

## **Ice Age 611**

### Chapter 611: Encircling Eclipse Moon

The Superhuman team from Daze City never expected that they'd arrive in Tianhai City full of confidence, thinking they were about to score big—

Only to walk straight into a slaughter.

Not only did they leave empty-handed, but most of them also left their lives behind.

Zhang Yi gave a clear command: root them out completely—not a single invader should survive!

He couldn't risk any of them spreading news of his true strength, which could bring him unwanted trouble.

And the fact that the battle ended in such an easy and crushing victory only further united the hearts of Tianhai City's people.

All three major bases now submitted to Zhang Yi willingly and wholeheartedly.

At that moment, Xingtian asked, "If the Jiangnan District questions us, what do we tell them?"

“What else? Just say that all the factions in Tianhai City joined forces and wiped out the invading force!” Zhang Yi said with a smile.

Xingtian scratched his head. “I’m worried they won’t buy it. On paper, there’s no way we should’ve won so easily.”

Zhang Yi shook his head.

“No need to get too detailed. We’re the victims here—justified self-defense is perfectly acceptable.”

“When Jiangnan District established the Superhuman Union, they announced that principle in public.”

“Plus, we have the letter they sent us. It proves they made the first move. Why should the victim have to explain anything?”

“As for how we won so easily, that’s even easier to explain—battlefields change in an instant. Anything can happen. Let them speculate all they want.”

Right now, Jiangnan District’s attention was focused on Linhai City—they didn’t have time to worry about what happened here.

Zhang Yi wasn’t worried about unexpected fallout.

Everyone acknowledged the order and headed out to thoroughly sweep the surrounding area—just to be safe, in case anyone slipped through the net.

In reality, this was just a precaution.

The stronger Superhumans from Daze had already been vaporized in a single move by Zhang Yi.

The rest, paralyzed by fear, were easily picked off by Tianhai City's defenders.

Finally, Zhang Yi had Fatty Xu cover the massive crater he'd created with snow.

The scene returned to its former silence—pure white snow, not a drop of blood in sight.

As if nothing had ever happened.

At the very same time that the battle in Tianhai City came to an end, a far more dangerous and large-scale war was breaking out in the nearby Linhai City.

This operation was being commanded directly by the Jiangnan District's Combat Operations Center.

Ten different Superhuman organizations had been deployed, with full support from headquarters.

The key to their coordination was Huaguo's Nebula System, which guided their movements and tracked the movements of Eclipse Moon from space.

Right now, inside a shopping mall, thirteen members of Eclipse Moon were huddled in a warehouse eating food.

Next to the wide-open doors lay two fresh corpses, blood still steaming—but rapidly cooling.

They were a married couple. After the apocalypse, they'd taken over this warehouse and managed to survive until now.

They thought they'd make it—thought they'd live to see the end of the world.

They never imagined they'd die at the hands of foreigners.

A man wearing a gray newsboy cap and a tight-fitting gray vest was rummaging through a shelf, eventually picking out a can of beef. A satisfied smile crossed his face.

With just a flick of his right hand, a small burst of flame shot out, melting the frost clinging to the can.

“Pop!”

The heat pressurized the can, and with a squeeze, it burst open.

But the man in the newsboy cap didn’t eat it himself—he turned and handed it to the girl behind him, dressed in a thick red winter coat.

Then he tossed more cans to the others in the room.

A cold-eyed, lazy-looking samurai.

A street thug wielding a black metal baseball bat.

A stern, silent middle-aged man with slicked-back hair and glasses...

Each took their can and opened it in their own way.

A short-haired kid who looked like a high school student squatted down with a smile and started preparing a fire to cook.

While he worked, the bespectacled middle-aged man—Jinguji Seiichirou—looked toward the man in the newsboy cap and asked hoarsely,

“We’ve killed a lot of people here. The Jiangnan District’s strike force will be on us soon. Leader, what’s your plan? Fighting them head-on is dangerous for people like us.”

The man in the gray cap—Phoenixin Ren, the leader of Eclipse Moon—just smiled lazily.

But there was always something sinister about his grin.

He pointed confidently and flamboyantly at Jinguji.

“Let them come! If we don’t show them what the Eclipse Moon group is capable of, why would they ever cooperate with us?”

Jinguji folded his arms, clearly unimpressed.

“You’re always like this. Thrill-seeking. Even with Takeuchi on our side, walking a tightrope is never comfortable.”

Phoenixin strolled over to Takeuchi Mayumi, the group's witch, and sat down on a cardboard box beside her.

"But right now, this is our best play, isn't it?"

"Don't worry. Jiangnan District can't throw everything they've got at us. From what I've heard, they've got plenty of internal messes to deal with already."

"All we need to do is give them a little painful lesson, make them realize we're not to be trifled with—then we'll have a seat at the negotiating table."

He smiled again, forming a small gesture with his fingers—thumb and index forming a pinch:

"Just a little Neon Shock should do the trick."

Jinguji adjusted his glasses, clearly helpless in the face of Phoenixin's reckless spirit.

He turned his eyes to Takeuchi Mayumi, who was quietly eating her canned beef next to Phoenixin.

"Takeuchi, start today's divination."

But she didn't respond.

Phoenixin smiled and patted her head.

"Mayumi, let's begin."

Takeuchi obediently nodded.

She put down her can, took off her gloves, and revealed a pair of extremely pale hands.

Then, she slowly inserted her right hand into her own temple.

The next moment, she pulled a scroll out of her skull.

Everyone's eyes lit up at the sight.

Even the short-haired boy who had been cooking looked thrilled.

“Yes! Yes! My favorite part—Mayumi’s fortune telling!”

Takeuchi Mayumi unrolled the scroll across the floor.

Then, she pulled a red liquid from her coat.

Because of her body temperature, the liquid hadn’t frozen.

When she twisted off the cap, a faint metallic scent of blood drifted into the air.

Takeuchi’s right hand paused slightly in the air.

A strange energy began to gather in her palm—

And soon, it condensed into a long, thin brush.

It resembled a sharp bamboo stick, and on its tail, a tiny naked imp was clinging to the end, gnawing on the bamboo.

Takeuchi’s expression became solemn.

Her eyes clouded over, glowing with an ethereal light.

Then she dipped the brush into the red liquid—

And with lightning speed, began to write across the scroll.

Moments later, the long scroll was covered in crimson writing.

An eerie, ghostly glow shimmered from the blood-red characters.

Chapter 612: Railgun

Once the divination was complete, Takeuchi Mayumi put away her brush.

But after performing the ritual, she looked visibly weakened.

Some members of the group eagerly crowded around to read the omen, while others pretended to be indifferent—yet their eyes still drifted toward it involuntarily.

As the leader, Phoenixin Ren grabbed the scroll himself and read it carefully.

His eyes grew brighter as he read, the corners of his lips curving into a wider and wider grin.

"They're on their way. And there's a lot of them."

Jinguji gave a displeased "tch," while some of the others remained calm and a few looked visibly excited.

Phoenixin raised his head and began assigning tasks one by one.

"Takizawa and Wagatsuma, you two head southeast."

As a couple, Takizawa Takashi and Wagatsuma Nanako nodded, grabbed their weapons, and left the warehouse.

"Nobunaga, you go west. The enemies there are just your type."

Tsukamoto Nobunaga, the lazy-looking samurai, said nothing. He simply picked up his katana and walked out silently.

"Daiku Kai, you go east. The fortune favors you in that direction today!"

The towering, bear-like man with a black face, Daiku Kai Enjin, slung a cello case over his shoulder and also left.

Phoenixin distributed assignments based on Takeuchi's divination from the scroll.

Soon, more than half the room had emptied out.

The short-haired high schooler was named Nishitokoba Satoru.

He remained completely oblivious to all of this, grinning as he cooked lunch.

Phoenixin squatted beside him, pulled a silver spoon from his coat, and scooped a spoonful of soup from the pot to taste.

He took a sip, then let a look of bliss spread across his face.

"Delicious. Another satisfying meal."

It was hard to say whether he meant the food, or the upcoming battle.

Linhai City.

Though Jiangnan District's headquarters hadn't arrived in person, they had already pinpointed Eclipse Moon's location via satellite tracking.

Tu Yunlie, head of the Combat Division, was personally overseeing the operation.

Though "overseeing" was mostly just observing.

The Jiangnan Superhuman Union had only recently been formed, and the outer-city Superhuman factions didn't yet fully obey their commands.

The ten Superhuman teams, using intel from the Operations Division, had already formed a surrounding net and were beginning to close in.

Southeast quadrant.

Here, the advancing force was Peng Jialuo's team from Heying City.

He brought twenty elite fighters, including six powerful Superhumans.

The rest were skilled snipers, scouts, and demolition experts.

The ten teams had agreed beforehand to surround Eclipse Moon from different directions.

No one was taking this Neon-origin group lightly—after all, they were strong enough to have wiped out all factions in a city.

That said, no one believed the mission would fail.

They had home-field advantage, satellite intel, and a massive numbers lead.

Compared to Eclipse Moon, who were stranded in foreign territory and blind to their surroundings, they were dozens of times stronger.

Even if they had to win by sheer numbers, they could drown them in bodies.

At least, that's what Peng Jialuo believed.

The Heying Superhumans trudged through the snow, cautiously advancing.

They kept in constant radio contact with the other teams.

“This is Peng Jialuo. We’ve arrived near the target area.”

Replies quickly came in:

“We’re at the perimeter too.”

“Closing in—ETA three minutes.”

“Good. Once everyone’s in position, we close the circle. Stay sharp—no reckless moves.”

“Heh, you really think we made it this far by being reckless?”

Peng Jialuo ended the transmission and didn’t rush in.

He was just about to order a scout ahead to survey the terrain when his pupils suddenly shrank.

He’d spotted a figure walking slowly down the street ahead.

A man with slightly long hair, dressed in a black combat uniform.

“Just one guy...?”

Peng Jialuo was surprised. His nerves tensed. He immediately ordered his men to get ready.

He also reported the situation over comms.

“This is Peng Jialuo—we’ve made contact with an enemy! It’s only one person!”

“One? Aren’t there supposed to be thirteen of them? Be careful—the others might be hiding.”

“See what he does first.”

Just as Peng Jialuo was about to respond, a harsh static screech suddenly pierced his ears, making him wince in pain.

He furrowed his brows and was about to curse—

When he saw the man stop a few hundred meters away, still staring at them indifferently.

His left hand was still lazily stuffed in his pocket.

But with his right hand, he pulled out a coin, holding it between thumb and forefinger.

In the next instant, white lightning burst violently from his body!

That coin became the bullet in a railgun, tearing through the air and space as it screamed toward the Heying team!

The lightning was so fast that no one expected him to strike first.

Before they could react, one Superhuman took the hit straight to the chest!

A blackened, smoldering hole was left behind—his eyes filled with disbelief as he collapsed, dead.

“He actually struck first?!”

Peng Jialuo couldn’t believe it.

They were the hunters—how could the prey bare its fangs first?!

“D\*\*n Neon scum—kill him!”

Even Peng Jialuo’s usual calm couldn’t take the blow of watching a comrade die before his eyes.

With a furious roar, his body suddenly swelled.

Golden light wrapped around him.

His muscles bulged, his frame shot up in height—

He transformed into a three-meter-tall golden Buddha!

Heying City’s Vajra Unit — Peng Jialuo, codename Diamond Invincible!

Though caught off guard, they still had the numbers advantage.

With a Delta-class Superhuman like Peng Jialuo in charge, they weren’t afraid of someone attacking solo.

They were certain—the advantage was theirs!

Everyone activated their powers, ready to crush Takizawa Takashi on the spot.

But just then, from somewhere distant, a low, haunting melody echoed through the air.

It was deep and thick—like the sound of a bamboo flute.

The eerie music floated over concrete buildings and descended upon the Heying Superhumans.

The world around them began to distort strangely.

Colors fragmented.

It looked like countless multicolored butterflies fluttered before their eyes.

Everything twisted out of shape.

Their minds grew foggy.

Their limbs no longer knew where to go.

Peng Jialuo shouted, "Mental-type ability! Block your ears!"

But in the very moment the music started, Takizawa Takashi had already raised both arms—

Eight coins glinting between his fingers.

With a crackling explosion, railgun blasts surged from the coins, each releasing a bolt of wild silver lightning that tore through the air—

Eight streaks of silver arcs screaming toward the stunned Heying squad!

Chapter 613: Tidal Tiger

The ambush that Peng Jialuo's team encountered quickly drew the attention of the other nine factions.

"Heying City's Superhumans got attacked? Unlucky. Looks like someone's trying to break out through their side."

“Should we head over and support them?” someone asked over the comms.

But silence fell.

After a long pause, someone spoke in a low voice, “Maybe we should go take a look?”

No one responded.

The rewards for this mission were insanely generous. The biggest contributors might even get control over all of Linhai City.

But with ten factions participating, the competition was cutthroat.

If Peng Jialuo’s people and Eclipse Moon clashed and whittled each other down, that was great news for the rest.

However, that train of thought didn’t last long.

Over in Yunzhou City, the team led by Li Tianlong was still on standby, hesitating on whether to support Peng Jialuo.

Suddenly, the sound of something tearing through the air rang out from above.

Li Tianlong jerked his head upward—

From the upper floors of the building they were hiding in, a dark figure dove straight down.

A flash of silver light from a blade streaked across the sky, illuminating the gloom.

Tsukamoto Nobunaga dashed through the group with a few quick steps—

Before anyone could react, five people had already been sliced into pieces.

Li Tianlong was stunned. “No way!”

What shocked him wasn’t the samurai’s strength, but the fact that this guy knew exactly where they were.

But how?!

They had the Jiangnan District’s satellite support—their intel should’ve been ahead of the enemy!

So why were they the ones getting found first?

And it wasn't just them. Within minutes, almost every faction had been ambushed by Eclipse Moon.

They'd all thought they were well hidden, just waiting for the signal to strike together.

But it was like the enemy could see their every move, turning the hunters into the hunted.

In the Jiangnan District's Operations Command Center, Tu Yunlie stared at the monitors with hawk-like eyes.

Thanks to the transmitters carried by the ten Superhuman teams, he could see the battlefield in real time.

Even he hadn't expected this—they'd been hit first.

"How did this happen? Was our intel leaked?"

But Tu Yunlie quickly shook his head.

"Impossible. Only HQ knows the precise location of every faction."

His eyes swept across every person in the command center.

Then he shook his head again.

“The command center has the highest level of security. Every outgoing message is screened. No one could’ve slipped intel to them.”

“Which means... it must be some kind of Superhuman ability. A recon-type power? But to cover this big of an area...?”

Tu Yunlie’s gaze sharpened.

This operation... had just gotten a lot more complicated.

The battle in Linhai City had officially begun.

The surprise attacks left the ten factions scrambling at first, suffering early casualties.

But they were all veterans—major powers in their own cities.

They quickly stabilized.

And once they realized that each team was only facing one or two members of Eclipse Moon, they relaxed.

Especially in the eastern part of the city, where Li Guoqiang from Bacheng and Meng Shucheng from Xiyang had teamed up.

Their opponent? Just one man in a suit—built like a bear, carrying a cello case.

“Just one guy?”

Li Guoqiang frowned.

He wondered if these Neon guys were nuts.

Didn’t they see he had over fifty people with him from two factions combined?

Coming here solo? Might as well be suicide.

“Kill him!”

Li Guoqiang didn’t waste time on words. There was no chance of negotiation anyway—not like he understood the guy’s language.

Ten sharpshooters stepped forward, sniper rifles aimed at Daiku Kai Enjin.

They were loaded with high-energy bullets—specially issued by Jiangnan District for taking down Superhumans.

But Daiku Kai Enjin didn’t even flinch.

Instead, he calmly shrugged off his suit jacket and reached for the cello case.

Crack crack crack!

Bullets tore through his clothes but failed to pierce his skin.

What they revealed instead was a body like forged steel—pure muscle, black as iron.

“So, he’s a Strength-type Superhuman,” Meng Shucheng said coolly.

High-energy rounds had more power than armor-piercing ones.

Even a Superhuman could be killed by them.

But among Superhumans, Strength-types were monsters.

No flashy powers—just pure physical enhancement.

Their bodies mutated on a physical level, reaching the durability of tanks or even fortresses.

Bullets? Even small arms fire? Useless.

Li Guoqiang glanced at Meng Shucheng, a smirk on his lips.

“Strength-type? That’s perfect.”

Meng Shucheng's long, narrow eyes also filled with a smile under his curtain of black hair.

"Couldn't be better."

Because both of them were formidable Strength-type Superhumans themselves!

With fifty-plus men backing them up, how could they lose?

Just then, Daiku Kai Enjin opened his cello case.

Inside was a bizarre-looking long spear, over three meters long when assembled.

Its blade was flat—like dragonfly wings.

He gripped the weapon—Dragonfly Cutter—and muttered in Neon-tongue:

"Mayumi's prediction was right."

Meng Shucheng and Li Guoqiang activated their abilities.

A hazy black glow enveloped Meng Shucheng, and his long hair grew wildly, wrapping around his entire body.

Each strand gleamed with a deadly gleam—sharper than the sharpest blade, capable of slicing through metal and stone.

Li Guoqiang, meanwhile, pulled out two heavy black iron batons from behind his back.

He crossed them in front of himself, preparing for both offense and defense.

“Go! Take him down!”

Dozens of Superhumans quickly surrounded Daiku Kai Enjin.

They launched attacks from every direction—ranged and melee, elemental and physical.

The two faction leaders closed in from front and back, going for a pincer strike.

But this towering human fortress only gave them a cold stare—

And with a swing of the Dragonfly Cutter, a hurricane began to roar around him, shielding his entire body.

When the wind finally died down, he had transformed—

Now standing over three meters tall, covered in yellow-brown striped fur—

He had become a mythical beast.

Daiku Kai Enjin—Beast-type Superhuman, Myth-Class Beast: Tidal Tiger!

Clutching the massive Dragonfly Cutter, his vertical brown pupils swept over every enemy.

The two faction leaders charged from both ends.

But Daiku simply made a single horizontal slash, spinning in place.

A green-blue arc of light cut through the air in a perfect, deadly circle.

A beautiful crescent flashed—

And in the next instant, the two Delta-class Strength-type Superhumans were suddenly sliced clean in half, their torsos separating from their legs mid-charge.

Chapter 614: Kamaitachi

When there's an absolute level gap between Superhumans, sheer numbers no longer matter.

Neither Li Guoqiang nor Meng Shucheng, leaders of two major factions, had expected that their bodies—hardened through countless battles—would be split in half by a single casual slash from Daiku Kai Enjin.

It wasn't even right to call it a "defense failure"—

They didn't have time to react at all before they were cleaved at the waist.

"Among all martial arts, speed breaks all defenses!"

Only when their torsos hit the ground did the surrounding soldiers realize what had just happened.

"AHHHHHHHHH!"

Agonized screams tore through the air.

Li Guoqiang and Meng Shucheng howled in unbearable pain.

This kind of execution was far crueler than a quick death.

As Strength-type Superhumans with incredible vitality, they didn't die immediately—even in the frigid air.

But everyone knew it was just a matter of time.

Now came the agony.

The dozens of elite fighters and Superhumans who had surrounded Daiku Kai Enjin were frozen in fear, too shocked to even lift their weapons.

But Daiku had no intention of stopping there.

“If you've come, then don't even think of leaving!”

He charged like a hurricane in one direction—

The massive Dragonfly Cutter in his hand cutting through enemies like a hot knife through butter.

That terrifying strength—against anyone below Delta-class—was utterly unstoppable, even through combat gear.

It was a one-sided, overwhelming massacre.

In the command center, Tu Yunlie saw it all clearly.

The entire room was thrown into stunned silence.

An entire joint force of two outer-city powers was being butchered like cattle by a single man?

Tu Yunlie's expression grew darker by the second.

"He's at least on par with an elite investigator... possibly a vice-captain or above."

"No wonder these monsters rampaged through Kanto, and even the Izumo Organization couldn't handle them."

The battle on Daiku's side was wrapped up quickly.

Over fifty people—not one survived.

And these were elites from the outer cities—

Nearly half of them were Superhumans.

After slaughtering them, Daiku devoured their Superhuman origins without hesitation.

While low-level origin energy didn't give much boost to someone of his level, sheer quantity could help make up for the lack of quality.

“What a delicious feast,” he said with a content smile.

“I really hope the Jiangnan District sends over more food...”

“Preferably of higher quality.”

Meanwhile, over in Heying's sector, Peng Jialuo's men were up against the duo of Takizawa Takashi and Wagatsuma Nanako.

A team of twenty elite Superhumans faced off against a two-person combo with a Railgun and Illusory Sound.

The result?

A completely one-sided slaughter.

Wagatsuma stayed hidden, attacking with her shakuhachi flute to launch sonic illusions.

Peng Jialuo immediately ordered everyone to cut off their hearing, preventing their minds from being tampered with.

But this also cut off their internal communication.

And that gave Takizawa an opening—he swiftly gunned down eight people!

When the rest tried to fight back, they found their bodies starting to change.

It was like they were drowning from the inside—

A liquid-like force surging through their internal organs.

Peng Jialuo sensed it instantly.

His heart sank.

“This... this isn’t just illusion. That sonic attack... it’s bypassing our defenses and hitting us internally!”

By the time he realized it, it was already too late.

Two Superhumans swelled up like water balloons—

Then POP!

They burst open with a disgusting splash of multicolored liquid!

Peng Jialuo himself felt the force growing inside him.

He quickly used his powers to reinforce his body.

But he now faced two threats:

Wagatsuma Nanako's sonic attacks...

and Takizawa Takashi, who watched him like a predator waiting to strike.

Despite outnumbering them, Peng Jialuo's team was the one getting boxed in.

But Peng Jialuo refused to die here.

His ability—Diamond Invincible—was powerful in both offense and defense.

No matter how tricky her tricks were, Wagatsuma couldn't kill him that easily.

He realized Takizawa was a long-range combatant.

If he wanted to win, he'd have to close the gap.

Take out Takizawa, and Wagatsuma alone was no threat.

With that thought, his golden Buddha body flared with light—

He roared and charged straight at Takizawa!

Takizawa frowned, firing multiple railgun shots in rapid succession.

But Peng Jialuo didn't dodge—

He chose to tank it for speed.

The golden aura around him protected his body—

Even though the coin bullets hit with the force of cannon shells, denting his muscles and embedding deep into his flesh—

They didn't break through.

Through sheer physical power, he clamped down on the coins with his muscles.

He was wounded—but only superficially.

In just one second, he reached Takizawa and swung a golden fist straight at his head!

Takizawa's pupils shrank.

He raised his lightning-coated arms to block—

BOOM!!

The punch sent Takizawa flying hundreds of meters away!

Wagatsuma immediately sensed Peng Jialuo's strength—

The shakuhachi's tune grew sharper and more urgent.

Peng Jialuo began to feel it too—

Something was screaming in the air, slashing at his body.

That was Wagatsuma Nanako's ability: Kamaitachi.

A sound-based power that caused auditory illusions—

But more than that, it could use sonic resonance to attack a person's internal organs, making them explode from the inside!

Peng Jialuo's Diamond Invincible was unmatched in defense—like a tank.

But no matter how tough a man is, his organs are still fragile.

And with all his attention focused on attacking Takizawa, he couldn't defend against Kamaitachi.

A muffled grunt escaped him—blood trickled from the corner of his mouth.

But by now, no one could come help him.

His team had been completely wiped out in just a few minutes.

When the power gap between Superhumans gets too wide, numbers mean nothing.

From the cloud of smoke, Takizawa Takashi walked back out.

One of his arms was clearly twisted.

Even he was surprised—this enemy was far tougher than expected.

He suddenly recalled Takeuchi Mayumi's fortune reading.

His fortune for this mission had been "Small Luck."

He could complete the task, but it wouldn't go smoothly.

"Tch... just my luck today."

He muttered to himself.

But before he could rest—

Peng Jialuo's next attack was already right in his face.

Chapter 615: Total Annihilation

In Heying City, the Indestructible King Kong, Peng Jialuo, ultimately fell under the joint assault of two Eclipse Moon Group members.

Among the ten factions present, his strength was considered top-tier.

But going up against two enemies of equal power, he couldn't handle the pincer attack. In the end, while battling Takizawa Takashi, he was ambushed by Wagatsuma Nanako with the Kama-Itachi, which pierced his heart.

As Peng Jialuo's massive golden body crashed to the ground, Takizawa Takashi let out a long sigh of relief.

“That was a close one!”

Suddenly, playful laughter echoed from above.

Takizawa looked up and saw Wagatsuma Nanako riding the wind, slowly gliding toward him.

After landing, she gave Peng Jialuo a smug glance. "Without my help, you'd have had a hard time with that big guy! So he's mine now."

Takizawa scoffed. "If it were one-on-one, I'd definitely have beaten him! He just had too many helpers. I wasted a lot of energy dealing with them."

But Wagatsuma had no intention of letting him off the hook.

"Give me a break! His ability counters yours. I'm the one who counters him. So I was the main force this time!"

Takizawa's expression turned sour, but he had no comeback—because, frankly, she was right.

When your ability gets hard-countered, it's tough to even use half your strength.

Wagatsuma didn't care about his expression and went straight to absorbing Peng Jialuo's ability.

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In Blizzard City's operations command center, one by one, the screens went dark, turning into static.

As the battle dragged on, their equipment for monitoring the field was systematically destroyed.

But Tu Yunlie hadn't seen a single battlefield where they had the upper hand. Within just five minutes of the fight starting, three entire factions had been wiped out!

Tu Yunlie continued to watch coldly, silent and emotionless.

Meanwhile, the operations staff worked rapidly, using the few remaining feeds to record every detail about the Eclipse Moon Group members and compile it into a dossier.

An hour later, the final faction also lost contact.

An observer turned and reported the news to Tu Yunlie.

He simply responded with a cold, "Got it."

His face showed no emotion, but the flicker in his eyes betrayed an undercurrent of unrest.

“Compile the report immediately. I need to brief Commander Zhu.”

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Inside a shopping mall building, Hōōin Jin had eaten just a bit, then walked over to the window, hands in his pockets, looking out leisurely over the city.

Linhai City wasn't particularly big in the southeast coastal region of Huaguo, but in terms of prosperity, it wasn't bad.

To Hōōin, who had come from Tokyo, the city held a unique charm.

It was the grounded, weighty feeling of being on a continental landmass.

The Neon people had possessed a deep sense of crisis for over a century.

Their island nation's instability had long driven a desire to become a land-based power.

That classic film *Neon Sinks* was the perfect symbol of that mindset.

After the apocalypse began, the fear of being isolated on an island only grew stronger.

That's why radical "landing factions" like theirs began to grow and flourish.

The Eclipse Moon Group was the most extreme vanguard among them.

The door suddenly swung open, and the team members who'd gone on missions trickled back in.

Some looked relaxed, while others had minor injuries.

Daikō Kaienjin was still in his suit, lounging casually on a sofa. From his calm expression, it was clear how easy this mission had been for him.

The Eclipse Moon members were all smiling, chatting about the opponents they'd faced—and how easily they had crushed them.

At that moment, a dragging sound came from outside the door.

Bang!

Something slammed into the entrance.

Everyone turned to look and saw Tsunamoto Nobunaga lazily push open the door, his Great Prajna Long Light blade slung casually at his side.

In his right hand, he was dragging a man soaked in blood.

Jingūji Seiichirō frowned at the sight. “That your prisoner?”

Tsunamoto Nobunaga said lazily, “Killing alone won’t cut it. We’re up against a massive organization. If we can get some intel out of them, that would be perfect.”

He glanced down at the man he’d captured—Li Tianlong, the faction leader from Yunzhou.

“This guy’s a leader. He should know quite a bit.”

Li Tianlong suddenly glared with wide, bloodshot eyes and used the last of his strength to roar, “You f\*\*\*ing Neon bastards! If you’re gonna kill me, just do it! I won’t say a single damn word!”

Tsunamoto Nobunaga frowned—he couldn't understand a thing Li Tianlong was yelling.

Just then, the short-haired high schooler who'd been handling cleanup duties chuckled, "The combat suit comes with a built-in translation system, you know!"

Tsunamoto waved him off. "I don't like wearing that junk. Slows down my draw speed."

Saijōbaba Satoru shrugged helplessly. "Guess I'll handle it."

He stood and walked up to the barely conscious Li Tianlong.

"Don't even think about it..."

Li Tianlong stared him down, voice weak but still fierce.

Saijōbaba wasn't fazed at all. He walked up with a grin, calm as ever.

"It's okay. You'll tell me."

Li Tianlong sneered, "Heh... dream on..."

But the words died in his throat.

Saijōbaba had placed both hands on either side of his head.

Li Tianlong's eyes rolled back, and his body went limp.

Two ghostly hands emerged from Saijōbaba's chest and plunged deep into Li Tianlong's skull!

Outside, Hōōin Jin lit a cigarette. When he finally walked back in, he saw Li Tianlong collapsed on the floor, completely unconscious.

Saijōbaba adjusted his glasses with a sunny smile. "Boss, I've gathered all their intel! We really stirred things up this time!"

His grin turned manic—he looked like a delusional teen thrilled at having done something "legendary."

"The entire Jiangnan region is hunting us down now! Man, they really want us dead."

“Who would've thought—after fleeing all the way here, we'd still cause such a ruckus!”

Jingūji Seiichirō looked at him with clear disdain. “That's nothing to be proud of. It's only going to bring us more trouble.”

Saijōbaba ignored the warning and spread his arms. “But it's cool, right? One of the six great districts of Huaguo is going all-out against us!”

Jingūji's tone turned serious. “If we push them too hard and they come at us with everything they've got, even with Mayumi here, I doubt we'd make it out unscathed!”

Saijōbaba suddenly made a face at him.

“Relax, Uncle Jingūji. I just confirmed it!”

A strange glint flashed in his lenses.

“Out of Jiangnan's six top-tier combat investigation squads, only two are still at HQ—and one of them just lost its captain.”

“This is our best shot!”

Chapter 616: An Unbelievable Battle

When Phoenixin Ren heard Nishijumu Satoru's words, a wicked smile crept across his face.

With both hands in his pockets, he said leisurely, "Nishijumu, why don't you tell everyone about the memories you peeked into?"

Nishijumu Satoru, a Mental-type Superhuman, codename Heartseer Demon, had the ability to read others' memories.

With his arms crossed, Nishijumu turned serious as he got to the point.

"There are currently thirteen cities in the Jiangnan District with major Superhuman organizations stationed in them. Among them, their headquarters is in Blizzard City..."

He took his time and shared the key memories he had extracted from Li Tianlong's mind with everyone.

After listening, Phoenixin sat on a cardboard box, eyes deep in thought, using the intel to plan the next operation.

"The ones who attacked us came from the twelve Outer Cities. Those guys don't pose much of a threat."

"The real threat lies with the official forces in Blizzard City."

"Blizzard City can't afford to act right now. And judging by the fact they sent Outer City troops against us, it's clear they're reluctant to risk their elites."

Shinguuji Seiichiro said, "So you're saying... there's room for negotiation?"

Phoenixin nodded. "Maybe not before, but now?"

He opened his arms wide and laughed boldly, "We've already shown them what we're capable of! Now we've earned the right to sit at the table."

Shinguuji replied slowly, “But I don’t think they’ll give in to our demands so easily.”

“After all, their real elite troops haven’t even shown up yet.”

He pushed up his gold-rimmed glasses, his expression turning grim.

“The ones they sent were just a vanguard force, testing the waters.”

“The next batch will likely be the Six Investigation Teams.”

Tsukamoto Nobunaga shifted his gaze toward Shinguuji and Phoenixin.

The others also dropped their smiles.

“These are regional-level Special Forces. Their strength isn’t even in the same league as this bunch.”

“This might turn into a grueling battle,” Shinguuji said.

But Phoenixin’s smile didn’t fade in the slightest.

“Isn’t this something we were bound to face anyway? If we want to gain a foothold on this land and complete the first step of our landing, then a tough battle is inevitable!”

He even sounded proud.

“Columbus, who discovered the New World, died fighting the natives! But his discovery reshaped the entire global landscape and brought immense wealth to his nation!”

“As pioneers, we too will be written into the history books!”

Phoenixin gave a passionate speech, his bold confidence carrying a contagious force.

Then he turned to look at the silent Miko Takeuchi Mayumi, who sat quietly nearby.

“Besides, we still have this trump card with us. Luck will stay on our side!”

Everyone’s expressions varied.

Ever since they chose to follow Phoenixin Ren aboard that icebreaker, they had mentally prepared themselves.

At that moment, Nishijumu suddenly pointed at the unconscious Li Tianlong.

“Is this guy still useful? If not, I’m gonna eat him.”

He licked the corner of his mouth.

This Delta-level Superhuman might be dispensable to Tsukamoto Nobunaga, but Nishijumu clearly looked forward to feasting on him.

“No, he still has some use,” Phoenixin Ren said, eyes narrowing playfully as he stared at Li Tianlong.

“We can let him go back and deliver a message to the leadership of the Jiangnan District.”

He lifted his chin and said slowly, “We’re pacifists. We don’t like bloodshed. If we can talk things out peacefully, then that’d be ideal.”

Blizzard City, Headquarters of the Operations Center, inside Zhu Zheng’s office.

Tu Yunlie arrived in front of Zhu Zheng and personally handed over a battle damage report.

As Zhu Zheng flipped through the pages, his eyes grew increasingly sharp.

By the time he reached the end, his eyes were visibly trembling.

“This can’t be happening!”

Zhu Zheng slammed the report on the desk with a loud smack.

He shot to his feet, glaring at Tu Yunlie.

“Even if Moon of Corrosion is powerful, there’s no way they could’ve wiped out ten of our Superhuman squads so easily!”

“Forget about them — even our Investigation Teams couldn’t pull that off!”

In less than an hour, and without even deploying all thirteen members, they had completely annihilated ten Superhuman squads!

And the leader of every one of those squads was a Delta-level powerhouse!

Even if the Six Investigation Teams had been sent, they wouldn’t have been able to achieve such a clean sweep.

Tu Yunlie spoke in a low tone, “Logically, no, this result shouldn’t have been possible.”

“This happened on our turf. We had timing, terrain, and unity — basically every advantage.”

“By all accounts, they should’ve been like blind men, toying in our palms. At worst, they should’ve suffered heavy casualties.”

“I accounted for every possibility—except this.”

“That’s why I believe... the enemy must’ve found a way to obtain our intel!”

Zhu Zheng locked eyes with Tu Yunlie, speaking slowly and deliberately: “If you’ve got something to say, say it. Don’t beat around the bush.”

Tu Yunlie replied, “Either we have a traitor in the Operations Department who leaked the information about the ten Superhuman teams and their positions...”

“Or the enemy has a Superhuman with some kind of reconnaissance ability, someone who precisely tracked all our movements and deployments!”

He pointed to the stack of reports on the desk.

“We’ve analyzed it thoroughly. One of the key reasons Moon of Corrosion won so swiftly is because their chosen Superhumans just happened to counter the squads stationed at each position!”

“You understand what that means — in a sudden ambush, if a Superhuman’s ability is hard-countered, their combat effectiveness drops drastically.”

“In fact, if the matchup is a complete counter, the Superhuman might as well be a cripple.”

Tu Yunlie clasped his hands behind his back, the sharp glint in his eyes hidden beneath the brim of his military cap.

“When it comes to the Moon of Corrosion, our intel is seriously lacking. Originally, we could’ve demanded the Neon Nation provide details on these Ronin’s Superhuman abilities!”

Zhu Zheng's expression darkened, and his tone cooled.

"You're absolutely right. But those slippery bastards used the excuse that these people aren't officially affiliated with their government. They outright refused to give us anything useful."

"They're practically hoping this bunch stirs up chaos across our lands. Why would they genuinely help us?"

"But even so... so what?"

Zhu Zheng's voice grew stern. "It's just a bunch of Ronin. Are you saying we can't handle them?"

"This matter... a lot of nations and regions are already aware of it. They're all watching closely. So we need to win this, and win it beautifully."

"They have to die here, executed by our own hands. That's the only way to prove our strength and scare off the scavengers nearby!"

#### Chapter 617: The Oddities of Tianhai City

Tu Yunlie fully understood Zhu Zheng's anger.

He wasn't one to speak much, but his eyes were already blazing with fury, as if they could burn the world to ashes.

"Commander Zhu, we can't let them keep running wild! I formally request permission to lead a team and personally head to Linhai City to wipe out those Ronin!"

Zhu Zheng didn't even hesitate before turning him down.

“No. You and the Yan Yun Guards are the most vital force guarding Blizzard City — you absolutely cannot leave! Your job is to protect our headquarters.”

Zhu Zheng folded his arms, took a deep breath, and looked up at the ceiling.

“The Outer City Superhuman organizations are just too weak. Without formal training, they fall apart the moment they meet stronger enemies.”

“To deal with the Moon of Corrosion, we still need to send in the Investigation Teams!”

Tu Yunlie’s eyes narrowed.

“Commander Zhu, forgive my bluntness — this opponent is different from the others.”

“Right now, only the Celestial Squad and Black Robe Squad are available, but since Bian Junwu’s death, the Black Robe Squad has suffered a serious blow in strength and can no longer take on Class-A missions.”

“As for the Celestial Squad...”

Tu Yunlie paused for a moment before continuing, “Deng Shentong’s personality still lacks maturity. I don’t fully trust him.”

Zhu Zheng’s lips curved slightly.

He knew well that Tu Yunlie and Deng Shentong had always clashed personality-wise.

“The Celestial Squad currently holds the highest points among the Six Investigation Teams. Their missions have been going quite smoothly. We should trust in their capabilities!”

“But, you do have a point.”

Zhu Zheng's gaze sharpened slightly, his hands supporting his chin.

"We can't afford another failure! So this time, we won't just send in the Celestial Squad. We need to gather even more firepower!"

Tu Yunlie's eyes lit up.

"Then let me bring five hundred Yan Yun Guards with me!"

"No."

Zhu Zheng turned him down flatly. "I already said, this isn't your task."

Blizzard City's strength came from two main forces: the Six Investigation Teams and five thousand Yan Yun Guards.

The Investigation Teams handled external missions and suppression; the Yan Yun Guards were in charge of defending Blizzard City.

If either force suffered losses, it would be a blow the city couldn't afford.

Zhu Zheng ran the city with strict military discipline. Naturally, he wouldn't allow anyone to step outside their designated roles. Otherwise, it would create massive problems in internal management down the line.

Tu Yunlie tugged the brim of his hat lower. Seeing Zhu Zheng's firm stance, he said no more.

After thinking it over, Zhu Zheng said, "Bring in a batch of powerful Superhumans from other cities. The last battle was for probing — now it's time to handpick our champions! We need to gather the strongest Superhumans together."

“This battle — we must win in one decisive strike!”

Once he finished speaking, Zhu Zheng immediately instructed his secretary Lan Xincheng to take charge of this task.

As for the candidates, Zhu Zheng already had a list in mind.

The Jiangnan District’s intelligence network wasn’t just for show — in Tianhai City, he had already mapped out nearly every local power.

Of course, it was nearly every power — not all.

Soon, Lan Xincheng returned with an intriguing piece of information.

“Commander Zhu, something rather interesting happened in Tianhai City in the past few days.”

As he spoke, a strange light flashed in Lan Xincheng’s eyes.

Zhu Zheng narrowed his gaze and looked at him.

Right now, the top priority was dealing with the Moon of Corrosion in Linhai City.

For Lan Xincheng to bring up Tianhai City now — there had to be a reason.

He wasn’t some clueless rookie, after all.

“Oh? What happened over there? If I remember correctly, Tianhai City is that Zhang Yi kid’s turf, right?”

Zhu Zheng had a faint impression of Zhang Yi — vaguely remembered him as a decently strong Superhuman.

But Tianhai City had already been devastated. It needed someone powerful to hold it down.

Plus, Zhang Yi's team was too small. They didn't seem particularly strong.

Truthfully, Zhu Zheng hadn't even planned on including them in the next operation.

Lan Xincheng looked at the report in his hand and began reading slowly:

"According to intel from the Recon Department, just last night, three large Superhuman organizations from Daze City assembled a massive convoy and entered Tianhai City."

"The convoy was led by three Delta-level Superhumans, along with 72 Superhumans and 800 elite warriors. They also brought a large supply of weapons and ammunition."

At this point, Zhu Zheng's brows knit tightly.

"They're launching an assault on Tianhai City? Those b\*stards! At a time like this, they actually ignore district orders and start fighting amongst themselves!"

The Jiangnan Superhuman Federation had just been formed, and it had laid down a clear rule: no infighting between regional Superhuman forces.

And yet, just a few days after the summit, they were already at each other's throats. Was this their way of spitting in the Federation's face?

Still, Zhu Zheng was merely angered. Realistically, he couldn't spare any troops to back up Tianhai City.

The Jiangnan District was indeed powerful, but it didn't yet have the reach to truly govern the entire region. All they could do was rely on overwhelming military strength to suppress troublemakers.

That was precisely why Zhu Zheng had pushed for the Federation in the first place.

He let out a sigh. “Given Tianhai City’s current strength, it must’ve already fallen, right? That’s what you were going to tell me?”

Lan Xincheng gave him a strange look.

“No, Commander Zhu. According to the latest intel, Tianhai City is eerily quiet. No signs of combat at all.”

“In fact, that convoy from Daze City... has completely vanished.”

Zhu Zheng froze for a moment, then looked at Lan Xincheng with bewilderment.

“Vanished?”

Lan Xincheng nodded solemnly. “That’s right. Gone.”

“We’ve tried reaching out to them — no response. Even satellite scans of the entire Tianhai City area haven’t turned up any trace of a large convoy.”

Zhu Zheng’s expression grew even more puzzled.

“What kind of trick are they playing? Are they planning a rebellion?”

Daring to ignore communications from the Jiangnan District was a blatant challenge to its authority.

But were the Superhuman organizations of Daze City really that stupid?

Zhu Zheng tapped his fingers on the desk. Suddenly, he asked, “Have you contacted any of the local powers in Tianhai City?”

Lan Xincheng paused. “No, we haven’t. But... the forces in Tianhai City were wiped out in the last battle. There’s no way they’d have the strength to completely obliterate Daze City’s Superhuman alliance without a trace, right?”

To him, that was utterly impossible.

Even if a battle had taken place, there would at least be traces on the map.

But in reality, there was no unusual activity at all in Tianhai City.

#### Chapter 618: The Summons

The three major powers of Daze City — their entire combat force had nearly vanished.

This bizarre phenomenon triggered a sense of unease in Zhu Zheng, whose sharp instincts immediately sensed something was off.

In his mind, the image of a cold, indifferent young man surfaced.

Zhu Zheng didn’t know why, but he was certain Zhang Yi had something to do with this.

He turned to Lan Xincheng and said, “Call Zhang Yi. I want to have a word with him.”

Lan Xincheng quickly acknowledged, “Yes, sir,” and pulled out a black satellite phone. He found Zhang Yi’s contact and dialed the number.

At that moment, Zhang Yi was inside the Shelter, actually waiting for the Jiangnan District to reach out.

So much had happened — no matter what, the district would need to make some sort of gesture.

But Zhang Yi knew this was just a formality. All for appearances, really.

After all, the matter was already resolved, and since they had been the side under attack, there wouldn't be any trouble.

When he saw the unfamiliar incoming call, Zhang Yi didn't hesitate to answer.

"Hello?"

"Hello, is this Zhang Yi?"

"Yeah, that's me."

Lan Xincheng glanced at Zhu Zheng. "I'm Lan Xincheng, secretary to the Command Division at the Jiangnan District Operations Command Center. Commander Zhu would like to speak with you."

Saying that, Lan Xincheng handed the satellite phone to Zhu Zheng.

Zhang Yi's tone instantly became warmer.

"Commander Zhu! Long time no see. It's only been three days since we last met, but your heroic and commanding presence has been deeply etched in my memory!"

A faint, almost imperceptible smile tugged at the corner of Zhu Zheng's mouth.

No one truly dislikes flattery — some are just better at hiding it.

Of course, it also depends on who's doing the flattering.

In Zhu Zheng's eyes, Zhang Yi was at least a fairly capable talent, so he didn't mind hearing a few compliments.

"Alright, alright, cut the crap. That kind of talk doesn't work on me!"

"Tell me — something happen in Tianhai City again?"

Zhang Yi already had his response prepared.

The annihilation of the Daze City Superhuman alliance wasn't something that could be covered up. He wouldn't dare underestimate the Jiangnan District's intelligence system.

"The three major powers of Daze City tried to seize control of Tianhai City's territory and resources. They ignored our firm protests and launched a full-scale invasion."

"In the end, thanks to the fierce resistance of all Tianhai City's Superhumans, they were wiped out right here!"

"We acted to protect our homeland, strictly in accordance with the principles laid out at the Jiangnan Superhuman Federation's founding conference — our actions were justified, lawful, and fully compliant. We stood firm against every invader!"

"We upheld the highest standards — ready to fight, skilled at fighting, and winning our fights..."

Zhu Zheng was starting to get a headache.

"Stop, stop, stop! Where the hell did you learn all that flowery nonsense?"

"So, you're saying it really was your people who wiped out Daze City's Superhumans?"

Zhang Yi nodded. "That's right. I've got proof that they were the aggressors. I'll send it to the district right away and let the leadership review it."

But Zhu Zheng didn't care about that part.

Based on the enemy's movements, the invasion was already an undeniable fact.

Like lice on a bald man — plain as day.

What puzzled him was how Tianhai City had managed to clean things up so thoroughly.

Nearly a thousand people, including some powerful Superhumans, had been completely eliminated — not a single trace left behind.

"Just how did you manage that? The three Superhuman groups from Daze City weren't exactly pushovers."

Zhu Zheng asked with genuine curiosity.

Zhang Yi chuckled.

"Commander Zhu, we have our own secrets — the foundations of our survival. Please understand, I can't share that information. Given Tianhai City's current situation, we need certain lifelines."

Zhu Zheng raised an eyebrow. "Oh? And you're keeping secrets from us, too?"

Zhang Yi stood firm.

"Please forgive me — it's not out of disrespect. We just can't afford any risks."

Zhu Zheng fell silent for a moment, then nodded.

“Alright. But I’m a very curious man, you know.”

The smile on Zhang Yi’s face deepened.

Zhu Zheng was clearly warning him — an investigation was coming.

But Zhang Yi swore, there was no way Zhu Zheng would uncover the truth anytime soon.

Because no one could imagine that Tianhai City housed a Superhuman of Zhang Yi’s caliber.

In the eyes of those in the Jiangnan District, only Blizzard City could produce top-tier Superhumans.

Even if an Outer City Superhuman had a decent power level, in overall strength, they were still leagues behind.

Then suddenly, as if on impulse, a new idea occurred to Zhu Zheng.

He said to Zhang Yi, “Come to Blizzard City again in the next couple of days. There’s something I need you to do.”

Zhang Yi’s smile stiffened.

Go there again?

“Uh... we just finished a battle, and there’s still a lot we need to handle here...”

A sly glint flashed in Zhu Zheng’s eyes.

“You just need to come yourself — that’ll be enough.”

He was growing increasingly sure that he had underestimated Zhang Yi.

This kid definitely had some kind of hidden power.

Which meant, for the upcoming Linhai City operation, Zhang Yi had to be included!

At the very least, his defensive capabilities and elite-level Investigation Team strength would be a huge asset.

Zhang Yi rubbed his head, thoroughly annoyed by the trouble.

“Can I at least ask what exactly you need me for this time?”

He was definitely going — but he wanted to know the reason so he could prepare.

Zhu Zheng let out a deep breath and said solemnly,

“The first wave of Superhuman squads we sent to Linhai City was completely wiped out!”

“What?? How’s that possible?!”

Zhang Yi blurted out in shock.

Those were ten powerful Superhuman teams!

Anyone who dared head to Linhai City had to be at least mid-tier in strength.

Even though Zhang Yi knew the city was dangerous, he couldn't imagine they'd all be wiped out in under three days.

Moon of Corrosion...

Was this organization really that powerful?

Zhu Zheng continued, "Next time, we'll be forming an even stronger task force to take on these Ronin. It'll be led by one of our Investigation Teams — your job will be to assist them."

Zhang Yi took a deep breath, then his eyes turned resolute.

"I understand. I'll get there as fast as I can!"

There was no need to hesitate.

That Ronin group from the Neon Nation had to be eradicated from this land!

Otherwise, everyone in the Jiangnan District would lose face.

Zhang Yi might be cautious by nature, but he still had a strong sense of honor.

He hadn't gone before because he trusted the Jiangnan District to handle it — and because he wanted more intel.

But now, the situation was far worse than he'd imagined.

So he had to go — and do his part.

## Chapter 619: Liang Yue's Question

Zhang Yi didn't hesitate—he decided to head to Blizzard City. If his strength was needed this time, then as long as he could keep himself safe, he wouldn't sit on the sidelines.

At the very least, he had to make sure those Ronin were wiped out completely before he could feel at ease.

Otherwise, from this day forward, there would be no peace for this land.

Where there's a first batch, there's bound to be a second, and a third.

Once a crack opens, the surrounding powers who had long been eyeing the continent's resources would swarm in like locusts.

Whether from a sense of duty or out of personal interest, he had to go.

Zhu Zheng didn't ask Zhang Yi to bring all of Tianhai City's elite forces.

After all, each city still needed some strength left for defense.

But after giving it some thought, Zhang Yi decided to bring a few people along—just for safety.

If anything happened, it'd be easier to work with his own people.

So he gathered everyone in the Shelter's living room.

"Of the ten superhuman organizations sent by the twelve outer cities, all were wiped out by Moon of Corrosion. Now that the Jiangnan District has summoned me, I plan to take two people with me."

Zhang Yi pointed at Liang Yue.

“Liang Yue.”

No one was surprised. Right now, within the Shelter, Liang Yue was the second strongest after Zhang Yi.

Although her ability was a regular Enhancement Type, she was a formidable Martial Arts Master to begin with, so her combat power was exceptional.

Just as everyone was wondering who the second pick would be, Zhang Yi picked up Hua Hua.

“As for the second one... of course it’s Hua Hua.”

Unexpected, yet somehow perfectly reasonable.

Hua Hua’s combat strength was probably on par with Liang Yue’s.

Uncle You furrowed his brows and pointed to himself.

“Zhang Yi, what about us? You planning to ditch us and face danger on your own this time?”

“This is about the honor of our nation. As a retired soldier, there’s no way I can just stand by and do nothing!”

Fatty Xu hesitated for a moment, then clenched his fist and said, “We’ve always faced our problems together. This time, we want to help you too!”

Zhang Yi stroked Hua Hua’s silky fur, a gentle smile softening his expression.

“I appreciate your loyalty! But this is war, not some brotherhood game!”

“The ten superhuman teams sent in the first wave were each about as strong as Tianhai City’s base force. All of them were led by Delta-level superhuman leaders!”

“Even with such massive strength, they were all wiped out by the Ronin. You think you guys can handle those Neon Nation freaks?”

Zhang Yi’s calm gaze swept across Uncle You and the others.

Uncle You’s expression dimmed.

His superhuman level was only Gamma, LV3, and in past battles he mainly acted as a tank.

But as Zhang Yi’s strength soared and Liang Yue and Hua Hua rapidly grew through Devouring abilities, his role in the team became less significant.

That made him feel a bit guilty.

Fatty Xu didn’t take it too hard. He’d always been the laid-back type, and on the battlefield, his role was more about control than fighting.

If he didn’t have to fight, he’d be thrilled.

He was totally chill with it—if the boss didn’t want him to go, he wouldn’t.

Zhang Yi noticed Uncle You’s disappointment and, after a brief pause, changed his tone.

“This time, we’re just going over to check out the situation in Linhai City. If we end up needing backup, I’ll get in touch and have you guys come over.”

That was indeed Zhang Yi’s plan for the three major bases.

Even though they'd fallen, some powerful superhumans still survived.

Especially Xing Tian and Xiao Honglian—both had Delta-level strength.

Still, unless it was absolutely necessary, he preferred to keep them guarding Tianhai City, just in case anything happened.

But to Uncle You, he was just offering some comfort.

No need to say too much.

Among adult men, too much consolation only hurts the ego.

Uncle You's eyes lit up again.

“Alright, then you'd better remember to call me when the time comes!”

Zhang Yi smiled faintly. “I will.”

“Why do I get the feeling this mission is gonna be super dangerous?”

Zhou Ke'er sat by Zhang Yi's side, her pretty brows furrowed in worry.

“Are those enemies really that scary? Didn't they say it was only thirteen people?”

Zhang Yi silently shook his head.

“I don’t have any info on them at all, so there’s nothing to say right now. But I’m sure that after this battle, Jiangnan District will definitely have collected data on them.”

“We’ll know once we get there!”

Zhou Ke’er clung tightly to his arm, her soft body pressed against him. She sighed lightly and said, “Another fight... I’m really worried something might happen to you.”

At this point, Zhang Yi had become the backbone of the whole Shelter.

With him around, everyone could live peacefully.

No one wanted anything to happen to him.

Zhang Yi smiled gently, wrapping an arm around her waist and enjoying the feel of her alluring figure.

After awakening her powers and modifying her body using her Doctor ability, she had the perfect proportions. The feel in his hand was unreal.

“Don’t worry. I know exactly what I’m doing.”

“I live by one principle—if I thrive, I’ll help the world; if I struggle, I’ll protect myself. I’ll act with caution and won’t play the hero.”

“Besides, this mission is led by Jiangnan District. Their investigation team will be the main force—we’re just there to assist.”

After a brief explanation, Zhang Yi geared up and prepared to depart.

Once he coordinated with Lan Xincheng, the Blizzard City express would come pick him up.

Soon after, he and the fully equipped Liang Yue drove off in the Snow Vehicle.

Once the engine started, Zhang Yi sent messages to Xing Tian, Xiao Honglian, and Chen Jingguan, letting them know about the situation in Linhai City.

He also told them to be ready to assist at any time.

There's no way Zhang Yi would be risking his life at the front while the others kicked back and relaxed.

No way he'd allow that.

Up front, Zhang Yi made a few calls while calmly reminding the others to stay alert while he was away.

Even though the superhumans in Daze City had been completely wiped out, it didn't mean the other cities would behave.

Of course, the first thing Zhang Yi planned to do upon arriving in Blizzard City was get Zhu Zheng to guarantee that no forces would mess with Tianhai City.

At least during his absence, it needed to be safe.

Only with the rear secured could Zhang Yi focus on taking down the Neon Nation Ronin.

Liang Yue sat in the passenger seat with Hua Hua sprawled on her perfectly toned legs.

Even cats loved long, shapely legs.

Liang Yue kept glancing at Zhang Yi's side profile, clearly hesitating about something.

Zhang Yi naturally picked up on her unease.

So after ending the call, he put down the satellite phone and asked calmly, “You’ve got something on your mind, don’t you? Go ahead and say it.”

Liang Yue frowned slightly, but didn’t hold back as she asked:

“Zhang Yi, do you think... do you think there’ll come a day when we’re no longer of value to you, and you’ll just abandon us?”

#### Chapter 620: One Hour

Liang Yue’s question wasn’t without reason.

This time, Zhang Yi was heading to Blizzard City with only her and Hua Hua, but refused to bring along Uncle You and the others.

It was easier to explain not bringing Zhou Ke’er, Lu Keran, and the others—they were all Support-type superhumans, after all.

But what about Uncle You and Xu Chunlei?

They were both Combat-type superhumans. Zhang Yi choosing not to take them meant only one thing—their combat power wasn’t enough for the battles Zhang Yi was involved in now.

That naturally made Liang Yue, as a teammate, feel uneasy.

After hearing her question, a playful smile crept onto Zhang Yi’s lips.

Instead of answering directly, he asked in return, “Miss Liang, do you think I’m the kind of guy who’s eager to build a massive force and constantly grow his own team?”

Liang Yue blinked. "Aren't you?"

Zhang Yi answered without hesitation, "Of course not!"

"Sure, from the start of the apocalypse till now, it might look like our team's been expanding."

"But I've never had the intention of creating some huge faction or ruling the world in the apocalypse."

He shot a glance at Liang Yue. "Otherwise, I could've easily consolidated all of Tianhai City's forces by now. Have you seen me do that?"

Liang Yue's expression grew thoughtful.

"You really haven't."

Even after taking in the people from the three major bases, Zhang Yi had never planned to manage them directly.

That didn't line up with someone hungry for power.

Zhang Yi said calmly, "Back when the apocalypse first hit, I kept gathering people because I didn't have the ability to protect myself. Banding together helped us all survive."

"Back then, I did pick teammates with a very utilitarian mindset."

"But now, those harsh early days are behind us. And the relationship between you all and me is no longer just mutual benefit."

Zhang Yi looked at Liang Yue, his gaze softening.

“We’re family now. And family doesn’t nitpick over who contributes more or less.”

“Even if you guys couldn’t do anything at all—just being by my side would be enough.”

The sincerity in Zhang Yi’s eyes made Liang Yue finally feel at ease.

She nodded. “That’s all I hoped for. Honestly, I’ve already seen all of us as family too. I just want us all to survive this apocalypse together.”

Zhang Yi smiled and nodded. “That’s the spirit! So from now on, none of that kind of talk, alright? Family doesn’t doubt each other.”

Liang Yue lowered her head a bit sheepishly. “I was overthinking it. Sorry!”

Zhang Yi thought to himself, Hey, I’m not some kind of devil...

At his core, Zhang Yi saw himself as just a regular person.

Not overly kind, but definitely not evil either.

All he wanted was to survive this apocalyptic world in peace.

And if he could have a group of companions who gave him warmth, even better. People always need some emotional support.

So even if Uncle You and the others couldn’t contribute much in future battles, Zhang Yi’s attitude toward them on the surface wouldn’t change.

Having a trustworthy crew in the apocalypse was already incredibly rare.

Zhang Yi and Liang Yue arrived at the Xiaomiaoshan Subway Station. He put the Snow Vehicle into storage, then waited on the platform for the special train to pick them up.

Right on schedule, the train arrived.

As usual, the familiar robotic female attendant greeted them with a smile and invited them to board.

Zhang Yi and Liang Yue stepped onto the train, with Hua Hua perched on Zhang Yi's shoulder like always.

This time, since there was no need to pick anyone up from other cities, it only took them under two hours to reach Blizzard City.

They stepped off the train onto a quiet platform, guarded by a few armed soldiers.

But Zhang Yi saw some familiar faces.

Baili Changqing, current captain of the Black Robe Investigation Team, along with his old acquaintances Wu Di and Meng Siyu.

The three of them were geared up in sleek black combat suits, and when they saw Zhang Yi, smiles broke out on both Baili Changqing's and Meng Siyu's faces.

Wu Di still wore that cocky expression, but his eyes carried a trace of respect when he looked at Zhang Yi.

After all, last time, Zhang Yi had beat him fair and square—while holding back.

“Hahaha! Zhang Yi, welcome to Blizzard City! You got here at just the right time.”

Baili Changqing laughed heartily and pulled Zhang Yi into a big bear hug.

Zhang Yi was a bit surprised. “You came to pick me up?”

As a Captain of one of the Six Investigation Teams, Baili personally coming to greet him was a bit over the top—it made Zhang Yi wonder just how much clout he had now.

When did he get this much face?

Baili let go and smiled. “Commander Zhu asked me to come meet you. To be honest, I was a little surprised myself that you actually agreed to join this operation.”

Zhang Yi got the picture—his actions in wiping out the Daze City superhuman alliance must’ve caught Zhu Zheng’s attention.

Still, he just gave a calm smile in response.

“You really think I had a choice?”

Baili’s grin widened.

“Not quite.”

“Commander Zhu said you were very cooperative this time—agreed to come right away.”

Zhang Yi took a deep breath. “Is that so weird? Even I can’t just sit back when facing a foreign invasion.”

Zhang Yi wasn’t stupid.

Baili nodded approvingly, then sighed. “You’re right. This mess is worse than we thought.”

Zhang Yi's face turned serious too.

"What exactly happened? Is Moon of Corrosion really that strong? They wiped out ten superhuman teams?"

Baili replied in a grave tone, "It's worse than you think. Even Commander Zhu was floored when he heard the full story."

"There's something weird about Moon of Corrosion's power. You know how long it took them to eliminate those ten teams?"

Zhang Yi narrowed his eyes. "How long?"

"One hour."

Baili said each word slowly and clearly.

"What?!!"

Zhang Yi was stunned.

"One hour? No way. That's impossible!"

Even if Bian Junwu led the entire Black Robe Squad at full strength, there's no way they could pull that off.

There were just too many unknowns in warfare.

When you don't know your enemy, you've got to probe carefully, and distribute your forces properly.

If this battle had been between the Black Robe Squad and ten superhuman teams, Zhang Yi figured it'd take at least ten days, maybe more.

Even if Bian Junwu went all-in with Annihilation, it wouldn't be that fast.

Once your powers are exposed, others will find ways to counter them.

Even if they lost, it wouldn't be like slaughtering pigs—completely wiped out in an hour!

Baili said, "Come on, let's talk while we walk. We'll chat more at the bar."

Zhang Yi raised an eyebrow, curious. "Shouldn't I be meeting Commander Zhu first?"

He was here on official business, after all.

Zhu Zheng sent Baili to receive him, and now Baili was taking him for drinks?