

New Era 291

Chapter 291 - Terror in the Women's Restroom

This was entirely Chen Xingyue's subconscious reaction; when she truly encountered danger, she couldn't care less about so much.

Chen Shouyi quickly scanned the women's restroom upon hearing this.

The place was brightly lit, with four gasoline lamps hanging, yet it felt eerily dim, especially at the entrance to the women's restroom, where a sense of yin permeated, exuding a burst of chilling coldness, like a breeze of cold air blowing.

This kind of yin aura was several times more intense than what he had observed at night in the otherworld.

He had always had a misconception, thinking that the Earth, with its low concentration of Original Force, couldn't give birth to powerful spirits. In fact, he wasn't entirely wrong; under low Original Force, spirits found it more difficult to survive, and their powers manifested far more weakly.

In the otherworld, even small animals like insects and birds could form spirits after death.

On Earth, only humans could barely form spirits after dying.

Yet, there are exceptions to everything.

As a funeral home, this place hosted hundreds of corpses every day, day after day, month after month, it was practically a natural gathering place for yin energy, where countless spirits slaughtered and entangled with each other, devouring one another.

It was like raising venom.

By now, this funeral home had clearly birthed a terrifying entity.

He gently took his sister's hand off his arm and softly said, "Don't worry!"

He didn't offer much comfort, and then walked toward the women's restroom.

A thin layer of mist condensed on the cement floor, the dim gasoline lamps, with their flames incessantly flickering, cast alternately bright and shadowy light across the restroom.

Chen Shouyi initially believed he would spot the spirit at first glance.

Yet, he saw nothing at all except the eerie atmosphere.

Nor did he see Tian Zhenzhen.

"Tian Zhenzhen, you can come out now," Chen Shouyi called.

His voice echoed faintly in the restroom, carrying a kind of ethereal quality.

However, there was no response whatsoever.

All around was silent, yet with his acute hearing, he could discern the somewhat erratic breathing of the other person.

He frowned slightly and walked to the middle stall, hesitating a bit, since after all, this was a women's restroom, and he inevitably felt a bit embarrassed.

But the situation did not permit him much thought; he grabbed the door handle and pulled, only to find it was locked inside, then forcefully yanked.

"Bang!"

The entire door was ripped off, falling to the ground with a loud crash.

Chen Shouyi saw Tian Zhenzhen squatting over the toilet, motionless.

Her pants were pulled down, exposing half of her buttocks.

Her long hair hung low, completely covering her face, so Chen Shouyi couldn't see any expression.

After just a glance, Chen Shouyi averted his eyes, blushing, and called toward the restroom entrance, "Xing Yue, come help!"

"Xing Yue!"

"Xing Yue!"

No response at all.

Had she gone back to the morgue?

At this moment, Chen Shouyi sensed something strange, turned his head, and found Tian Zhenzhen, who was just motionless, slowly raising her head, staring at Chen Shouyi with a blank look. Between her disheveled hair, a rigid, eerie smile stretched at her lips, looking somewhat creepy.

Chen Shouyi's heart sank, "Are you okay?"

As soon as he spoke, Tian Zhenzhen suddenly lunged at him.

...

Outside the restroom, four girls huddled together, looking around nervously.

In fact, none of them had seen any spirit before, just felt the restroom was inexplicably creepy and terrifying.

Only Tian Zhenzhen had gone to use the restroom, while the others waited outside the stalls for her.

By this time, it was already midnight, making the few girls even more tense, skittish, and frightened by Tian Zhenzhen's shrill scream, which instinctively drove them all to flee before they were prepared to rescue her when Chen Shouyi arrived.

To distract themselves, Wu Huifang asked, "Xing Yue, is he really your brother?"

Though a bit concerned about her brother and Tian Zhenzhen's safety, Chen Xingyue nodded shyly, "Yes!"

Since it had been called out, there was no point in hiding it.

"Is he your biological brother?" another girl asked curiously.

"What are you thinking, of course, he's my biological brother!" Chen Xingyue said, slightly exasperated.

"Your brother is too good to you; he came secretly to protect you, and he's handsome, strong, and so caring towards his sister. Class president, you're really so lucky," a stout and muscular girl said enviously.

"It's alright; I didn't even want him to come, but he insisted, he's so annoying," Chen Xingyue chuckled dryly.

This immediately drew another round of envious, jealous, and resentful reactions from her classmates.

"Your brother brought Tian Zhenzhen out," a girl said then.

Everyone prepared to go over, but before they could move, a deep chill rose from within.

Chen Shouyi grabbed Tian Zhenzhen's arm, nearly dragging her out.

Tian Zhenzhen seemed frenzied, biting his arm continuously, her nails frantically scratching his body, while emitting low growls that didn't sound human.

His clothes were torn to shreds, exposing his tightly knotted muscles, yet there wasn't a single scratch left on his skin.

"Bro, what's wrong with Tian Zhenzhen?" Chen Xingyue asked as she walked up.

For some reason, Chen Xingyue's voice sounded distant, as though heavily distorted.

"I don't know, maybe she's possessed." Chen Shouyi allowed her to scratch and bite him, "By the way, why didn't you hear when I called you just now?"

"Ah, did you call me just now?" Chen Xingyue asked in surprise.

Chen Shouyi frowned.

Could it be an illusion!

He glanced at the surrounding area shrouded as if in darkness, his heart stirred, and suddenly his will focused.

The next moment, it was as if an invisible force swept across instantly, causing the air to tremble slightly.

The previously eerie atmosphere around was immediately swept away, the light brightened, and Tian Zhenzhen next to him seemed to be strongly stimulated, screaming:

"Die! I... want... you... to die..."

Her voice was sharp, like nails scraping glass, sending a chill through everyone's hearts.

"It actually developed a certain level of intelligence!" Chen Shouyi thought with a chill in his heart.

However, the next moment, her voice abruptly stopped.

A large hand pressed against Tian Zhenzhen's back, causing her to tremble all over, and a spirit full of hostility sprang from her body. This was a woman in red, vaguely beautiful when alive, but her twisted face and sharp nails completely destroyed everything.

She screamed in fright, ready to flee, but just as her body moved, Chen Shouyi flashed forward, focusing his will to grab her illusory chest. Before his palm made contact, the entire spirit exploded instantly, dispersing completely.

...

Morgue.

Tian Zhenzhen quickly woke up, surrounded by classmates.

"Are you okay?" Chen Xingyue asked, supporting Tian Zhenzhen.

"I'm fine, I should be fine!" Tian Zhenzhen shook her head, feeling lingering fear, her pale face showing signs of weakness and fatigue.

While being possessed by the spirit, her consciousness remained clear throughout, but she couldn't control her body: "Where's that ghost?"

A trace of fear flashed in her eyes, her whole body trembling slightly.

"It was killed by Xing Yue's brother," Wu Huifang said. "Luckily he was here, otherwise the consequences would have been unimaginable."

"Isn't Xing Yue's brother General Manager Chen?" Tian Zhenzhen asked in confusion. She looked gratefully at Chen Shouyi, who was talking with several officers and the Martial Arts Teacher in the distance, her cheeks slightly flushed.

Her previous unbecoming appearance had been completely exposed, and he had even helped her pull up her pants.

"General Manager Chen is Xing Yue's brother!" another female student quickly explained.

Some students who didn't know were suddenly shocked.

...

"I really apologize for this time!" Company Commander Zhou said with deep regret. "This terrifying spirit first appeared a month ago, and then it got stronger and stronger. We've been helpless, originally thinking that burning it the day before yesterday had eliminated it, but unexpectedly, it wasn't dead yet."

"This is something no one could have anticipated. Fortunately, nothing happened!" Chen Shouyi said. He wasn't unreasonable, and since only Chen Xingyue was frightened, he didn't pay much attention to it.

In fact, even if he hadn't come, Chen Xingyue should have been fine. The spirit wasn't yet strong enough to possess a Martial Artist.

Tang Jiande nearby kept saying it was fine as well.

However, his attitude didn't matter, since no one asked the school to take students to the funeral home, and if something happened, the school was naturally responsible.

Seeing Chen Shouyi understand, several senior officials from the funeral home couldn't help but breathe a sigh of relief.

The guide opened his mouth, unable to help but confirm again.

"General Manager Chen, did you really eliminate that spirit?"

Ever since this spirit appeared, the entire funeral home has been under great pressure, even applying to the higher-ups to abandon this funeral home and build a new one, but moving to a new funeral home obviously couldn't be completed in just a month or two.

"Rest assured, it's already been eliminated," Chen Shouyi said somewhat helplessly, repeating himself once more.

"Then, can you see any other weaker spirits?"

Chen Shouyi nodded slightly.

Hearing this, everyone felt a sense of awe and reverence in their hearts.

"General Manager Chen, although it's a bit presumptuous, on behalf of our company of 123 brothers, there's a request, if you might be willing to..." Company Commander Zhou said with hopeful eyes.

"You want me to clear out the spirits in this area?" Chen Shouyi, quick-witted, quickly understood his meaning.

"If it's too much trouble!" Company Commander Zhou hurriedly said.

"It's not about trouble or not, after all, I'm idle now," Chen Shouyi replied.

"General Manager Chen, thank you so much!"

The officers immediately expressed their gratitude continuously.

Chen Shouyi waved his hand and walked outside. Company Commander Zhou and several officers and Tang Jiande immediately followed curiously, wanting to see how he dealt with the spirits.

Chen Shouyi focused his will, looking at an illusory old man in front, who immediately exploded.

Then, he glanced at the ground.

A few spirits hidden underground were shaken and suddenly vanished into thin air.

This was the technique he discovered earlier when rescuing Tian Zhenzhen.

The use of willpower is not limited to swords; it can be used from all parts of the body and is not restricted to cutting damage. As long as the will is concentrated enough and within the perceptual domain, sheer thought is enough to kill some weak spirits.

Several people curiously followed Chen Shouyi, watching him glance left and right, walking further and further, feeling more and more puzzled.

If it weren't for being intimidated by Chen Shouyi's identity, someone would probably have asked questions already.

Tang Jiande couldn't help his curiosity and walked to Chen Shouyi's side.

At this moment, Chen Shouyi's gaze suddenly swept towards him,

Tang Jiande's breath caught, feeling an incredibly terrifying aura rushing at him. His muscles tensed, hairs stood on end, and he instinctively prepared for battle.

Fortunately, the gaze only swept past him, and he quickly walked past Chen Shouyi, looking elsewhere.

Tang Jiande gasped for air, his heart pounding wildly, and it took him a long time to recover.

Feeling a chill down his back, he then realized his back was completely soaked.

Such a terrifying presence!

Chapter 292 Professional Tattletale

"Teacher Tang, what's wrong!" A few officers behind him noticed his abnormality and came over to ask.

"Nothing...nothing!" Tang Jiande forced a smile, quickly adjusted his mindset, feeling that after working in school for so long, his sharpness had long been smoothed out, with no competitiveness left, he laughed at himself, "The aura of a great martial artist is too strong, can't be compared!"

Company Commander Zhou whispered, "What great martial artist, President Chen is the provincial security advisor, he is a martial artist!"

Tang Jiande was stunned speechless: "Martial artist!"

Looking at Chen Shouyi again, his already slightly hunched back suddenly became more bent.

...

Chen Shouyi toured every corner and space of the funeral home.

Most of the spirits here were incredibly weak, a thought could kill them instantly, only a few slightly stronger ones required him to take action personally. Half an hour later, the cold atmosphere of the funeral home finally completely dissipated.

The oppressive heat of the summer night returned.

Chen Shouyi was also exhausted, his spirit nearly dried up, and his temples throbbed with pain.

Upon his return, Chen Shouyi declined a few officers' invitation for a late night snack, and instead sat in a chair specially moved for him by a soldier, closed his eyes, and recuperated.

...

A few female students gathered together, whispering.

"Class president, does your brother have a girlfriend?" Tian Zhenzhen asked shyly, she had recovered by now, although still weak, her body felt alright.

"Not yet, I think. He spends all his energy on training every day," Chen Xingyue thought for a moment and said.

"Ah, he doesn't have a girlfriend yet!" Tian Zhenzhen said in a slightly surprised tone.

"Don't even think about it, someone like him won't be interested even if you throw yourself at him," a girl next to her discouraged.

"I don't need to be his girlfriend, just knowing he's single makes me happy!" Tian Zhenzhen retorted.

"I totally agree," a large girl felt this hit home, and quietly agreed.

"Yeah! Yeah!"

"Just look at the muscles on his arms, they're so perfect."

"And his skin is really nice!"

"Class president, does your family hire housekeepers? I might as well become one."

"In your dreams!"

Chen Xingyue opened her mouth, yet couldn't insert herself into the conversation.

The nearby boys, looking at the relentless debate among the girls in the class, kept their heads down like quails, not daring to refute, especially with that prominent figure sitting nearby, who knew if such a powerful and unpredictable person could hear them.

...

As time crept closer to midnight.

The number of bodies arriving began to surge, some bodies came wrapped in cloth but parasites had already crawled out, the atmosphere in the morgue became increasingly heavy and oppressive.

Less and less talking took place.

By four in the morning, another batch of bodies was cremated.

That night, the death toll shockingly approached a thousand.

...

At six in the morning.

Chen Shouyi and Tang Jiande exchanged a greeting, then Chen Xingyue and he rode their bicycles and left the funeral home ahead.

"Brother!"

"What's up?" Chen Shouyi said casually.

"Can't you treat me better in the future!" Chen Xingyue said.

She was in an excellent mood at the time, ever since classmates found out that President Chen was her brother her attitude felt different from everyone.

Though she was the class president, and indeed the most capable in class.

Yet in reality, she wielded little authority in class.

Perhaps because she was too young.

Would a young man in his twenties take commands from a sixteen-year-old girl?

Male classmates treated her more like a younger sister.

But among female classmates, apart from Wu Huifang, whose age was close to hers and had the best relationship, others only maintained a surface interaction.

Chen Shouyi didn't understand, turned his head in confusion and asked, "Haven't I treated you well enough?"

"You call that treating me well? You've been bullying me since I was young, can't you care and cherish me like other brothers do for their sisters?"

Chen Shouyi blushed slightly upon hearing this, and retorted, "What do you mean by bullying you, whenever mom hit me it was because you snitched!"

"Who told you to make mistakes, otherwise why would mom specifically hit you and not me," Chen Xingyue got angry and sneered.

The two bickered over and over, soon completely off track.

...

There were no tricycles loaded with corpses on the road.

In fact, before leaving, only a few bodies had been sent to the funeral home.

A dozen military transport vehicles drove in succession on the road, crowded with armed soldiers.

Chen Shouyi's expression darkened:

"It seems the source of the parasite infection must have been sealed, and bodies are being disposed of nearby." He speculated:

"Just wondering, how extensive is the range and can it be controlled... Sigh, hopefully, the safe zone stays unscathed!"

He sighed slightly.

...

Soon afterwards, Chen Shouyi and Chen Xingyue returned to the safe zone.

It was peak hours then, the streets crowded with people getting to work, the ringing of bicycle bells and laughter collided into a boisterous scene.

A bus screeched to a halt at the station, a large crowd swarmed onto it.

Chen Shouyi couldn't help but glance over.

The bus was part of a new wave of diesel-powered public transport, still rare and seldom seen.

Gazing at this lively atmosphere, the gloom in his heart dissipated considerably.

The two ate breakfast at a street-side breakfast shop, then visited their parents' restaurant to assure safety.

Then returned home, each heading to their room.

Chen Shouyi opened the bedroom door:

"Little one!"

Upon hearing the familiar voice, Shell Lady emerged from under the covers.

She was timid and alert by nature, always ducking into various nooks at the slightest disturbance.

After feeding her honey, Chen Shouyi let her sleep, considering her personality, evidently she hadn't slept at all the previous night.

With a pure heart and the Giant around, there was no worry about her safety, her eyes shut, within seconds quiet snoring began.

He thought:

The Barbie Doll clothes, glass bead and crystal ball related to her on the bed floated automatically, simultaneously two drawers opened, and everything categorized flew into the drawers then gently closed.

He went to the bathroom to shower, returned wearing shorts, and sat down on the bed.

At this time, not an ounce of sleepiness lingered.

For a divine creature like him, not sleeping for a night is nothing, even a week without sleep has little effect. In fact, he only sleeps for three to four hours every night now.

He opens the attribute panel:

Strength: 16.0

Agility: 15.9

Constitution: 16.4

Intelligence: 14.5

Perception: 13.7

Willpower: 14.6

Energy Accumulation: 1.35

"Perception increased by 0.1! Looks like last night wasn't without its benefits."

He closed his eyes and sensed for a while.

"It's about a three-meter radius now!"

It could completely cover the entire bedroom.

At this moment, a commotion came from outside the window.

Chen Shouyi closed the attribute panel, quickly walked to the window, drew open the curtains, and saw several people in sealed hazmat suits taking water samples from various ditches and places with water accumulation.

Many people around were watching this scene, discussing it animatedly.

"What are they doing?"

"You don't know? A parasitic outbreak from another world was found over by the reservoir. A friend of mine is a doctor and they said it's serious; quite a few people have died!"

"How did that happen? Surely we won't have it here?"

"Who knows for sure? But definitely don't drink raw water now, and it's best to scald your clothes with boiling water too!"

"Scald it? The clothes would shrink!"

"That's still better than losing your life!"

"That's true! By the way, does our tap water come from the reservoir over there?"

"No, I remember it's sourced from Sun and Moon Lake in the city!"

"Thank goodness, that's a relief!"

...

Chen Shouyi watched for a while before looking away.

By noon, a large number of workers swarmed into the villa area and started spreading lime on the ground.

Chen Xingyue woke up after sleeping for the entire morning.

Chen Shouyi didn't plan on eating out and cooked some noodles at home.

All vegetarian, without adding any meat.

Having just returned from the funeral home, the strange meaty aroma was still deeply imprinted in his memory, and he now found the smell of meat repulsive.

Being the son of a chef.

He knew basic cooking skills.

Brought the noodles to the dining table.

"It's all overcooked!" Chen Xingyue took a bite and commented with obvious distaste.

"Be grateful there's something to eat. Whether overcooked or not, does it make a difference once it's in your stomach?" Chen Shouyi retorted unhappily.

"There's a big difference; how can it be the same?"

"You're just too demanding. Next time, you do the cooking!"

Unbothered by his picky sister, Chen Shouyi slurped all the sticky noodles from a large bowl.

Hmm, it actually tasted pretty good!

The seasoning was just right.

Once Chen Xingyue finished eating, Chen Shouyi cleaned up the dishes and went to the kitchen to wash them.

Chen Xingyue also walked in:

"Brother, how did you kill those spirits?"

"Want to learn?" Chen Shouyi glanced at her.

"Please teach me!" Chen Xingyue shamelessly hugged Chen Shouyi's arm and acted coquettishly. This was a technique to kill spirits, and once mastered, she wouldn't have to be afraid of them anymore.

His sister had developed well already, making Chen Shouyi feel slightly awkward. He freed his arm and said while washing dishes:

"There's no real technique; it's all about willpower."

"Willpower?"

"As long as you focus your mind, a psychic power will erupt from within."

"Brother, you must be lying again," Chen Xingyue doubted. "There's no such thing, and it's never been taught at school."

Chen Shouyi paused, greatly disheartened.

Is my credibility really so low?

After all, I'm a Martial Artist. Can I be compared to those at school?

Chen Shouyi finished washing the dishes, set them aside, and said irritably, "Watch!"

As soon as the words fell, the two dishes next to him began to float and rotate around Chen Shouyi, faster and faster, producing a whooshing sound. After circling a dozen times, the cabinet door opened automatically, and the dishes quickly flew in, landing neatly in place.

"Did you see that clearly?"

Chen Xingyue's rosy lips parted slightly, her eyes widened, looking dazed.

It wasn't until Chen Shouyi wiped his hands with a towel, took off his apron, and walked out of the kitchen that Chen Xingyue came back to her senses.

"Brother!"

This "Brother" was full of emotion, genuinely heartfelt.

Listening to it gave Chen Shouyi goosebumps: "Alright, alright, I'll teach you, I'll teach you!"

"It's simple to gain this power. First, you need to achieve a state of calmness and focus your mind. Then, concentrate all your thoughts, merging them into one.

The power of will isn't limited to manipulating objects; it also has a significant offensive capability."

He raised his finger and flicked it towards the wall. Without a sound, a barely noticeable crack appeared on the wall.

Chen Xingyue immediately moved closer to examine it carefully, incredulously saying, "Did you just do that?"

Chen Shouyi nodded with a calm expression.

He found that showing off in front of his sister felt doubly satisfying.

"Mom asked yesterday who made that crack in the dining table. I said it must've been you, and my guess was right."

Chen Shouyi's hand twitched slightly, feeling a bit itchy.

This little snitch!

Thinking back, ever since she started practicing martial arts after turning fourteen, he hadn't hit her anymore.

Of course, mainly because he couldn't beat her anymore.

Now, is it still appropriate to hit her?

Chapter 293 - Spread

City Government Building Conference Room.

"The regions where juvenile parasites have been found are mainly concentrated around the Guangming Reservoir area, including Changgang Town, Xuxiang Town, and part of Hongshan Town, affecting a population of about 170,000 to 180,000. These areas are now strictly sealed off, waterways have been blocked, and supplies, epidemic prevention personnel, and doctors are already in place.

The main issue now is that this parasite is a new alien species, and there is currently no targeted medication.

As of this morning, the recorded death toll has exceeded one thousand. We might face a peak in the number of deaths in the coming days," a deputy mayor said with a grave expression.

The alien parasites are highly resilient. For otherworldly creatures, they may be as ordinary as roundworms, but for fragile ordinary humans, they are completely lethal.

Ordinary broad-spectrum anthelmintics are completely ineffective. If the toxicity is increased, humans might die before the parasites do.

Therefore, every new alien parasite outbreak leads to research aimed at developing new, specific narrow-spectrum insecticides.

Since the spatial passage appeared twenty years ago,

hundreds of parasite outbreaks have occurred across the country. Some have killed as few as a dozen before being controlled, while others have wiped out tens of thousands to a hundred thousand people, leaving nine in ten houses empty. However, in recent years, thanks to these drugs, such outbreaks have almost become silent and rare.

Yet, this time the alien parasite is a species humanity has never discovered before.

"The most pressing issue is that according to the weather station's report, it is very likely to rain today and tomorrow," the deputy mayor continued.

The rain will not only lead to a massive proliferation of the parasites but also accelerate their spread through flowing water.

Everyone present frowned, and the atmosphere was oppressively tense.

Power has still not been restored.

Previously, whenever an alien parasite death case was discovered, investigations, lockdowns, and rapid responses followed immediately.

However, with the sluggish and outdated communication and transportation means now, by the time the discovery is made, it has already spread to a certain extent.

"I will let the Provincial Government contact the air force to disperse the coming clouds, ensuring that the surrounding area remains absolutely dry in the coming days," said the city leader solemnly.

The war on the Dongning side is still in a blockade and recuperation state. The God of Hunting has yet to appear, and numerous warplanes remain stationed in Hedong.

"We'll also need a few helicopters for emergency communication," the second city leader immediately added.

Just then, there was a sudden knock on the door.

The secretary responsible for the meeting records, seated in a corner, stood up, went to open the door, and saw the Bureau of Health and Family Planning director, who had a look of distress on his face, covered in sweat. His heart couldn't help but skip a beat.

"An outbreak has been detected in the Safe Zone!"

...

The rumbling of trucks on the highway, the hurried footsteps of the crowd, and the sound of conversations made the night especially noisy.

Chen Shouyi stood by the window, drew the curtain, and quietly watched.

Even though it was already 9 PM, a large number of workers in the villa area were still busy outside, leveling the low-lying waterlogged areas, filling them with soil, and sprinkling lime.

With news of the alien parasites spreading, many people might have a sleepless night.

"Hey Giant, why is one of my little gems missing?" said Shell Lady sitting on the bed, with a serious face.

"You're definitely counting it wrong," Chen Shouyi said casually.

Shell Lady was skeptical but began to patiently count: "One, one... one, one."

After counting for more than three minutes.

She finally stopped: "There is indeed one missing!"

"Count it again!" Chen Shouyi said.

"Hmph, this is the last time. I never count wrong," Shell Lady warned angrily and started counting patiently again.

Several minutes later.

"It is missing. I count it every day. It must be you who took it,"

"Give me back my gem!"

"Give me back my gem!"

Chen Shouyi was so annoyed by her that he closed the curtain, walked to the bed, opened a drawer, and handed her a small glass bead.

Shell Lady received it and snorted twice.

Seeing the little one's slightly disdainful expression, Chen Shouyi was so annoyed that he could grind his teeth.

He really wondered, with so many "ones," how she could remember them all.

"Bang bang bang!"

"General Manager Chen!"

Bai Xiaoling's voice came from downstairs.

Chen Shouyi quickly walked out of the bedroom, went downstairs, and opened the door. Bai Xiaoling was wearing long pants and sleeves, sweating profusely, holding two cardboard boxes.

He looked on curiously; today, it was rare for Bai Xiaoling not to wear a skirt:

"Why are you dressed like this? Isn't it hot? What's going on?"

"General Manager Chen, I came to bring you insecticides!" Bai Xiaoling handed the two boxes over.

"Is the parasite situation that severe?" Chen Shouyi asked after hearing this, taking the boxes.

Bai Xiaoling nodded solemnly: "A resident in the Shuiyue neighborhood has just had a case of parasitic infection, and it's now under military lockdown. We're not sure about the situation yet. During this time, it's best for your uncle and aunt not to go out."

Chen Shouyi felt a weight in his heart.

Unexpectedly, even the Safe Zone had a case.

"Shouyi, who is it?" Mrs. Chen's voice came from upstairs.

"Liaison Bai!" Chen Shouyi replied, then said to Bai Xiaoling, "Come in and sit for a while!"

...

In the living room.

"According to the information I have, this alien parasite is quite terrifying. It can not only enter the body through food but also burrow through the skin," Bai Xiaoling said with a slight tremor of fear. "But this information must be kept confidential. I hope Uncle, Aunt, and Xing Yue won't spread it to prevent public panic."

"Don't worry, we understand the importance. There was an outbreak here in Dongning years ago, killing over a thousand people!" Chen Dawei sighed.

"When did it happen?" Chen Xingyue asked, "How come I never heard about it."

"Back then, you were only two or three years old, and Shou Yi had just started kindergarten!" Mrs. Chen said.

Chen Shouyi had vague memories, but not very deep. At that age, he was mainly focused on playing. He only knew he was kept at home, not going to kindergarten for a whole month.

Bai Xiaoling chatted for a while and soon left.

The parents exchanged a few more worried words and went to bed quickly.

Before going to her room, Chen Xingyue quietly called Chen Shouyi.

"Brother, I moved a corpse. Do you think I'll also get parasites?" Chen Xingyue asked worriedly.

"Let me see your hand," Chen Shouyi said, startled.

Chen Xingyue immediately offered her arm.

Chen Shouyi examined her arm; it was smooth and white, without a trace of red spots. Then, with his fingertip, he quickly drew a line on her skin, leaving a faint red mark on her arm. He glanced at it and said:

"Don't worry, your skin is so thick that parasites shouldn't be able to burrow through."

"You're the thick-skinned one!" Chen Xingyue recoiled in pain, retorting.

But the worry in her heart was gone.

Chapter 294 - Dignity

Chen Shouyi, who returned to the bedroom, wasn't as dismissive as he pretended to be.

The skin doesn't show it, but it doesn't mean there's no possibility of parasitism. Maybe the wound is just too small to notice.

He picked up the Shell Lady and placed her to the side, then scattered her bits and pieces apart.

He then lay on the bed with a slightly solemn face and closed his eyes, entering the virtual memory space of the Book of Knowledge.

The Shell Lady rolled over and stood up again, looking at the gems and clothes she had just tidied up, now in a mess again by the Giant, she trembled with anger, hands on her hips, muttering grudgingly:

"Bad Giant, I won't cover you with a blanket again in the future!"

...

Upon entering the virtual memory space, as the space shifted, Chen Shouyi woke up to see Tang Jiande, smiling broadly, striding over: "General Manager Chen, hello, hello."

However, at this moment, Chen Shouyi had no time for him, he's just an NPC anyway.

Every second wasted here is a precious Energy Point!

Impatiently, he pushed him aside and quickly walked to a corpse.

Tang Jiande, with an irresistible force, staggered back seven or eight steps, almost falling to the ground. He stood dumbfounded, feeling the eyes of his students and nearby soldiers on him, his face shifting between red and blue in shame and anger.

But Chen Shouyi couldn't care less about an NPC's attitude, he focused his will.

Under an invisible force, the blanket covering the corpse quickly unwrapped, revealing parasites crawling on the surface.

These parasites, the longer ones were even longer than the Shell Lady, while the shorter ones were only one or two millimeters, almost invisible to the naked eye for an ordinary person.

Even though Chen Shouyi was prepared, he couldn't help but frown at these disgusting things.

With a thought, a tiny parasite floated out and was bouncing intensely in the air, full of vitality, displaying its well-developed and flexible muscles, quite different from his understanding of Earth parasites.

He glanced around.

His gaze moved from the surrounding students and soldiers to Tang Jiande, standing aside.

It's you.

"Come over here."

Tang Jiande felt a surge of irritation at Chen Shouyi's call.

He didn't want to go.

He had just lost face in front of the students, eager to warm up to someone cold, and the embarrassment hadn't subsided.

You can't make me leave just because you said so, nor make me come over just because you want me to.

That's not reasonable.

First, you must be sincere.

Even if you're a Martial Artist, you shouldn't be so arrogant and casually humiliate a martial artist.

Martial artists have dignity too.

However, despite his thoughts, his feet moved on their own, walking over with a forced smile and saying, "General Manager Chen, you called me."

As he spoke, the parasite had already silently moved to his exposed neck.

"There's nothing more," Chen Shouyi waved his hand.

Tang Jiande: ...

He waited patiently for a while, discovering that although the parasite was crawling, it couldn't penetrate Tang Jiande's skin.

"It seems the resilience of a martial artist's skin can withstand the intrusion of parasites," he thought to himself.

Still, Chen Shouyi felt this wasn't foolproof.

After all, every person is different.

Even among martial artists.

One's a Senior Martial Artist, the other a new Martial Artist.

One is a greasy, rough-skinned middle-aged man, while the other is a delicate sixteen-year-old girl with smooth skin.

The differences are significant.

There's nothing safer than testing on my sister once, he thought determinedly, gesturing for her to come over: "Come here!"

...

The next day.

The atmosphere in the Safe Zone was growing tenser, in just a day, the number of pedestrians had thinned considerably. The Safe Zone was covered in a layer of white lime, adding a layer of glaring brightness in the morning sun, increasing the already sweltering summer's stifling feel.

Chen Shouyi glanced up as he cycled, spotting several fighter jets frequently passing in the sky.

With loud rumbling sounds.

It wasn't long before he arrived at Jiangnan University's campus.

He parked his bicycle in the bike shed, picking up a paper box. This was pest control sent by Mrs. Chen for him to deliver to his cousin and aunt. Last night, Bai Xiaoling brought over two boxes, and obviously, their family couldn't use it all.

Just as he turned around, a girl with flushed cheeks, holding books, walked over, her eyes eagerly watching Chen Shouyi: "Classmate, do you know if the library still has seats?"

"I'm not from this school..." Chen Shouyi had long been used to girls striking up conversations, calmly saying, "Do you know how to get to the dormitory building for the third-year finance major in the School of Economics and Trade?"

"I know, I'll take you there!" The girl quickly offered.

"It's really too much trouble for you." Chen Shouyi politely responded.

"It's no trouble at all, I'm just passing by," the girl originally planning to go to the library said with a charming smile.

There was always time for the library, but helping out and assisting a handsome guy wasn't something you could do any time.

"I'm Ma Shuhua from the biological sciences major. What school are you from?"

"I dropped out after high school, I'm Chen Shouyi," he replied.

"Oh, working so early, it must be difficult?" The girl sympathized, kindness overflowing.

"Uh, it's alright!" Chen Shouyi said.

"Are you here to deliver something?" Ma Shuhua asked, seeing him holding the box, carefully without offending his dignity.

"Yes!" Chen Shouyi nodded.

They passed a sports field where people were practicing Martial Arts everywhere.

Noticing his interest, Ma Shuhua smiled and commented:

"You're so tall and strong, you must like Martial Arts too. Now, here we also have Martial Arts Classes, the teachers are all Senior Martial Artists, and many people come to audit every day. If you want to learn, you can also come here.

If a famous teacher guides you, maybe you'll become a martial artist too."

"Thanks, but there's no need!" Chen Shouyi replied helplessly to the overly enthusiastic girl.

At this moment, someone approached quickly.

"Professor Guan!" Chen Shouyi called.

"Teacher Guan, hello!" Ma Shuhua also greeted quickly.

Guan Miao glanced at Chen Shouyi, subconsciously pinching her fingers, coldly averting her gaze before nodding to Ma Shuhua and walking briskly away.

"Do you know Teacher Guan? She's our microbiology teacher," Ma Shuhua curiously asked.

"I've met her a few times, not very familiar," Chen Shouyi ambiguously replied.

"Oh, Professor Guan used to be quite nice, but recently she divorced, and her personality has become very stern!" Ma Shuhua informed.

Divorced!

Chen Shouyi felt a wave of surprise.

Could it be because of what happened last time?

I didn't do anything, just borrowed a few books!

...

The two meandered through the campus until they finally arrived at the dormitory building of the School of Economics and Trade.

After asking a girl entering the dormitory to call down Chen Yuwei, Chen Shouyi finally completed his task.

He rode his bicycle out of the campus, heading home.

Chapter 295 - Reservoir

Exhale!

Inhale!

Exhale!

Inhale!

Every alteration in his breathing and the flow of air made the doors and windows of the bedroom creak, with fine dust falling down.

Chen Shouyi practiced the Thirty-Six Styles of Horizontal Training, bare-chested, steam enveloping his entire body, emanating a scorching heat. His well-built, tightly-knit muscles swelled and contracted, causing fine ripples in the air.

Don't think that an arm strength of only over 1100 kilograms seems small.

In fact, a regular sedan weighs only about 1300 to 1400 kilograms.

With Chen Shouyi's current strength, although he can't lift a car, when his power bursts forth, he can flip the car away.

...

A few minutes later, he stopped.

While checking the attribute panel, he walked towards the bathroom.

His eyes skimmed over the attributes and skill bar that hadn't changed much, and finally looked at the energy points.

"Originally I had accumulated 1.4 energy points, but after last night's consumption, it fell back to 1.1 again!" He sighed slightly, turned on the faucet, allowing the tap water to pour down his head: "I must start saving now! At this rate, optimizing the meditation to refine oneself seems far off."

This year's summer is exceptionally hot.

The Safe Zone has already seen incidents of people dying from the heat.

Even as a divine creature, though he can endure high heat and cold much better than ordinary people, with a little exercise he's drenched in sweat as well.

The most unbearable time is at night.

The Shell Lady, for some unknown reason acting oddly, sometimes covers him with blankets from head to toe.

He often wakes up sweating profusely in the middle of the night.

After showering, he doesn't bother with clothes and just swaps into shorts, stepping out of the bathroom to see the Shell Lady flushed, dragging a thick book, emerging backward from under the bed, her skirt already smeared with dirt.

"Why did you go under the bed?" Chen Shouyi looked at the mischievous child, speechless.

"I found a 'book' of yours in there," her little face showing a touch of pride as she sought credit.

Often, during conversations, Chen Shouyi explains certain specific terms in Chinese. She has now mastered quite a bit of Chinese vocabulary, frequently mixing Chinese with the common language of the other world.

Chen Shouyi picked up the book from the ground, brushing off the dust.

"Summary of the Various Schools of Inner Alchemy"

He glanced at the pages, stamped with Jiangnan University's library seal. Feeling somewhat embarrassed.

It must have been borrowed from Guan Miao last time, how did it end up under the bed?

Should I return it?

But remembering that woman's malicious attitude, Chen Shouyi gave up.

Better to have Bai Xiaoling take it back next time she comes over.

...

During lunch, the atmosphere was somewhat dull and oppressive.

Not long ago, a parasitic case appeared near the villa area, leading to a lockdown of the entire neighborhood, making everyone here on edge.

After eating, Chen Xingyue called Chen Shouyi, asking him to be her sparring partner.

The two found a nearby park, wielding two branches, and fought for half the day, until Chen Xingyue was so exhausted that she was soaked in sweat and completely spent.

During the sparring, Chen Xingyue hit her brother several times. Although she knew he was intentionally letting her, she was still happy and asked, "Brother, have I made some progress?"

"Yes, you've made a little progress!" Chen Shouyi said.

This wasn't just to flatter her. In the few months of systematic study at the Martial Arts Academy, she had made great strides, her punches more diversified and her combat more strategic, gradually growing from a clumsy novice to a... somewhat clumsy novice.

"How far am I from being a martial artist?" Chen Xingyue asked again, bringing up an old topic.

It had almost become her obsession.

"Why do you always ask this question? Don't get proud just because you achieve a bit—be modest, especially as someone who practices martial arts." Chen Shouyi donned an elder brother's authority, instructing.

"But I sparred with our Martial Arts Teacher, and he didn't seem that much stronger than me!" Chen Xingyue pouted, feeling a bit indignant.

"Do you think a teacher would go all out in sparring? If they really wanted to kill you, it'd probably only take one move—they were just letting you win." Chen Shouyi deliberately scoffed, internally cursing Tang Jiande for being useless, unable to manage even a sixteen-year-old girl.

"Of course, I know that, you don't have to remind me." Chen Xingyue suppressed her frustration, grumbling.

In the past, she would use such words to tease her brother.

Now the roles were reversed, with her brother scolding her!

Really infuriating!

...

A week passed in the blink of an eye.

Chen Shouyi stayed at home the whole time, not visiting the other world.

In fact, whether he was home or not made no difference.

Parasites aren't barbarians; such microscopic organisms, despite his great strength, he can't protect his family.

But he remained at home, comforting both his parents and himself.

These days, rumors about parasites in the Safe Zone spread wildly, causing panic.

Some claimed that several towns near the Safe Zone's reservoir had nearly perished.

Others said the parasite lock has completely lost control, starting to spread everywhere.

Though newspapers fervently propagated disavowal asking the public not to panic and to remain calm, people's inherent crisis awareness tends to believe unfavorable news.

However, Chen Shouyi knew the situation wasn't as dire. From what he heard, though parasites had indeed spread, aside from the reservoir area, other places were merely sporadic cases, mostly influenced by human traffic.

After all, parasites aren't viruses or bacteria; even if parasitized they have no contagion. If detected before the host's death, without having had the chance to escape, it's difficult for them to spread rapidly like viruses.

Especially now, highly populous areas have been abundantly treated with quicklime, nearly eliminating its spread.

For instance, two isolated neighborhoods within the Safe Zone have recently lifted their lockdowns.

As for the most severe reservoir surroundings...

Indeed, many died there.

Chen Shouyi once approached the blockade zone, observing from a distance.

Near the kind of village where the blockade zone falls, they're mostly deserted.

Bills of dark smoke from burning corpses practically obscure the sky, with an eerie charred smell pervading the air.

...

Guangming Reservoir.

Five protective-suit-clad health station staff stopped by the roadside, walking to the reservoir embankment.

The reservoir appeared green, filled with a mass of algae, countless rotting dead fish floating on the surface, emanating a strong stench.

"After this occurrence, the reservoir's ecosystem probably won't recover for years," one female staff member said, heavy-hearted.

Recently, a vast amount of highly toxic insecticide had been spread over the reservoir, leaving all fish and shrimp utterly dead.

"Compared to the dead, this is nothing," the team leader, a middle-aged man said. "Let's collect water samples; these other-world parasites are incredibly resilient, perhaps some remnants linger."

Without further conversation, they quickly headed to the kayak parked against the embankment.

Chapter 296 - Reservoir (Part 2)

The kayak gradually moved away from the lakeshore, heading towards the center of the lake.

Every now and then, the group collected a tube of water sample, sealed it with a cork, and placed it into the sampling box.

The reservoir was very large, with its source and outlet blocked off; it was almost like stagnant water here with little movement. The water quality differed in various areas, requiring stratified and zonal sampling.

The sampling work was monotonous and dull.

One staff member suddenly brought up a topic of conversation:

"Do you know how many people died yesterday?"

"How many?"

"I glanced at the station's statistics data this morning—over three thousand six hundred people!"

"Sss! So many?"

Although they had seen so many corpses daily that they had become numb, hearing this number still made their backs go cold.

"Actually, there were even more yesterday; I heard it exceeded four thousand, but this has already peaked. In a few days, it should quickly decrease. Now the nearby soil, after being treated with lime, rarely detects parasites." The team leader also joined the conversation.

"That's true, the deceased were all previously parasitized individuals."

While everyone was chatting, nobody noticed a gigantic whirlpool appearing on the water surface not far away, with a vaguely large shadow flashing by.

...

The next morning, Chen Shouyi woke up and checked his attribute panel.

He found that his attributes finally had a change; his strength increased by 0.1, reaching 16.1 points.

Having stayed on Earth for nearly nine days, he only managed to improve by 0.1.

Too slow!

On the contrary, his willpower was unaffected and increased by another 0.2 points.

He forcefully clenched his fist, a slight explosive sound echoed in the air, blowing his hair upwards.

Suddenly, his brow furrowed as a scene flashed through his mind.

Although the image passed by in an instant, and he couldn't see what the content was clearly.

He knew in his heart that those Barbarians were conducting another ritual.

He didn't know whether they were just too idle, as these Barbarians performed rituals very frequently, once every few days. Their belief seemed to become more and more devout; now and then, even on Earth, he could slightly sense it.

He decided to ignore it, went to the bathroom to brush his teeth and wash up.

After going downstairs and finishing breakfast, he greeted his parents and walked out the door.

Having been at home for several days, he felt like he was growing mold, and he decided to go outside to exercise.

However, just as he stepped out, he coincidentally ran into Bai Xiaoling on the road.

"General Manager Chen, there's a task."

He halted his steps, "What is it?"

Any task that requires him, a Martial Artist, to handle is not simple.

Before Bai Xiaoling could speak, he continued, "Tell me later. I need to prepare first."

...

"Why are you back again?" Mrs. Chen asked curiously as she saw him run back home.

"There's a minor task I need to help with. I probably won't be back for lunch." Chen Shouyi headed toward the staircase, casually saying.

"Where do you have to go? Is it dangerous?" Though Mrs. Chen was used to him going out from time to time, she still felt a bit worried.

"Don't worry! I'm already an adult and a Martial Artist. I have a sense of what the tasks entail; of course, I wouldn't go if it were dangerous!" Chen Dawei couldn't help but say.

"Even if he's a Martial Artist, he's still my son; what's wrong with me caring? What's it got to do with you, trying to start a fight?" Mrs. Chen glared at him.

Chen Dawei's belly fat trembled, "Can't talk to you, I'm going to wash the dishes now."

Amid the couple's bickering, Chen Shouyi hurriedly walked up the stairs, changed into sportswear, picked up a bow and sword bag, then went downstairs.

"Be careful!" Mrs. Chen said.

"Got it, Mom, don't worry!"

Chen Shouyi said as he stepped out, opened the garage, and rolled out his bicycle.

Bai Xiaoling naturally sat on the bike and naturally wrapped her arms around Chen Shouyi's waist.

Although holding onto the solid, muscular abs of her idol made her a bit dreamy for a moment, she adeptly spoke quickly.

"Something happened at Guangming Reservoir."

"Guangming Reservoir?" Chen Shouyi interrupted.

"Yes, it's the source of the interdimensional parasite outbreak!" Bai Xiaoling quickly explained.

"Continue!" Chen Shouyi nodded and said.

"In fact, inside the reservoir is a huge spatial passage connected to the swamp of the other world, just pressed down by the atmospheric pressure over there, causing the lake water not to recede, and no one noticed.

Until yesterday, several epidemic prevention station staff collecting water samples suddenly disappeared, swallowed by the giant beast in the reservoir, finally drawing attention.

The military urgently deployed a deep-water bomb, but it still escaped back to the other world.

Now the reservoir's water has receded entirely, and the city government is preparing to seal off this dangerous spatial passage completely, fearing the giant beast might return. The task this time is to guard the area, ensuring the safety of the operations there."

Bai Xiaoling succinctly explained the situation.

Chen Shouyi frowned slightly as he listened; it seemed this task might take a long time.

Nonetheless, he decided to check the situation there first.

He cycled quickly towards the blockade area, the pungent smell of burnt permeating the air and stabbing into his nostrils, making his stomach churn, as he continued cycling for another minute before being stopped by soldiers at the barricade.

Bai Xiaoling promptly got off the bike to show her credentials.

The soldiers checked their documents and soon let them pass.

At a nearby outpost, they changed into protective suits before continuing.

The rice on both sides of the road had turned yellow and drooped, some poles had collapsed, but no one bothered to harvest them, leaving them in the fields.

The factories nearby were already empty and desolate.

Only truck after truck shuttled back and forth on the highway, delivering massive supplies to the disaster area.

...

Passing through a small town, Chen Shouyi saw a large number of soldiers and medical staff in protective suits, checking house by house.

On the residential buildings, many silhouettes stood at the windows, looking numb.

"Ahead is the temporary hospital," Bai Xiaoling suddenly said as they were about to exit the town.

Chen Shouyi glanced over, noting it was initially the town government, evident by the sign still hanging there; however, it was clearly repurposed as a hospital now.

Though called a hospital, those entering could only await death, the difference only being between living a day or a few days. For ordinary people, once parasitized by the parasites, it's a guaranteed death sentence, with no cure.

When the bicycle passed by the entrance, a corpse happened to be carried out from inside to a corpse truck.

Being used to seeing such tragedies, Chen Shouyi wasn't much affected internally.

A dozen minutes later, Guangming Reservoir was in sight.

Chen Shouyi noticed that the reservoir's high embankment was filled with soldiers in protective suits, several holding flamethrowers, continually spraying flames at the reservoir's depths.

Parking his bike, he walked to the temporary camp nearby.

After Bai Xiaoling's introduction, Chen Shouyi shook hands with the director stationed there.

"Hello, hello, General Manager Chen, I'm Gao Yuanshan. I'm relieved that you're here; we're really causing you trouble this time. I've arranged your accommodation already; I'll have someone take you to see it right away." Gao Yuanshan spoke with great politeness.

"Director Gao, it's not urgent right now. I'd like to check out the situation first."

"General Manager Chen, you're indeed straightforward, alright!" Gao Yuanshan said to the young communications officer standing nearby, "Xiao Zhang, accompany General Manager Chen and show him around."

"Yes, sir!" the communications officer replied loudly.

The three of them walked to the embankment, and Chen Shouyi's face turned sombre; the reservoir was enormous, spanning several square kilometers, with a depth of over twenty meters. Now the water level had reached the bottom, leaving only a shallow layer of black water.

A large number of bizarre interdimensional creatures were actively moving in the black water.

From afar, Chen Shouyi even saw a gigantic creature resembling a crocodile or a gecko, yet measuring five or six meters long, madly dashing upon the water, letting out sharp wails, with flames from the flamethrower roasting it as it rushed around, kicking up water like an explosion,

Several times it tried to charge towards the embankment but was repelled by the flamethrowers.

"You're here too." At this time, Qin Liuyuan quickly approached, followed by a group of martial artists.

"Yeah, I was called over." Chen Shouyi snapped back to reality and replied.

Upon looking around, he realized even more martial artists had arrived, many appearing unfamiliar, likely newcomers to the martial circle.

"Brother Qin, who's this handsome man?" A rather attractive female martial artist boldly glanced at Chen Shouyi and asked Qin Liuyuan.

Qin Liuyuan was momentarily stunned, smiled, and addressed the martial artists behind him, "Some of you might not know him; let me introduce you. This is Chen Shouyi, the province's Chief Safety Advisor, and one of the only two Martial Master-level experts in Jiangnan Province."

"Sss!"

Upon hearing this, everyone gasped in shock, surprise etched on their faces.

Chapter 297 - Awe

Lin Jingyi in the team opened her mouth, dumbfounded.

She had seen Chen Shouyi before.

Two months ago, her sister accompanied her to the Martial Artist assessment in Hedong City. On the train back home, he sat across from them, and they chatted for a bit.

Not long ago, her sister mentioned seeing him on the road.

She originally thought he was just an ordinary Martial Artist, like her.

Unexpectedly, he was such a legendary figure, which was hard to believe. He seemed even younger than her.

The current Martial Arts Level of humanity is divided into four stages.

The weakest is the Martial Artist Apprentice, then Martial Artist, Great Martial Artist, and Martial Artist Master.

The Martial Artist Master is already considered the peak of human power. For a Martial Artist, a Great Martial Artist is already daunting, let alone the Martial Artist Master, who stands at the top, almost like a figure from a different dimension.

Chen Shouyi felt the lively atmosphere quickly quiet down, and all the Martial Artists showed obedient smiles like quails.

Even the previously bold female Martial Artist didn't dare to look directly at him.

It's lonely being a master.

I'm only eighteen!

"President Chen, do you want some water?" Bai Xiaoling, who felt inexplicably pleased, handed over a bottle of mineral water.

"Thank you!" Chen Shouyi came to his senses, took it, glanced at the production date, and realized it was a rare one-year-aged mineral water.

Now, mineral water couldn't be bought on the market, as plastic materials were scarce, accessible only to government agencies or the military.

He loosened the mask of his Protective Suit, as wearing it in such a hot weather was torturous. He unscrewed the cap and took a sip, then asked Qin Liuyuan beside him, "Do you know how big the Spatial Passage is?"

"I just arrived a short while ago. I heard from the soldiers that it's seven or eight hundred meters in diameter and directly connects to the marsh," Qin Liuyuan said.

Seven or eight hundred meters!

Chen Shouyi felt his heart sink; this was the largest passage he'd ever encountered.

Seven or eight hundred meters is a distance even a runner would take two or three minutes to cover.

He looked at the stinking black pools at the bottom of the reservoir.

From the otherworldly creatures crawling in the shallow waters, the water shouldn't be deep, generally between thirty to forty centimeters to a meter. In some exposed areas, you could directly see verdant aquatic plants from the otherworld.

No wonder so many Martial Artists were gathered.

"Thud, thud, thud...!"

At this moment, a machine gun in the distance started shooting at the pond, targeting a massive snake-like creature with red and yellow scales. It erupted into a spray of blood, fighting madly in the water, causing waves to surge.

Suddenly, its spike-covered head jerked up, unleashed a mighty mouth, and spat out a long, transparent water jet.

The water jet spanned over a hundred meters, drenching dozens of soldiers nearby.

The next moment, blue smoke started rising from the soldiers' Protective Suits.

The clothing was rapidly corroded.

One soldier reacted quickly, frantically tearing off his Protective Suit, trying to rid himself of the rapidly corroding garment.

However, as soon as he removed his mask, dizziness overwhelmed him, and he collapsed to the ground.

One by one, soldiers fell, their clothes dissolved, their bodies corroding and drenched in blood; many died instantly when the venom broke through their suits and invaded their systems.

The venom was evidently extremely toxic.

This scene unfolded so quickly, catching everyone off guard.

In just a dozen seconds, thirty to forty soldiers had already perished.

"Thud, thud, thud..."

Nearby machine guns immediately opened fire in unison, and several flamethrowers began targeting the horrific creature. Soon, blood dispersed through the water as its entire body was torn apart.

Smelling the faint bitterness in the air, Chen Shouyi quickly put back the mask he had taken off and screwed the cap back onto the water bottle.

Fortunately, by the time it got here, the toxicity was greatly diminished.

Chen Shouyi didn't feel any physical discomfort.

He thought the mission would be easy, but it turned out to be more dangerous than expected.

As creatures living in the marshes, many are venomous, and it's often hard to prevent an attack.

Soon, medics were carrying stretchers, swiftly but carefully placing the bodies onto them.

Bai Xiaoling, nearby, felt her heart racing, her fingers turning pale from grasping tight.

Chen Shouyi withdrew his gaze, glanced at her, and said, "Are you okay? It's pretty dangerous here; you don't have to stay with me all the time."

"I'm fine!" Bai Xiaoling tried to maintain her composure.

Since she could still manage, Chen Shouyi didn't press further and addressed the other Martial Artists, "Don't gather together, disperse and stand guard."

"Yes, General Manager!"

"Okay."

The crowd dispersed hastily after muttering a few words.

Standing before such powerhouses was really nerve-racking; the pressure was enormous and torturous for these undisciplined folk Martial Artists.

Not everyone left, though.

Two stayed behind.

Chen Shouyi recognized them; one was Xue Youcheng, someone he had met during the Barbarian clearing mission in Hedong City's Yun Mountain, and the other, a young woman, he recalled after a moment.

"President Chen... General Manager, congratulations on becoming a Martial Artist Master!" Xue Youcheng squeezed out a brilliant smile, even his vicious scar exuding a fawning expression.

"Call me either Chen Shouyi or General Manager Chen!" Chen Shouyi replied.

"General Manager Chen it is then."

Lin Jingyi, visibly nervous, tightly clutched her fingers for a long time before finally speaking, "Chen... General Manager Chen, hello!"

Seeing her anxious demeanor, Chen Shouyi joked, "Relax, I don't hit people; we chatted on the train before!"

"Ah, General Manager Chen, you remember." Lin Jingyi said with delight on her face.

Beside her, Bai Xiaoling subtly glanced at her flat chest, expressionless, subconsciously straightening her chest that surpassed the typical Great Xia Country female standard C-cup. Unfortunately, the Protective Suit she wore significantly diminished the effect.

"I'm not suffering from amnesia," Chen Shouyi chuckled, as he placed down his bow bag, unzipped it, quickly assembled the War Bow, and slung three quivers onto his back.

He drew an arrow, ready to test the feel, and glanced towards the reservoir's bottom, aiming an arrow at an otherworldly creature covered in pustules trying to swim towards the bank.

"Boom!"

The ugly otherworldly creature's head burst open instantly.

Then, Chen Shouyi began rapid shooting.

Boom...

His hands turned into a blur; the thunderous shots merged, and within a breath's span, the remaining nineteen arrows in one quiver were emptied.

Shooting hadn't suffered much despite not holding arrows for nearly ten days.

Of course, with his instinct-driven Archery, there wasn't much room for decline.

At this point, Chen Shouyi noticed numerous gazes fixated on him. He raised his head and swept a glance, and immediately everyone averted their eyes, awe written on their faces.

Chapter 298 - Encountering Divine Creatures Again (Part 1)

The main force of this war is the army, and the Martial Artists are here just to fill in the gaps, preventing any creatures from the alternate dimension from suddenly rushing out of the reservoir and escaping, causing unpredictable consequences.

Just think about it, these creatures from the swamp are all sources of infection by alternate dimension parasites.

If they manage to escape from here!

Hedong City has paid such a big price to barely control the situation, and it will rapidly deteriorate again.

The sun gradually rose, and the sunlight became increasingly scorching.

The temperature on the concrete ground was so high that you could fry an egg on it.

The thick Protective Suit felt as though your entire body was shoved into a steamer, stiflingly hot, and everyone was sweating profusely.

However, Chen Shouyi's face did not have a trace of sweat.

A gentle breeze swirled around his body inside the Protective Suit, bringing a sense of thorough coolness, making him feel as if every pore was breathing.

What is happiness?

It's when others are drenched in sweat on a hot day, and you are enjoying a gentle cool breeze.

Of course, if you have the ability to control temperature, it would undoubtedly be even better.

He glanced at Bai Xiaoling, whose hair was already sticky and wet, and whose eyes were stung by sweat to the point she could hardly open them, and said: "Liaison Bai, you might as well go back since you won't be of much use here!"

Bai Xiaoling knew she couldn't be of any help, so she didn't insist: "General Manager Chen, I'll head back first, I'll be at the camp nearby. Just let me know if you need anything."

Bai Xiaoling soon left.

The intensity of the battle wasn't high, apart from the initial dozens of casualties, no more soldiers had died afterwards.

However, the creatures from the alternate dimension didn't decrease at all; instead, they kept increasing.

At the bottom of the reservoir, the sewage mixed with blood and corpses had turned into a slightly viscous red-black color. Perhaps attracted by the strong bloody smell there, more and more creatures crossed the spatial passage and swarmed here, frantically tearing at the corpses at the bottom of the water.

"Why don't we use toxins? We can't possibly kill them all like this," Xue Youcheng complained, removing his mask and taking a sip from a thermos.

It was really too hot.

"This place isn't far from the Safe Zone, and they might be concerned about the toxins spreading and causing contamination in the future!" Lin Jingyi from A division spoke up before Chen Shouyi could.

Once toxins are used, they can't possibly be in small amounts. Even if a large quantity of a powerful cyanide toxin is manufactured, it would undoubtedly be measured in tons; by then, while mutated creatures might be killed, this place would also become a hazard.

At nine o'clock.

The first cement spraying truck arrived at the embankment.

One look at the truck, and you could tell it was a diesel-powered vehicle produced before the mutation, just retrofitted with a new diesel turbocharged engine.

Although the first diesel-powered bus in the Safe Zone had been up and running for over a month, besides those buses, other diesel-powered vehicles remained scarce.

Hedong City had no intention of replacing technology, showing no signs of recovery from before the mutation.

Trucks running on steam power continued to dominate the roads.

Chen Shouyi could guess the reason. Since the power outage after the mutation, the petrochemical industry was virtually paralyzed, and gasoline and diesel couldn't be mass-produced industrially yet. The gasoline and diesel being used now were from old stock, depleting bit by bit.

In comparison, coal was much easier to obtain and more economical in the current situation.

This cement spraying truck raised its pipes and started spraying cement concrete.

But it was barely a drop in the bucket.

After the entire truck was emptied, not even the tip of the sewage in the reservoir showed.

Fortunately, a second and third, and more trucks followed...

By almost noon, the sprayed area finally... had a bit of exposure.

"General Manager Chen, I brought you lunch." Bai Xiaoling hurried over from afar, carrying a bag in her hand.

Xue Youcheng was just about to go over when Bai Xiaoling said: "Meals are served in turns, yours will be delivered shortly."

Xue Youcheng stopped in his tracks with an awkward smile.

Chen Shouyi looked at the reservoir, which was mostly filled with small, less threatening creatures.

In fact, apart from the earlier snake monster, he had just shot a few arrows all morning out of boredom and had encountered no real danger.

He placed his bow aside, removed his gloves, and took off his mask.

"It's all individual ration packs, the taste might not be great, just bear with it," Bai Xiaoling said.

This place was the source of the parasites, and any exposed food carried some risk.

"I'm not picky!"

Said Chen Shouyi, picking up a three-year ration pack, he tore it open, chose a packet of beef jerky, chewed it, and found it surprisingly tasty, with a three-year rich and dense flavor.

It was just a bit salty.

He finished it in two bites.

And picked up a piece of compressed biscuit.

...

Bai Xiaoling brought five whole boxes, and Chen Shouyi finished all of them.

Ever since becoming a Divine Creature, he no longer had the massive appetite he used to, but getting full easily didn't mean he couldn't eat.

In fact, as a Divine Creature, his digestion and absorption abilities were more astonishing.

He could eat three to four times the amount of food he could before in one go, and could also endure hunger for longer periods.

After finishing, Chen Shouyi twisted open a bottle cap and drank the remaining water in one go.

Just after he put it down, Bai Xiaoling, who had tidied up the trash, handed over two bottles of one-year-old bottled water: "They are ice-chilled."

"Where did the ice come from?" Chen Shouyi asked, surprised.

"I just went outside and bought some saltpeter!" Bai Xiaoling replied: "If you finish them, I'll bring more for you."

Xue Youcheng glanced down secretly at the thermos hanging on his waist, baked hot by the sun, his throat loosened slightly, and only felt the midday sun become more glaring.

Just then, with a loud "splashing" noise,

sewage splashed in all directions.

A monster suddenly emerged from the water, suspended mid-air.

With a pair of massive wings flapping wildly.

Its body, including its tail, was about eleven to twelve meters long, covered in gray-black fur, resembling a giant flying rat, with a narrow head, exposed interlacing fangs, and a goat-like beard on its chin.

Its golden eyes were cold and vicious.

This monster gave Chen Shouyi a sense of danger, causing his heart to sink.

He didn't hesitate at all; he quickly grabbed the War Bow from the ground, and with a strong push of his toe, the stone fragments splashed on the concrete embankment. Before anyone could react, his body shot like an arrow from the string, running swiftly along the embankment.

This monster was over a kilometer away, near the opposite bank, and given his bow's range, it was entirely out of reach at such a distance.

It wasn't until he had run over twenty meters that people on the opposite side started shooting arrows.

Yet, with just a flap of its wings, this monster easily dodged, its golden eyes instantly focused on the crowd on the embankment.

The next moment, it fiercely flapped its wings, wind howling, carving a large bowl-shaped pattern on the water's surface. Simultaneously, its massive body shot like a phantom at high speed towards the crowd.

Chapter 299 - Encountering the Divine Creature Again (2)

The terrifying power of a pair of fleshy wings granted it unparalleled speed.

With a "boom," it left behind a dense sonic boom cloud at the original location, and its massive body completely disappeared.

In the next instant, its body crashed heavily into the crowd, and the concrete ground shattered like brittle cookies.

Not to mention the surrounding soldiers, even the Martial Artist who had just shot an arrow couldn't react in time. His body was knocked away like a ragdoll, twisted unnaturally, clearly lifeless.

The embankment was struck by this monster, leaving a long gully nearly half a meter deep.

It shook its head and rapidly stood up, letting out an angry roar, its golden eyes holding a trace of displeased brutality.

It had just entered Earth, and the low-gravity environment made it unable to adapt for a moment, resulting in excessive speed and complete loss of control.

A young soldier nearby scrambled on hands and feet, fearfully watching this nearly two-story-tall behemoth, retreating continuously.

It exuded a suffocating aura, its fur reflecting an oily luster under the blinding midday sun. Though it had just come out of the sewage, its body was free of a speck of dust, with no trace of filth at all.

Suddenly, a gust of wind blew, and a clawed, washbasin-sized foot stomped heavily on the soldier's chest.

Accompanied by the dense sound of bones breaking, the soldier's eyes bulged as he spat out a mouthful of blood and went silent.

"Such weak creatures!"

Its golden eyes flashed with disdain; its tongue rolled the corpse, and as soon as it swallowed the body, blood splattered on its body.

"Boom boom boom..."

The sound of the machine cannon finally rang out.

"Roar!"

The armor-piercing bullets from the machine cannon didn't penetrate deeply into its flesh, and for a creature of its size, they couldn't penetrate its muscles, only causing minor flesh wounds. But the intense pain infuriated it beyond measure. It roared, the air rippling like waves, the sound booming like thunder.

Immediately, it leaped into the air, its wings flapping, quickly ascending.

In mere breaths, it had soared several hundred meters into the sky.

"Boom boom boom..."

Over a dozen machine cannons arranged around the reservoir opened fire simultaneously, turning into long, fiery whips aiming at the monster.

Unfortunately, the monster was extremely fast, its massive body maneuvering in the air with unmatched agility, quickly twisting and spiraling.

A pair of golden eyes coldly watched the strange yet fragile creatures below.

It was attracted by the intense scent of blood, leading it inexplicably to this bizarre place.

Even now, it didn't understand where exactly this was.

However, that didn't stop it from killing these ants that dared to offend it.

"Boom boom boom!"

With only slight inattention, a few shells struck its abdomen again, leaving a row of arm-thick holes, blood gushing out.

It really hurt!

Its golden and violent eyes blazed with fury.

With a low, ferocious roar, energy surged within its body, and then its body began to expand in an incomprehensible way. Its bones started thickening and lengthening, muscles and skin becoming more dense and solid, the elongated head sprouting several sharp bone spikes, teeth growing ever sharper...

In just one second, it expanded from its original eleven or twelve meters in length to fourteen or fifteen meters.

It looked somewhat unsatisfied at its own imposing figure.

This world is so bizarre.

Why has my innate ability become so weak?

As a fierce beast that occasionally fed on giants, this transformation was hard for it to accept.

At fourteen or fifteen meters in length, excluding the tail that occupied nearly half its length, the body was only seven or eight meters long—hardly fit for a giant's meal.

"Boom!"

A shell exploded ten meters away from it.

The shockwave, mixed with shrapnel, sent it tumbling through the air.

The anti-aircraft rapid-fire cannon stationed not far from the reservoir finally opened fire.

With a sudden flap of its wings, it quickly regained control over its body, feeling the scorching pain on its body, the fury within it uncontrollable,

Its wings flapped once and then retracted, its body instantly turning into a streak of light, rapidly diving toward one of the machine cannons.

The sonic boom echoed across the sky.

...

By now, all the soldiers were frantically busy.

The incident at the reservoir happened suddenly; only a regiment was deployed, and the peculiar geography delayed the setup of many heavy weapons. Apart from eight 20mm machine cannons dismantled from armored vehicles, only some machine guns, rocket launchers, and flamethrowers were available.

As for the previously fired anti-aircraft cannon, it was initially set up nearby to defend against invading otherworld flying creatures.

The two-meter-long slender barrel fired "boom boom" repeatedly, shell casings flying, creating a jingly sound.

The dense smell of gunpowder smoke permeated the air.

"Quick, quick, quick!"

"Aim!"

"Die for me!"

The soldiers' eyes were bloodshot, faces twisted with ferocity, operating the machine cannon desperately.

The army's machine gunners were typically Martial Artist Apprentices, as there was no automatic fire control now, and ordinary people found it challenging to operate such a heavy weapon and react to high-speed targets.

Yet, facing a supersonic diving high-speed monster, even so, it was difficult for the cannons to capture it promptly.

Just two seconds.

With a loud "boom," a machine cannon exploded, parts flying in all directions.

The gunner had no time to react, struck in the head by metal fragments, skull shattered, as several nearby soldiers were knocked away by the monster.

It plowed a long trench on the embankment, standing again.

Just as it stood up,

a single rocket flew in its direction.

"Boom!"

A huge fireball engulfed half its body.

"Roar!"

With a flap of its wings, it blew the flames away in an instant.

The soldier who had just fired the rocket stared in terror at the creature, retreating continuously.

"Impossible... Impossible!"

He muttered nervously to himself.

He was horrified to find that the creature hit by a rocket had barely any injuries.

In fact, though the rocket was powerful, its destructive force per unit area was far less than that of a 20mm machine cannon using armor-piercing bullets.

In the next moment, the furious monster pounced in a rage, stomping down with a large foot, the soldier's flesh and blood bursting apart.

...

Chen Shouyi ran for a while and then gave up the futile back-and-forth running.

"Damn it!" He stopped, cursing as he watched the monster fly toward another machine cannon.

With a flying creature possessing superlative mobility, running fast on the ground was pointless, especially when his speed was far inferior to that of the monster.

Some newly advanced Martial Artists on the battlefield looked tense and panicked.

Hedong City had been calm for a long time since the Barbarian God invasion, and these new Martial Artists usually only dealt with common invading creatures around the area; they'd never seen such a terrifying beast and brutal fight.

They were just a bunch of rookies, much like his younger sister.

Chen Shouyi quickly glanced around and then, with a swift motion, headed for a nearby machine cannon position.

Chapter 300 - Slaughter

When Chen Shouyi was still on his way, another machine gun was destroyed.

His face looked grave.

He could feel that this fierce beast was considerably powerful and ferocious. Even though its body was occasionally hit by the machine gun, causing many parts to bleed profusely, its combat capabilities were not affected at all.

...

A martial artist gripped his war bow tightly in his heart, watching the colossal creature fly towards another machine gun in the distance, taking deep breaths repeatedly:

"It's okay, it's okay."

"I will definitely survive!"

At this moment, a figure suddenly flashed past him, and the strong wind billowed up dust and smoke around him.

Startled, he quickly turned his head to look.

He saw that the figure was already tens of meters away, at such astonishing speed that it stirred up the dust and gravel on the ground behind it, forming a long trail of air waves, appearing as if sand and rocks flew wildly around it.

In just a breath, the figure had already become a dot, and he opened his mouth in shock: "It's that martial artist!"

...

Currently, Chen Shouyi's full-speed running pace was about 120 meters per second.

If it was a short-distance burst within a step, the speed could even reach 200 meters per second.

Of course, this "step" was within twenty meters.

In just five or six seconds, Chen Shouyi had already reached the machine gun in front of him.

All the soldiers nearby paid no attention, being extremely busy with intense fervor.

The machine gunner's protective suit mask had long been torn off by him, and he was biting his teeth hard, with veins popping on his neck and forehead, desperately firing. Suddenly, he slapped himself forcefully, leaving blood marks on his face.

"Damn it!"

Then he quickly pulled the trigger again.

"Boom boom boom boom..."

...

Opposite, a soldier carrying a flamethrower sprayed a flame tens of meters long towards the approaching fierce beast. Yet, with just a slight flap of its wings, it easily dodged, and as it pounced towards the machine gun, its slender tail swiped.

With a loud bang.

The soldier was directly smashed to pieces, flesh and limbs flying everywhere.

Chen Shouyi felt his heart sinking as he watched. It was rapidly adapting to the gravity here, changing from initially awkward and clumsy movements to now displaying considerable agility, making him deeply wary.

At that moment, after destroying the fourth machine gun, the massive body of the beast turned in midair towards his direction; his adrenaline surged, and his heart pounded violently.

He immediately took down his war bow, hesitated for a moment, then threw it to the ground.

This war bow's force was too weak, only about the same as the machine guns, and hitting normal areas would have little effect.

Instead of relying on the slim chance of hitting its eyes, it was better to use the sword.

Chen Shouyi, gripping the sword hilt, withdrew about seven or eight meters away from the machine gun, took a deep breath, and quickly gathered all his energy.

Through previous observation, Chen Shouyi roughly figured out the attacking pattern of this fierce beast.

Just like an eagle hunting a hare, although hares can vary in size, fatness, and fur color, the attack patterns are quite similar. Grasping the right timing might achieve a killing blow.

"Get out of the way, run!" Chen Shouyi whispered to the soldiers. With the terrifying beast closing the couple of kilometers' distance at supersonic speed in mere seconds, there wouldn't be time to escape if they didn't move immediately.

However, all the soldiers responsible for guarding the machine gun seemed oblivious. The flame at the muzzle of the machine gun kept spewing, and shells flew everywhere.

A few soldiers quickly lifted their RPGs, squatted on the ground.

"Boom boom boom..."

Several rockets were fired successively.

But these rockets were too slow; any martial artist could easily dodge them, not to mention the fierce beast.

It didn't even bother to dodge; the rockets flew past without touching it.

Chen Shouyi admired the courage of these soldiers; if it were him, he might not be able to face death with such composure.

He didn't try persuading again, focusing intently on the massive figure closing in at high speed.

At 200 meters, it slightly folded its wings, preparing to land.

...

At 100 meters, its two gigantic forepaws extended forward, revealing claws as sharp as daggers.

...

At 50 meters, a howling wind started blowing fiercely.

Chen Shouyi narrowed his eyes slightly.

The next moment, just as its iron-like claws reached for the machine gun, intending to crush it, and its wings were flapping to slow down, in a flash, Chen Shouyi propelled off the ground with his toes, his protective suit instantly shredding, and at the same time, his body shot forward quickly.

While still gliding through the air, the long sword was already unsheathed, like thunder streaking through the sky.

He soared over more than ten meters in an instant, then gripped the sword with both hands, twisting his waist as all his strength surged through his body, slashing fiercely at the beast's neck.

This attack was entirely unexpected for the fierce beast.

It was indeed the right place at the right time.

Just at that moment when the beast shredded the machine gun, and its mind slightly relaxed.

As soon as it felt something was amiss and slightly turned its head, sharp pain surged through its neck.

Its thick neck nearly two meters wide was partly sliced open by Chen Shouyi's sword. Maybe some arteries were severed, as a massive amount of blood gushed out like a fountain, spraying everywhere.

"Roar!" The beast let out a thunderous roar, furious yet tinged with panic.

The sound waves made Chen Shouyi's ears ring, but his focus remained unshaken, with a cold, ruthless gaze. As soon as his feet hit the ground, without any hesitation, he moved swiftly while the beast hadn't entirely lifted off.

With a quick step, he dexterously maneuvered underneath its belly.

He lifted the long sword, an invisible sword aura pulsating at the tip, and pushed off the ground with a leap, drawing the sword edge along his body's rapid movement, slashing it entirely through.

The black sword, with an attachment of willpower at 14.8, became incomparably sharp.

The blade sliced through the beast's tough skin, fat, and muscles, making a "tear" sound like ripping cloth, slashing its entire abdomen open with a single cut.

"Whoosh!"

Tons of intestines poured out immediately, reeking of a horrid stench.

Chen Shouyi's series of movements was as nimble as a rabbit and swift as a sparrow, flashing like lightning, dazzling one's eyes. In just 0.5 seconds, this terrifying fierce beast was already stepping into the realm of death.

Being severely wounded again, its roaring transformed into a shrill wail.

Its body shook!

The next moment, a "boom" echoed.

The massive body crashed heavily onto the ground, making the earth tremble slightly, as dust swirled.

But it wasn't over. A figure leaped nimbly like a ghost onto its head, ignoring its death throes, thrusting a sword swiftly into the gap in its neck's spine.

The beast's body suddenly shuddered, and its cries abruptly stopped.

Unnoticed, the battlefield suddenly became quiet!

Only the "hiss hiss" of blood spraying and the sound of swallowed gulps rose distinctly in the air.