modification of an adult organism is not just exceptionally expensive and difficult to afford, but also carries a huge risk of genetic chain collapse.

Yet, if successful, the effects can be quite extraordinary, much like the Octoped Specter now.

As the Octoped Specter gradually stepped into the arena, its massive form, over one hundred and fifty meters long, came into view. Muscles like solid rock covered its frame, with viciously jagged bone spurs protruding all over. Its terrifying maw and fangs served as a stark reminder to everyone: this Octoped Specter was completely different from before. It now possessed the absolute strength to contend for the title of the Behemoth Alliance's number one behemoth!

The entire audience rose to their feet, cheering. Among them were many of Chen Gu's fans. After all, they had seen Combat Rooster effortlessly annihilate opponents in too many matches, and the spectacle had gradually grown predictable.

A match against a worthy opponent was what Chen Gu and Combat Rooster deserved now.

Fertos and Fu Qianping sat together in front of the television. Fu Qianping maintained his usual demeanor of an old gentleman. Fertos, on the other hand, was much more casual; with arms spread wide and legs crossed, he monopolized an entire large sofa.

Seeing the Octoped Specter enter, he cracked a smile and said to Fu Qianping, "Look, I told you he'd use it—I know my brother very well, hahaha!"

In the arena, Kostia finally showed up. His attire was different from before as well, with some mysterious "totems" painted on his face and neck with black pigment.

This made him appear even more "dark," "ferocious," and "terrifying," and the younger audience loved it, triggering even more cheers.

He hooked his pinky finger in a contemptuous, provocative gesture toward the direction of Chen Gu's tunnel.

Chen Gu frowned. The moment Kostia appeared, the sense of "threat" in his heart intensified.

Logically, the considerably larger Octoped Specter should be the greatest threat... What was the secret here? Chen Gu grew more cautious. Then, he made his entrance with Combat Rooster.

The duel finally began. Chen Gu still let Combat Rooster fight on its own while he discreetly observed their opponent.

Combat Rooster initiated with a "Behemothic Martial Skill," but it was unexpectedly and immediately overpowered. The Octoped Specter's strength was simply too formidable. It allowed Combat Rooster's claws to scratch it from unimaginable angles, yet its hard exoskeleton easily withstood these blows. Then, four of its spectral legs continuously thrust toward Combat Rooster.

THUD, THUD, THUD...

A succession of dull thuds rained down as Combat Rooster's head took repeated heavy blows, forcing it to retreat continuously. It attempted a counterattack midway, but the Octoped Specter easily blocked two successive strikes. The specter then pressed its assault, leaving Combat Rooster dazed and disoriented.

Just as the audience had anticipated before the match, Combat Rooster was being suppressed for the first time since entering the Behemoth Alliance.

Viewership skyrocketed, and the Alliance's executives were all grinning from ear to ear.

Combat Rooster was now cornered at the edge of the arena. The Octoped Specter pressed its attack, increasing its attacking spectral legs to six, leaving only two to support its own body.

Combat Rooster was already staggering, with various electric sparks sputtering from its body.

Cornered, Combat Rooster could only mount a weak defense. Its opponent's gigantic spectral legs smashed down again and again. Combat Rooster seemed doomed.

Although its opponent was a biological type, it was a full half larger than Combat Rooster.

The crowd's cheers intensified, especially from Kostia's loyal fans. Kostia hadn't been doing well this season. A victory today would mark a strong comeback, especially since his opponents were Chen Gu and Combat Rooster—currently the most talked-about figures in the Behemoth Alliance!

Chen Gu still wasn't focused on the fight itself. He continued to use his psychic sense to monitor Kostia, who was across from him.

On the arena floor, two of the Octoped Specter's spectral legs slammed down heavily. At last, Combat Rooster could no longer hold on and collapsed to its knees with a THUD.

The Octoped Specter let out a terrifying roar to the heavens. Then, a thick spectral leg rose from its back like a scorpion's tail, arcing over its own head and aiming at Combat Rooster's head.

In the middle of this spectral leg, the bone armor suddenly split open, revealing a sharp serrated bone blade!

Excitement surged among the audience, as such a spectacle had not been seen in a long time. This was Kostia's finishing move, "Heavenly Execution"!

The spectral leg pulled back a bit, then accelerated suddenly, stabbing towards Combat Rooster's head.

Combat Rooster shook its head, growing irritated. Just because this rooster hasn't shown its might, you take me for a little chick?

It jerked its head up sharply, emitting a loud crow. Simultaneously, a pillar of dark-red pulsed energy blasted from its mouth, accurately striking the Octoped Specter's chest.

After using that mysterious potion, the Octoped Specter's body had undergone earth-shattering changes, with thick exoskeletons covering its vital areas, including its chest.

However, this armor-like exoskeleton melted and burned through in an instant under the energy pulse. A moment later, the beam of energy burst through the Octoped Specter's body, shooting out from its back!

WHIZZ—

The energy pulse slammed into the arena's energy shield, causing it to tremble violently. Massive Energy Halos rippled outwards. The sixteen generators maintaining the shield suddenly emitted plumes of blue smoke, looking as if they could fail at any moment.

## Chapter 589 A Two-Pronged Approach\_2

"This is bad!" the site manager and the head of the security team exclaimed together, breaking into a run toward the arena. But it was already too late. As soon as they moved, a loud bang came from the direction of the arena.

**BOOM!**

The energy shield couldn't hold up and shattered instantly.

All sixteen high-power energy generators combusted at once.

The force of the energy pulses spewed forth had not yet been exhausted and continued upward at an angle, burning a transparent hole through the high roof of the stadium in an instant, revealing the starry sky outside!

The Octoped Specter's "Heavenly Execution" just froze above its own head.

Within the Immeasurable Stadium, the cheer that had been as loud as thunder was now replaced by silence so deep you could hear a pin drop.

The Combat Rooster staggered, then triumphantly stood up, flicked out a sharp claw, and pressed it against the forehead of the Octoped Specter, giving it a light push.

RUMBLE...

The immense Octoped Specter toppled down. Only then did the audience come back to their senses, erupting in cheers as explosive as the previous blast. Countless spectators excitedly pumped their fists.

Only those spectators located beneath the transparent hole in the roof were feeling trepidatious, looking up to judge whether the roof might collapse.

The Combat Rooster strutted proudly around the ring, responding to the cheers with waves of its claw. The damned bird was nearly beside itself with arrogance.

But Chen Gu's sense of impending danger surged alarmingly. He stepped out of his link device, crossed the arena, and headed straight for the opposite side.

The Combat Rooster looked perplexedly at its master as Chen Gu had just reached Kostia's link device when suddenly there was a loud bang, accompanied by a violent gust of wind. Caught off guard, Chen Gu was blown back and slammed heavily against the wall of the arena.

CRACK—

Dense cracks appeared on the wall.

The audience gasped, uncertain of what had occurred in the arena.

Why did the battle continue even though the beast had clearly died? And how could Kostia's intervention be more terrifying than the beast itself? Chen Gu was blown away?

SQUEAK, CREAK, CREAK...

Out of Kostia's link device came a series of ear-grating metallic twisting sounds. Then, the thick alloy doors of the link device were twisted into a lump like paper by some force!

Kostia emerged from inside, but by now, he had completely transformed from his previous state.

The "oil-painted" totems on his face and neck were continuously spreading a black energy smoke into the air.

His body had grown many vile and nauseating extra tissues, just like the Octoped Specter.

Not only that, Kostia opened his mouth wide and easily chewed up the twisted alloy door in his hand and swallowed it.

The "consumption" had an immediate and noticeable effect; Kostia's body surface quickly took on a metallic sheen—the alloy door was rapidly absorbed, growing on his body surface as his "armor"!

Kostia appeared extremely hungry, his eyes glinting with a ravenous sparkle as he searched around, quickly setting his sights on the energy generators outside the arena.

He raised his hand, and his five fingers instantly transformed into five massive tentacles that shot out. As they flew, they divided further, forming sixteen strands. Each strand wrapped around an energy generator and pulled it back. Kostia then opened his mouth and voraciously began to eat.

Chen Gu's expression turned incredibly somber. Contamination!

He didn't know how the situation had escalated to this, but there was no doubt that Kostia was heavily contaminated with something from the Endless Realm!

This was going to be a disaster far surpassing the previous moss virus incident.

The moss virus, though terrifying, was easy to detect. But with tens of thousands of witnesses in the stadium, anyone who saw could be contaminated.

The task of clearing tens of thousands of people was daunting.

In front of the various live broadcast terminals, there were billions, even hundreds of billions of viewers! These people could also be contaminated!

Checking for contamination was much harder than testing for the moss virus. Furthermore, because it was a large-scale screening, there was a very real possibility of some slipping through the cracks—overlooking just one person could create a horrific disaster.

Chen Gu was truly enraged. Who was behind this? Such actions could overturn the entire human society! Depraved madness!

In front of the television, Fertos's mouth hung open. He knew his "brother" Kostia very well and was aware that Kostia would not have turned into this without a reason.

He suddenly turned his head, and in his hand appeared a high-power explosive energy pistol, its barrel thick as a child's fist, aiming at Fu Qianping. He grated his teeth and demanded, "What is going on?!"

Fu Qianping looked down at the weapon in his hand with scorn and lightly uttered a "Bang!"

The heads of Fertos and the two underlings behind him exploded simultaneously, scattering brain matter everywhere.

Fu Qianping remained undisturbed by the mess, still sitting there with gentlemanly poise, ready to continue watching the live broadcast.

But the next moment, the screen went completely dark.

The Alliance had urgently cut off the broadcast.

Fu Qianping let out a sigh of regret, stood up, walked over to the door, and went out.

On the arena, Kostia was still devouring the energy generators. By consuming these already damaged generators, he should be able to evolve the ability to generate an energy shield.

But how could Chen Gu simply watch him finish eating and evolving?

Chapter 590 A Two-Pronged Approach\_3

Chen Gu softly said, "Combat Rooster."

The once boastful Combat Rooster was also stunned by Kostia's transformation. At its master's call, it immediately snapped back to reality, its demeanor turning fierce. No matter what you turn into, there's nothing an energy pulse spray can't solve. If there is, then it'll just take two!

"ROAR—"

With a roar, the Combat Rooster unleashed a second energy pulse spray, hitting Kostia squarely.

His body instantly shattered, and a substantial part of it even melted away.

The Combat Rooster strutted proudly, bouncing around its owner to take credit. See? He couldn't withstand a single blow from me!

But those shattered body parts quickly writhed and reconstituted. To its surprise, they rapidly formed back into Kostia.

The Combat Rooster was a bit confused but still ferocious. It chirped and squawked at its owner. Let me do it again! This time I'll burn him to ash!

However, Chen Gu gently raised his hand to stop the Combat Rooster. He slowly approached. Kostia had completely lost human consciousness. His eyes, now pitch-black, were fixated on Chen Gu, and his body emitted a strong, evil aura originating from the Endless Realm.

Dark energy, like black smoke, continuously emanated from his body, blending into the surrounding void.

Chen Gu watched him and sneered, "Do you know I have a nickname at the Bureau of Mystic Security? They call me the 'Mutant Fuse'."

As he spoke, he advanced. His body began to emit dark red energy flames, while intense radiation burst outward, causing a series of bizarre, crackling sounds.

"Radiation Scouring!"

As Chen Gu deployed this professional skill, a terrifying field of radiation energy filled the air around him. The arena began to melt beneath his feet. A few energy generators that hadn't yet been consumed by Kostia also quickly fused with the platform where he passed.

The Combat Rooster blinked. I really got a bit carried away after evolving my energy pulse spray. In truth, Master's skill might seem less powerful than my pulse spray in terms of sheer impact, but it has a much broader range. My pulse spray can only focus on one area. You could say each has its own merits.

With each step Chen Gu took, the bloodstains on the arena from Kostia's first "death" were also completely incinerated, turning to ash.

Sensing the threat from Chen Gu, Kostia suddenly retreated a few steps. He then dropped to all fours, like some primitive crawling creature, and cowered in a corner of the arena. His eyes, previously filled only with evil and madness, now betrayed a hint of apprehension and... fear.

"SSSS—"

Kostia suddenly flicked a forked, scarlet tongue at Chen Gu while emitting a threatening hiss. From an observer's perspective, this posture could hardly be called a "deterrent." It seemed more like a bluff born of desperation.

Chen Gu ignored his reaction, keeping "Radiation Scouring" at full power as he continued to close in.

Kostia seemed to have a sudden realization. He sprinted on all fours, darting onto the Octoped Specter. Then, his entire being "melted" into the massive wound in the Octoped Specter's chest—the one blasted open by the Combat Rooster.

In the blink of an eye, the Octoped Specter, which had been thoroughly dead, roared and stood up again. It waved its eight ghostly limbs menacingly as it charged at Chen Gu.

Perhaps its confidence had surged again because it had fused with the behemoth and acquired vast energy.

Chen Gu casually drew the "Father-Son Sword" from his Dimensional Prison Ring. Flames instantly blazed along the blade as he said, emphasizing each word, "I told you. My nickname is the 'Mutant Fuse'!"

He swung the sword. Terrifying crimson lightning flashed across one of the ghostly limbs, severing it. The limb snapped in two and fell to the ground. There, it immediately began to melt under the power of "Radiation Scouring," then combusted, and finally turned to ash.

Chen Gu strode forward. Each time he swung the battle sword in his hand, some "part" would inevitably fly off the massive creature, only to be burned to ash upon hitting the ground.

The Kostia-Octoped Specter hybrid roared continuously, repeatedly attempting to launch a frenzied counter-assault. But each time it rallied its strength, Chen Gu's sword would strike it down, forcing it to abandon some "parts" as it wailed and licked its wounds.

Chen Gu wasn't as composed as he appeared. He wanted to end the fight quickly, to dispose of this Mutant as swiftly as possible. Yet, he had an unsettling feeling that this particular Mutant was far from ordinary.

Tens of thousands of spectators still remained in the stadium. Although the Bureau of Mystic Security and the Behemoth Alliance were urgently evacuating them, it was proving difficult to clear everyone out in the rush.

The spectators who hadn't yet evacuated disregarded all warnings, captivated by the battle. This is even more thrilling than a behemoth fight!

But every extra moment they watched increased their risk of contamination and mutation.

Chen Gu's "Mind Belief" told him that the most prudent course of action was to meticulously cut this special Mutant into pieces, bit by bit, and then incinerate it completely.

Therefore, even though he was incredibly anxious internally, he could only maintain an appearance of calm composure and complete confidence, patiently maneuvering against his opponent.