

Genius 203

Chapter 203 Skill: Swimming_1

Qin Fang was clearly very receptive to Tang Cheng's encouragement, and his spirits seemed instantly lifted, but he quickly became dejected again, after all, he only had less than 60% of his energy left and was still in a state of exhaustion.

"Can you handle armed river crossing?"

However, Tang Cheng didn't come to Qin Fang just to offer a word of encouragement; his visit had a more important purpose.

This team was led by Tang Cheng, and he was very familiar with each member, having undergone such training many times; Tang Cheng wasn't worried about them.

But Qin Fang was different; this was his first time participating in such high-intensity training, and he had already pushed his body through a fifteen-kilometer weight-bearing cross-country run. Tang Cheng didn't even know if Qin Fang could swim—if he was made to enter the water rashly, problems could easily arise.

They were not armed swimming across some ordinary river or lake; it was the Yangtze River, one of the two great mother rivers. If something were to happen in the river, they might not be able to bring him back. At least several warriors from Tang Cheng's contingent had already been lost to the river for this reason.

"I should be able to, I guess."

Qin Fang hesitated for a moment but then nodded, "I played in the river a couple of times as a child, although never swimming across it, there weren't any major issues..."

Qin Fang's words were not an exaggeration. He was a local from Ninghai, living north of the Yangtze River, by a major river that connects to the Yangtze. Naturally, his swimming ability was quite good. Though it had been years since he last took a swim, the main challenge in crossing the Yangtze River was stamina, and seeing the neatly arranged baozi in the Props Box, Qin Fang wasn't so worried anymore.

"That's good to hear..."

Tang Cheng nodded, then sent Qin Fang to collect the equipment needed for armed swimming.

In fact, armed swimming wasn't literally swimming straight from one side of the Yangtze to the other. After such grueling weight-bearing cross-country, every warrior's energy was severely depleted. Attempting to cross the Yangtze River afterward would undoubtedly result in numerous deaths, so life jackets were also issued.

Soon, Qin Fang got his life jacket, and he was somewhat puzzled by Tang Cheng's earlier questioning, as such safety measures should prevent any accidents.

"Don't kid yourself, kid. A life jacket can only offer a measure of protection; it's not infallible. You don't know, but during the annual flood control and disaster relief, even our warriors wearing life jackets have still suffered losses..."

Scarface gently patted Qin Fang on the shoulder, easily reading Qin Fang's thoughts from his expression.

The Yangtze River is not an ordinary river; its surface is vast, and there could be turbulent flows within, not to mention hidden fishing nets and hooks. No one can guarantee an absence of danger; the life jacket is only for emergencies and is indeed not infallible.

"Understood, Scarface!"

Qin Fang nodded and quickly donned the equipment, grabbed his weapons, and got ready.

"Move out!"

At Tang Cheng's command, he saw Tang Cheng be the first to leap into the Yangtze and swiftly head towards the vast expanse of water, moving so fast it seemed as if the weight-bearing trek had not drained any of his strength.

That clearly was not possible, as Tang Cheng carried more weight than any of them, and the drain on his energy was considerable. It's just that he was already accustomed to such intense training, evident from every following warrior entering the water with the same swift speed.

"What are you standing around for; let's go!"

Scarface lightly pushed Qin Fang, urging him on and then followed the troops into the water himself. Qin Fang stumbled a bit but quickly dived in and chased after them.

Qin Fang saying he could swim across the Yangtze River was no boast. Once in the water, his swimming movements were very proficient. Despite being weighed down by equipment, which made his movements not as smooth as if he were stark naked, his actions quickly became fluid after a moment's hesitation, and in no time, he caught up to Scarface, who had entered the water before him.

Almost immediately after Qin Fang had swum several tens of meters, a delayed notification appeared in his mind, but it brought two messages at once.

"Skill Comprehended: Swimming, Skill Level: Beginner, Proficiency 0%."

"Character already comprehends the skill, Conversion Proficiency applied, Swimming Skill upgraded to Intermediate..."

Such a result turned out to be quite surprising to Qin Fang. Since he had obtained these magical abilities, almost every skill of his had started from Beginner Level at 0%.

The only one that was Intermediate from the get-go was Xingyi Fist, and that was personally taught by the National Martial Arts Master Cai Pingyuan.

But what he didn't expect was that the first skill to start at Intermediate would be Swimming, a skill that seemed rather useless. This indeed caught Qin Fang off guard, even though he was actually quite good at swimming.

"What else am I fairly good at?"

Such a discovery made Qin Fang reflect on his strengths, but after much thought, he couldn't come up with anything else, not even something seemingly as trivial as swimming.

This result left Qin Fang slightly disappointed, but he soon cast those thoughts aside. He had tried it himself; some skills were not recognized by the System, and despite numerous attempts, they were still utterly useless, always unable to prompt any skill notifications.

However, some skills that Qin Fang had never paid attention to would appear unexpectedly, like Swimming, which Qin Fang had thought he might acquire a skill for before he even entered the water.

It was only after swimming dozens of meters that Qin Fang received the System prompt for the skill. He even thought at one point that this skill, too, wasn't recognized by the System and had given up on it, but then it emerged leisurely.

"It seems that acquiring skills also needs a proper opportunity!"

Vaguely, Qin Fang felt as though he had grasped a bit of the knack for it, even though it still seemed rather vague, but at least it gave him a bit of confidence.

"I didn't see it coming, you're pretty good with water, kid..."

Seeing Qin Fang catching up so quickly, Scarface laughed. He had been somewhat worried that Qin Fang might not be able to keep up with their main force, so he had swum at a slower pace, deliberately falling behind. But watching Qin Fang's aggressive approach, swiftly overtaking the rest of the team, even Scarface sped up only to be easily caught up by Qin Fang, who then slowed down and addressed him.

"When I was a kid, there wasn't much else to play with. In summer, I'd jump into the ditches and play for half a day; I got quite proficient with it. It's been some years since I last swam, but it looks like I haven't fallen behind..."

Qin Fang said somewhat embarrassedly.

What he said was entirely true, except now that his Swimming skill had reached Intermediate Level, he was noticeably better than before when he had been an amateur. He now understood how to swim in the most energy-efficient way, how to move his body to go faster...

It was these changes that significantly reduced the physical effort Qin Fang needed to swim, allowing him to just manage to keep going even at such a high speed.

But the Yangtze River was too broad, and looking at the distant land from within the water seemed so far away.

Qin Fang didn't know how long he had been swimming. Even though he was trying his best to conserve his strength, his already scarce energy was rapidly depleting, reaching a very low level, and his face became increasingly pale. He looked like he had been soaked by the river water, or like someone who was pale from excessive exhaustion.

The Yangtze River was vast, and there were quite a few boats passing by. Tang Cheng was leading this group of warriors swimming across the river and naturally needed to avoid these vessels. Similarly, the boats would slow down from a distance upon seeing a group crossing the water, so collisions were generally unlikely.

Despite this, guaranteeing everyone's safety was still paramount as some unpredictable dangers couldn't be avoided, but human-made crises like these could still be avoided.

"You okay?"

Tang Cheng slowed down from the front, falling back to Qin Fang's side, and asked, mainly because he noticed Qin Fang's pale face.

"Brother Tang, I'm fine, I can handle it... Aren't we almost at the other shore?"

Although Qin Fang was indeed heavily fatigued at the moment, a glance upward revealed the land ahead. After pondering for a bit, Qin Fang decided to grit his teeth and persist because he found that the more he persisted beyond his limits when he was out of energy, the more Combo Points he received. Obviously, this was the benefit of pushing beyond one's limits.

"The other shore?"

A smile immediately appeared on Tang Cheng's normally cold face, "Who told you we're at the other shore? That's Jiangxinzhou; we need to go around it... But considering your current state, let's rest on Jiangxinzhou!"

"Ah... we're just at Jiangxinzhou?"

Upon hearing this, Qin Fang remembered that the Yangtze River in Ninghai was not an unobstructed expanse; there were many islands like Jiangxinzhou and Bagua Island in the middle, dividing the river into two parts. Even though the water was connected at the ends, many people still lived on these islands.

Qin Fang had been so focused on swimming and consuming his energy that he had forgotten about this detail. It was only when he remembered that he realized their armed crossing was only halfway done, or even less than halfway. This realization dampened his spirits a little. He quickly ate a baozi to replenish some energy, otherwise, he figured he might collapse from exhaustion before even making it to Jiangxinzhou.