

New Era 301

Chapter 301 - New Talent Ability (Part 1)

In the distance, Qin Liuyuan held the war bow, his face full of shock.

In fact, he barely saw the battle just now. In the blink of an eye, the fight was already over.

Is this what a Martial Artist is?

So incredibly powerful!

He had thought that he wasn't far from being a Martial Artist himself.

Previously, having taken Divine Blood twice, his arm strength had reached 880 kilograms, already at the peak of a large Martial Artist, but at this moment, he realized that facing a true Martial Artist was as if a child was up against an adult—completely different levels!

...

Chen Shouyi stood atop the fierce beast, panting heavily. His clothing and protective suit were in tatters, steam rising from his hair in the scorching noon heat. One could imagine how high his body temperature rose during the intense exertion just now.

"Clatter"

A soldier let his rifle fall out of his hand and hurriedly bent over with a flushed face to pick it up.

This abrupt sound also startled Chen Shouyi awake.

He reached out, drew his sword, and leaped down from the beast's head.

It was as if time began to flow again; everyone snapped back to reality. The atmosphere became lively, with cheers echoing from afar, as people spoke loudly, casting looks of awe in their direction from time to time.

But Chen Shouyi was not overly excited; instead, he was rather silent.

In charge of this machine gun were ten soldiers, including two dead, one of whom was the gunner. Three others were seriously injured, hit by flying machine gun parts. The remaining ones had bleeding ears, obviously deafened by the sonic roar of the fierce beast earlier.

Though he killed this terrifying beast, it would not have been so easy without these soldiers as bait and cover.

One mistake, and he might even have capsized.

"Good day, sir!" When they saw Chen Shouyi approaching, a few soldiers immediately saluted with respect.

Chen Shouyi opened his mouth, wanting to explain that he wasn't part of the army, but seeing their bleeding ears and suppressed expressions, he closed his mouth and nodded slightly.

Whatever he said, they wouldn't hear it anyway.

Medics quickly ran over, carefully lifting all the wounded and fallen soldiers onto stretchers.

...

The war wasn't over; this fierce beast was merely an episode.

Soon, the sound of gunfire started again.

"General Manager Chen, I found you a set of clothes and a protective suit. See if they fit?" Bai Xiaoling ran over, panting, and said, "Also, here's a specialized insecticide I found for you. You'd better spray some, but be careful as it is toxic."

Chen Shouyi accepted gracefully. Although he was confident that his body, which even bullets couldn't penetrate, wouldn't get infected by parasites, his skin might carry them. Who knew if the fierce beast had parasites on it!

He accepted the insecticide and clothes, glanced at Bai Xiaoling, and seeing she didn't avoid his gaze at all, he didn't feel embarrassed. He turned around, tore off his broken protective suit along with his T-shirt and pants, and sprayed himself a few times.

The clothes were camouflage uniforms used by soldiers for summer training, still unopened.

Chen Shouyi tore them open and quickly changed into them.

With the corner of her eye, Bai Xiaoling secretly glanced at Chen Shouyi's back muscles, which were like tightly wound steel wires, and felt the weather seemed even hotter.

...

"General Manager Chen, would you like a cigarette?" Xue Youcheng's face broke into a chrysanthemum-like smile, bowing slightly as he respectfully offered a cigarette.

The voice seemed to come from afar. Chen Shouyi snapped back to reality, shook his head, and said, "No, thank you, I don't smoke!"

For some reason, after killing the fierce beast, he felt something was off. His body was somewhat hot, and even his mind seemed a bit dazed:

"Am I getting a heatstroke?" he thought to himself.

Chen Shouyi opened his mask, grabbed a bottle of iced mineral water, unscrewed it, and gulped down half of it in one go.

The icy water slid down his throat.

His spirit lifted, and he felt much better instantly.

However, Chen Shouyi soon realized this was temporary.

As time went on, he felt increasingly hot, with a tendency to intensify, and it seemed that even the Knowledge began to stir.

What's going on?

He immediately opened the attribute panel, and just with a glance, he was stunned.

He was surprised to find that at the end of the talent abilities sub-option on the attribute panel, there seemed to be a line of fuzzy text looming in and out of sight.

"Is a new talent ability going to appear?" A hint of excitement flashed in his heart,

"Could it be related to the fierce beast I just killed?" Chen Shouyi pondered;

"Apart from this reason, there seems to be no other reason."

"Splash!"

An ugly half-meter-long reptile emerged from the black water.

Chen Shouyi turned off the attribute panel, took a glance, and said to Xue Youcheng and Lin Jingyi beside him: "Keep an eye out, I'm going to sit down for a bit."

"General Manager Chen, leave this kind of trivial matter to us. Rest assured and take a break," Xue Youcheng quickly threw away the cigarette butt and said.

Lin Jingyi, being a woman, was a bit more considerate: "General Manager Chen, are you okay, or should I notify the medics to come?"

"No need, I didn't sleep well last night, a bit drowsy. Sitting for a moment will do," Chen Shouyi waved his hand.

Afterward, he found a shady spot to sit down.

Pretending to rest his eyes, he quickly entered the Book of Knowledge Space with his mind.

Looking at the World Tree in front, shrouded in a thin layer of brilliance, and the numerous intricate flashing shadows, he couldn't help but feel enlightened.

The sight before him was deeply imprinted in his memory.

It was just like the scene after annihilating the Tree God last time.

Unexpectedly, this fierce beast turned out to be a Divine Creature.

However, compared to the Tree God, its Power of Faith was undoubtedly far inferior.

It appeared incredibly thin, barely perceptible.

From the images flashing through the Power of Faith's shadow, Chen Shouyi discovered that this creature had no fixed faith and didn't even have faith in the conventional sense. It was merely as a top predator, naturally feared or revered by other beasts.

Through these images.

Chen Shouyi could see various strange swamp creatures either trembling on the ground or desperately fleeing.

He glanced over and no longer paid attention, then focused on a radiant dot swirling within the Power of Faith, darting left and right trying to escape.

This is Divinity!

His breathing became rapid.

...

The weak Power of Faith was soon absorbed and stripped by the World Tree, and a few minutes later, this Divinity was gradually devoured as well.

The World Tree emitted an invisible ripple; its leaves gently rustled, producing a crisp sound. At the same time, the World Tree began to swiftly grow, increasing from nearly three meters tall to three and a half meters.

The space also expanded by a circle, and it seemed to have become more stable.

However, these were minor details to Chen Shouyi, barely worth his attention.

Among the leaves, he searched for quite a while:

"Huh, strange! Why isn't there a Rule Fruit this time!"

After absorbing the Tree God's Divinity last time, the World Tree bore a fruit of the World of Wind, which after absorption, turned him into a Divine Creature. However, this time there was nothing.

Chapter 302 - Giant Battle Body

Chen Shouyi searched the World Tree carefully again before he reluctantly gave up.

He vaguely felt that this divine creature and the Tree God were vastly different. It had hardly any Power of Faith accumulated, not even one-thousandth of the Tree God's. Judging by the illusions of the remaining Power of Faith, it seemed this creature had never deliberately pursued faith. Its lifestyle was more akin to that of a wild beast.

What puzzled Chen Shouyi was that such a creature possessed divinity.

Could it be innate?

Perhaps the offspring of some powerful creature!

...

Chen Shouyi exited the Book of Knowledge Space and eagerly opened the attribute panel. His gaze quickly swept over the unchanged attributes, finally settling on the sub-option for talent abilities.

Sure enough, it had formed.

A hint of excitement flashed across his face.

In addition to Natural Healing and Air Control (Intermediate), he now had a new ability.

"Giant Battle Body (Intermediate)"

The Giant Battle Body is easy to understand.

It should be a talent that allows one to grow larger.

The fierce beast earlier seemed to have used this ability.

"I just wonder how to activate it?"

As soon as the thought crossed his mind, countless Original Forces around him seemed to be drawn, converging here en masse. His heart throbbed, pounding uncontrollably...

Startled, Chen Shouyi hurriedly stopped his thoughts.

Just in time, the anomaly in his body gradually subsided, and he let out a sigh of relief.

His heart was still pounding: "That was close!

Almost burst through my clothes again.

I'll find a secluded corner and experiment later."

He stood up, dusted his rear, and walked towards the crowd.

...

Following this, the reservoir remained calm without encountering any considerable danger.

Cement spraying trucks, one after another, sprayed cement onto the bottom of the reservoir, and around sundown, the concrete had gradually formed a small island approximately ten meters in diameter at the bottom.

After having dinner on the embankment and seeing no immediate danger, Chen Shouyi proposed to Bai Xiaoling to head home temporarily.

On one hand, to inform his parents that he wouldn't be home tonight. On the other, the pitiful Shell Lady was still waiting to be fed at home. Most importantly, he was itchingly eager to test out his new talent ability.

He had been preoccupied with it the entire afternoon!

Upon hearing, Bai Xiaoling immediately went to report.

Soon, Director Gao came over with quick steps, followed by Bai Xiaoling:

"Thank you for your great assistance, General Manager Chen. You want to go back temporarily? Of course, no problem! But when will you be back? We literally can't do without you here!"

To be honest, facing such a fearsome powerhouse made him a bit apprehensive, and he spoke with careful consideration.

This was someone who had one-shotted a monster impervious to even machine guns; if he was displeased and left for good, they'd really have no solutions.

Chen Shouyi glanced at his watch: "I'll be back before seven."

"All right, we have a car at the camp. I'll have someone drive you back." Director Gao said, a bit uneasy.

...

After disinfection procedures at the checkpoint, the troop carrier sped on.

After about ten minutes, the vehicle stopped at the doorstep.

By this time, dusk was settling in.

He took off his protective suit and walked into the living room, finding that dinner had just been prepared at home.

"Why so late?" Mrs. Chen put down her bowl and chopsticks, asking.

Seeing Chen Shouyi's return, a heavy weight seemed to lift off his parents, who had been quite worried.

"Been busy, and have to head out again tonight. Probably won't be back for the next few days. I came just to let you know." Chen Shouyi said.

"Did you eat?" Mrs. Chen asked.

"I did, let me take a shower and change first." He quickly went to his bedroom and shut the door.

"Oh, Giant, you're back." Hearing the familiar footsteps, the Shell Lady swiftly darted out and jumped down from the bed, running over joyfully.

What a little rascal.

"Hungry?" Chen Shouyi asked with a smile.

"Hungry, very hungry!" the Shell Lady nodded.

He opened a jar of honey and scooped out half a spoonful, diluting it with warm water: "Eat up!"

The Shell Lady leapt onto the table, stuck her tiny bottom out, and began sipping the honey.

Chen Shouyi could no longer contain himself.

He quickly undressed.

His eyes shone with excited light.

In his mind:

Transform!

The next moment, as his thoughts flickered, Original Forces quickly converged towards him, woven into an extraordinary energy circulating within him. His heart beat thunderously like a drum, and his body began to stretch and expand in an incomprehensible manner. His bones rapidly thickened and lengthened, muscles became massive and dense, and his skin thicker and coarser...

As a tingling ache spread throughout his body, he grew taller and bulkier.

"Crash..."

A second later, his head hit the crystal chandelier, and glass shattered, raining countless fragments down.

Before they landed, Chen Shouyi's will converged, and all the glass suspended mid-air, then flowed like a river into the trash bin. He ducked his head and took a step back, avoiding the chandelier.

He overstretched, cracking the floor with one foot.

Terrified to move, he feared demolishing the whole room.

Hearing the commotion, Shell Lady turned and was stunned, mouth agape, murmuring, "Giant, you've grown bigger!"

After two seconds, his transformation finally halted.

Everything in the room seemed a size smaller from his perspective.

He straightened up, glancing at the ceiling, realizing it nearly reached.

Must be at least three meters high!

Even without checking attributes, he felt his whole body brimming with incredible strength.

Clenching his fist firmly, a dull "boom" sounded, air exploding, a gust whistling.

Raging, yet destructive.

Even if steel stood before him, he felt confident in crushing it.

Sadly, he couldn't thoroughly test it here, fearing a single move might collapse this house.

He opened the attribute panel.

Strength: 16.1+3.7

Agility: 15.9-0.4

Constitution: 16.4+3.6

Intelligence: 14.5

Perception: 13.8

Will: 14.8

Energy Accumulation: 1.25

Chen Shouyi noticed the attributes, seeing pluses and minuses for the first time.

But upon further reflection, this transformed attribute was temporary; his original attributes remained unchanged.

In this state, his strength increased by 3.7, about a fourfold boost. In terms of raw data, his arm strength reached 4.5 tons, and his constitution improved by 3.6, roughly equal to the strength boost.

Meanwhile, agility decreased by 0.4, a reduction of about two-tenths.

It was a trade-off, with gains and losses.

In normal state, he was agile, but in giant state, his attack was fearsome.

Given the terrifying attack boost, the slight agility loss seemed minor and negligible.

And what excited Chen Shouyi the most was the realization that this was on Earth, where Original Forces were scarce. In another world, this talent might display even more astonishing results.

Time was limited, and today he could only have a sample taste.

He quickly deactivated the ability.

As his body gradually shrank, he felt a sense of loss, alongside a slight weakness creeping in.

"This is probably the side effect!" Chen Shouyi mused.

Chapter 303 - Mirror (Part 1)

At this moment, Chen Shouyi's expression changed, and he immediately reached out to grab his underwear.

The elastic of the underwear had obviously been stretched a bit loose during his transformation, and once he returned to his normal size, it began to slip down.

"When I'm free, I definitely need to buy a few dozen pairs of high-elastic underwear," Chen Shouyi silently noted to himself.

The attack of this giant transformation is terrifying. Although its defense hasn't been tested, it's obviously much better than his normal form. He'll inevitably use this innate ability when encountering danger in the future.

By then, if his clothes get torn, it would be fine; he's a grown man and doesn't really care.

But if even his underwear were to explode...

And if there are still a lot of people around...

Chen Shouyi instinctively shook his head slightly. The image was so beautiful that he couldn't even imagine it.

"I just don't know if these high-elastic underwear are still available for purchase?"

...

He glanced at the already cracked floor beneath his feet and the broken chandelier, sighing slightly.

He found a new pair of underwear and headed for the bathroom.

Once Chen Shouyi disappeared.

The Shell Lady also stopped drinking honey, immediately jumping off the table, running into the bathroom, and squatting at the door, her eyes bright and fixedly watching Chen Shouyi shower.

She just wanted to see if the giant would suddenly grow bigger again.

"Stop watching, go out!" Chen Shouyi felt a little uneasy being scrutinized by the Shell Lady's gaze and waved his hand.

"Good Giant, grow bigger, grow bigger!" the Shell Lady shouted loudly.

Grow bigger, my foot!

"I'm tired today, I'll transform some other time!" Chen Shouyi said helplessly.

The Shell Lady showed a hint of disappointment on her small face. She wanted to see it again; the transformation earlier had given her a strong shock to her soul. The giant suddenly grew so tall, like a mountain.

My Giant is indeed the most powerful giant!

...

After showering, Chen Shouyi changed into his underwear, looked helplessly at the Shell Lady who kept following him.

He walked to the wardrobe, took out a T-shirt, and said:

"I'll be going out later; you stay at home and don't wander around."

"Will you be back by sunrise?" the Shell Lady quickly asked, tilting her head up.

Chen Shouyi estimated in his mind while putting on his T-shirt, feeling that the reservoir wouldn't be finished in a day or two: "Probably after two sunrises and sunsets!"

The Shell Lady's expression quickly fell, becoming somewhat listless: "Can't Little One go with Good Giant?"

"The places I'm going are full of the worst bad giants, very dangerous, and they love eating cute little animals. You're so well-behaved and cute, it would be too dangerous if you went!" Chen Shouyi used his usual tactic to frighten her.

This trick worked best on the Shell Lady, never failing.

Sure enough, the Shell Lady got scared, shrank her neck, and didn't mention going along anymore.

Chen Shouyi comforted her: "I'll prepare honey for you. Remember to eat it when you're hungry, and I'll reward you later."

"Another big gem!" the Shell Lady said.

Hearing the Shell Lady's tone, Chen Shouyi clearly felt that the Crystal Ball no longer held the same appeal for her as before.

It's understandable; no matter how much you like something, too much of it will make you lose interest.

But where can I find glass beads bigger than the Crystal Ball now?

At this moment, his eyes noticed the dressing mirror next to the wardrobe, and he remembered that the Shell Lady often liked to pose in her skirt in front of the mirror.

He had a sudden idea and pointed at the mirror, saying: "It's not a big gem, but I'll reward you with this."

The Shell Lady shivered all over at his words, her small face quickly showing a blush, and she felt dizzy.

She ran quickly to the mirror, hugged the mirror stand, which was clearly quite large for her, and looked back at Chen Shouyi, excitedly saying: "Good Giant, will you give this to me?"

Dream on.

Even if I gave it to you, could you move it?

Moreover, past experiences teach that rewarding with dressing mirrors will soon fill the bedroom with them.

"This is mine. The reward is a smaller one." Chen Shouyi said.

As for how small exactly, that depends on what he can buy.

Then Chen Shouyi didn't bother with the Shell Lady, who was already happily dizzy. He found a small measuring cup four or five centimeters high from the cabinet, washed it in the bathroom, and poured in half a cup of honey, sealing it with cling film.

Next, he prepared a small cup of warm water for her.

When she wants to drink it, she'll mix it herself.

This amount should last her for about three to four days.

...

After settling the Shell Lady, Chen Shouyi bid farewell to his parents and took the troop transport back.

Upon arrival, he found that there were a lot more soldiers, and more heavy weapons had been added, including a dozen rapid-fire artillery and rocket cars using steam cars as platforms.

"A new regiment arrived while you were out," Bai Xiaoling said.

Chen Shouyi nodded, clearly, the prior appearance of the Fierce Beast had raised the danger level of this place.

...

As night was falling, the gas lamps hung down the edge of the reservoir lit up the bottom brightly.

Chen Shouyi removed his mask and took a breath, feeling the stuffy heat cooling down slightly with a hint of coolness.

If you ignored the stench of sewage and the thick smell of blood in the air, it wasn't too unbearable.

He unscrewed the cap of a bottle of mineral water, preparing to take a sip.

Then he heard a series of loud shouts in the distance, as if some danger had occurred.

Soon, the flames from a flamethrower swept back and forth like a long dragon.

"Boom..."

Numerous gasoline incendiary bullets were fired into the sewage, igniting a fierce blaze.

Countless mysterious creatures struggled violently in the sewage, emitting shrill wails. A gigantic being, five to six meters long and resembling a lizard, was engulfed in flames, running around blindly like a headless fly.

Soon, its movements slowed, and it collapsed into the sewage.

Why is there so much commotion?

Chen Shouyi was baffled, momentarily forgetting to drink his water.

Then he heard a buzzing sound. He replaced the cap and followed the sound quickly.

The noise grew louder, resembling the amplified sound of a bee's flight tenfold.

Before long, he saw a bug flying rapidly toward him in the air.

He leaped three meters high and grabbed the bug mid-air with his fingers, holding it between his thumb and forefinger.

It was a flat-winged bug with a colorful body. After being caught by Chen Shouyi, it struggled continuously, trying to attack with a purple stinger on its mouth.

Xue Youcheng and Lin Jingyi hurried over; Lin Jingyi glanced at it and felt a chill, quickly saying:

"General Manager Chen, this bug may be poisonous!"

Chen Shouyi nodded, flicked the bug to the ground, and before it could fly up again, he crushed it with his foot.

This reservoir has more hidden dangers than expected. If these bugs are allowed to spread and breed, it could be a disaster no less severe than parasites.

Chen Shouyi searched around, and the only relief he found was that there was nothing else discovered.

Chapter 304 - Rotation

Within the reservoir, flames roared, forming a tornado of fire that shot straight into the sky.

The heat waves blew in waves, causing everyone to retreat continuously.

Lin Jingyi watched this scene in a daze and suddenly asked, "General Manager Chen, do you think we humans will lose?"

Chen Shouyi understood that she was not referring to this battle, but to the war between Earth and the alien world.

He was silent for a while before speaking, "Of course not. If we can resist the alien world for twenty years, we can continue to hold out. The war will eventually be victorious!"

Although he didn't have a global perspective, in the past six months, he could clearly feel that human strength was rapidly recovering.

At the start of the mutation, the entire city was dead silent, and not a single moving vehicle could be seen on the roads.

But now, steam trucks appeared everywhere.

Not only that, the silhouette of planes reappeared in the sky.

As long as humans are given a few more years to breathe, when electricity, communication, and electronics gradually recover, human strength will be a thousand times what it is now, and we'll no longer be in such a sorry state.

As for humans counterattacking the alien world, Chen Shouyi had never considered it.

Not to mention the influence of three times the gravity and high concentration of Original Force on technology.

Just the strength of the Barbarian Gods would be enough to halt human progress.

The Barbarian Gods in the alien world's base camp and the ones that came to Earth were two completely different concepts.

If the Barbarian Gods on Earth could only exert one strength, then in the alien world, their strength would be one hundred, one thousand; even a nuclear bomb probably wouldn't work.

After all, no matter how powerful a nuclear bomb is, it has to hit to be effective.

Given the speed of Barbarian Gods' movement in the alien world, they would probably escape the attack range before it even exploded.

The fire burned for a few minutes before gradually extinguishing. The sewage at the bottom of the reservoir was already boiling, and numerous dead alien creatures rolled in the boiling water, with a strange smell permeating the air.

Chen Shouyi immediately put on a mask.

...

The time gradually reached dawn.

A thin cloud covered the moonlight overhead.

A faint mist permeated the air, making the view hazy.

Xue Youcheng squeezed his sore arms, feeling utterly exhausted.

From daytime to now, he didn't know how many times he had pulled the bow, three hundred times, or five hundred; he had lost count.

In total, the two crates of arrows provided by the troops were all used by him and Lin Jingyi.

Of the total one thousand arrows, just over a hundred remained.

With the corner of his eye, he cautiously glanced at the Chief Safety Advisor sitting by the embankment, slowly chewing on a piece of compressed biscuit.

The circle of Martial Artists is strictly hierarchical, with Martial Artists at the top of the food chain, high above, and detached, while Martial Artists form the middle layer, neither superior nor inferior, and Warriors are at the bottom.

The hierarchy among the three is distinct and insurmountable.

There's no such thing as challenging up the ranks.

Those who can defeat Martial Artists are naturally not ordinary Martial Artists, and those who can defeat a Martial Artist are certainly Martial Artists themselves.

Everything relies on actual combat, no fancy techniques.

As the bottom rung of the Martial Artists, whenever there are higher-ranking experts in the team, the dirty, tiring, and menial jobs naturally fall on them.

This is as it should be and also reflects the value of their existence.

Their only use is to handle these odd jobs so that the strong can maintain their strength to deal with dangerous situations.

They put in hard work, and what they get in return is safety.

They bow and smile, giving up their pride, in exchange for a helping hand at a critical time.

Of course, not all Martial Artists can let go of their pride, but that's just his old salted fish mentality.

And young Martial Artists, most of them are energetic and ambitious.

At this moment, a figure blurred, and Chen Shouyi was already standing beside him.

Xue Youcheng was startled, almost firing an arrow, but the next moment he saw the sewage at the bottom of the reservoir bulge into a mountain, creating waves as a colossal creature nearly ten meters long emerged from the water.

"Boom boom boom..."

The machine gunfire sounded, and the rapid-firing cannon began to roar.

This huge creature, with sharp teeth and a swordfish-like dorsal fin, barely understood the situation before a storm of attacks came its way. Numerous shells caused blood to splash from its body, which trembled repeatedly, wailing incessantly.

As a gasoline bomb hit its body, flames enveloped it.

Very soon, the reservoir returned to complete calmness.

...

The swamp behind the spatial passage was obviously a terrifying area.

All sorts of powerful creatures appeared endlessly.

Throughout the night, three similar giant beasts emerged, and small alien creatures were even more numerous.

By morning, the sewage at the bottom of the reservoir was piled with corpses, almost side by side, densely packed.

The presence of these corpses greatly accelerated the cement's sealing process, and by dawn, nearly a third of the passage was blocked by cement.

Chen Shouyi estimated that at most two days would see the completion of this task.

When the time reached seven o'clock.

A batch of military Martial Artists came to replace their group. Among them, Chen Shouyi saw Lei Ruiyang, who glanced over here from a distance before moving his gaze and talking to a nearby military Martial Artist.

...

The campsite had long prepared a place for them to rest. Accompanied by an orderly, Chen Shouyi entered the tent.

The ground was covered with lime, and the air was filled with the strong smell of medicine. Inside, besides a bed, there were also some toiletries and two thermos bottles.

Fortunately, compared to other Martial Artists who had four in a tent, this could be considered a luxurious single room.

"Chief Advisor, do you need to wash your body?" the orderly asked.

"Take a bath? Is there running water?" Chen Shouyi wondered, as this was the wilderness, and running water did not reach here.

"All the water here is boiled!" the orderly explained. "If needed, I can bring you several bottles of hot water. After cooling down, it can be used for cleaning."

"Then forget it, there's no need!" Chen Shouyi said. He hadn't moved much the whole night, and not a drop of sweat had come out.

After the orderly left.

Chen Shouyi took off his protective suit and began to wash up.

In this lockdown zone, to eliminate parasites, there's almost no cold water; all the water is boiled, which is rather troublesome. Brushing teeth and washing the face took nearly ten minutes.

After finishing up, he lay on the bed with his clothes on, thoughts flying all over his mind.

Across the country, there are likely quite a few undiscovered dangerous spatial passages like this one, and this definitely won't be an isolated case. Fortunately, this one was discovered in time and effectively controlled...

At that moment, the sound of artillery and gunfire came again from afar, slightly vibrating the bed.

He stopped his wild thoughts, listened quietly for a while, placed his hand on the sword hilt, and waited until the artillery fire gradually subsided. He sighed gently, closed his eyes, and began to meditate.

Chapter 305 - Banner

After resting for three to four hours, Chen Shouyi couldn't lie down anymore.

He got up and walked out of the tent.

Not far away, the makeshift field hospital was faintly echoing with the painful moans of the wounded.

This place was barren, surrounded by mountains. Once, it would have been an ideal spot for a summer outing.

But now, it was enveloped in the smoke of war.

Since the mutations began, Jiangnan Province had not seen a day of peace.

War, death, happened every moment; peace had completely faded away, becoming a distant memory.

"Good day, Chief Consultant!" A young martial artist in his twenties quickly stood aside respectfully to greet Chen Shouyi upon seeing him on the road.

"Can't sleep?" Chen Shouyi glanced at the young martial artist, who wasn't much older than him, and asked.

The martial artist, surprised that Chen Shouyi would talk to him, stammered, "Yes... yes, the sound of the cannons is too loud, so I just stayed up, waiting to sleep when I'm tired in the evening."

"Are you from the Jiangnan Martial Arts Academy?" Chen Shouyi asked as he walked.

"Yes, I just graduated this year. Are you also from the Jiangnan Martial Arts Academy, Chief Consultant?" The young one quickly caught up, asking cautiously.

"No," Chen Shouyi shook his head slightly.

"Then are you a graduate of the Beijing Martial Arts Academy?" he asked.

The Beijing Martial Arts Academy is one of the top martial arts schools in Great Xia Country, comparable to international prestigious schools. Those who get in are all martial arts prodigies, and most can pass the martial arts assessment before graduation.

"Neither. I never attended a martial arts academy. I intended to, but plans couldn't keep up with changes. Before recruitment, I became a martial artist," Chen Shouyi sighed slightly, speaking with a hint of regret.

That was the college life he had long dreamed of.

A life without having gone to college is like not having had a girlfriend in middle school or not having a childhood, leaving regrets.

Unfortunately, he never spent a single day there and rushed into adult society before he even came of age.

After a long silence, Chen Shouyi couldn't help but turn his head to find the other looking constipated, his face red with restraint.

Sigh, young people just don't know how to talk.

Not like Xue Youcheng, who not only added to the atmosphere but also spoke well.

...

After showing off in front of the young martial artist, Chen Shouyi felt much better.

Indeed, showing off brings joy.

After wandering outside for a bit, Chen Shouyi returned to the tent, drew his sword, and slowly practiced his exertion technique.

He had barely begun when footsteps approached from outside.

"General Manager Chen, may I come in?"

"Come in," Chen Shouyi said, practicing his sword.

The tent flap lifted, and Bai Xiaoling, carrying a C-cup, walked in, quietly watching Chen Shouyi practice his sword.

In his state of inner tranquility refining himself, he had reached the stage of refining organs. Every move was fluid, his entire body moving with a grace akin to flowing mercury, full of a strong sense of beauty paired with an imposing killing intent.

Bai Xiaoling, standing by his side, still felt a chill on her back, her skin prickling with goosebumps.

Chen Shouyi stopped, a glimmer flashing as the sword slid into its scabbard: "What's the matter?"

"I just received a message that your bow has arrived, and you can pick it up from the provincial government at any time!"

Upon hearing this, a hint of delight flashed across his face, having waited a long time for it to finally arrive.

He quickly asked, "How many pounds?"

Chen Shouyi had long been dissatisfied with his bow, finding the 800-pound war bow far too light for him.

"It's 2000 pounds. Is that too heavy?" Bai Xiaoling asked with concern.

"A bit heavy, but it's fine," Chen Shouyi said, looking surprised.

Of course, it's too heavy!

Two thousand pounds, converted to kilograms, is 900 kilograms. With his near 1200-kilogram arm strength, even he couldn't draw such a heavy bow, given that it's a few fingers pulling the bowstring despite having the arm strength.

Enduring such pressure, his fingers would likely be torn off.

With his strength, what's most suitable for battle is around a 1500-pound bow, roughly half his arm strength.

However, he wasn't too concerned. Though his strength growth had slowed, it was only relatively speaking. He estimated it wouldn't be long before he could fully adapt to this bow.

"That's good! This bow was originally for the military, but it was returned later," Bai Xiaoling said.

Chen Shouyi nodded; he didn't need to think to realize this bow was meant for Lei Ruiyang or the late Xiao Changming, but after discovering it unsuitable, it was returned.

This martial master level bow was by no means cheap. More importantly, it was worth more than its price, and taking an unusable bow not only failed to provide combat power but made securing the next suitable bow challenging.

Military-trained martial masters, although like a son to them,

No matter what goes on in private, everything must appear fair on the surface.

A thought crossed Chen Shouyi's mind, and he curiously asked, "What's the origin of this bow?"

"I'm not entirely sure. I heard it's the relic of a martial master," Bai Xiaoling said.

Chen Shouyi's expression changed slightly, his heart sighing.

Someone capable of wielding such a strong bow undoubtedly possessed immense strength, far beyond the likes of Lei Ruiyang, yet even such a powerful figure sacrificed himself.

...

As manpower and resources rapidly mobilized in this direction,

One truck after another loaded with cement and sand queued to drive to the embankment, followed by a large number of cement mixers mixing and spraying on-site.

The speed of sealing the spatial passage was significantly accelerated.

By nine o'clock in the evening, the bottom of the reservoir was already covered in cement.

Though occasionally interdimensional creatures would crawl out of the still-soft cement, they could hardly stir trouble.

The next day, the cement began to harden preliminarily.

All martial artists and part of the soldiers began to withdraw, but a substantial number of soldiers remained stationed here to respond to any potential emergencies.

...

"I heard the military lost two martial artists!" Qin Liuyuan said, riding a bicycle along the road.

"How many civilian martial artists did we lose?" Chen Shouyi asked.

"Four, I think, all killed by that flying monster!" Qin Liuyuan said, then lowered his voice, "General Manager Chen, there's something I'd like to say, but I'm not sure if I should."

"What do you want to say?" Chen Shouyi asked, feeling a bit puzzled.

"I think civilian martial artists shouldn't remain so disunited any longer. Before, we had no conditions and were leaderless, but now it's different. Perhaps you haven't noticed, but you've become a symbol for civilian martial artists.

As long as you stand up, followers are sure to gather, and by then, everyone will have to consider our stance.

Why did Cui Ziweng get killed as a warning? It's because civilian martial artists were not united at all. If we formed a cohesive force, who would dare underestimate us? Even the military would have to think twice before acting against us."

Chen Shouyi glanced at Qin Liuyuan.

Slightly surprised, yet somewhat understanding.

No wonder, seeing him yesterday was like he was surrounded by a crowd, warmly socializing with martial artists.

He likely had this idea for a while.

When did it start?

Chapter 306 - Astonishing Power

Chen Shouyi did not answer immediately.

He was no longer a young, impulsive teenager easily swayed by flattery.

He suspected Qin Liuyuan had no ulterior motives, merely wanting to form an independent martial artist organization, to provide mutual support, leveraging the vast number of freelance martial artists and his martial artist prestige, to vie for greater power and benefits.

If all freelance martial artists, not just a small fraction, were efficiently integrated, without a doubt, it would become a formidable force, enough to shake Hedong, becoming a power second only to the military, potentially forcing a compromise from above.

However, Chen Shouyi was not interested.

As one of the two official martial artists of Jiangnan Province, he had a transcendent status, having long outgrown the ordinary martial artist rank.

The treatment and attention he deserved were already adequate.

He had no ambitions, nor any cravings for power.

Becoming such a forerunner offered no benefits to him.

Strength was his means of survival, and any spare energy was better spent training hard.

"Forget it, I don't have the mind for this," he thought silently, then said aloud.

Qin Liuyuan's expression briefly showed disappointment, and after a few more words of persuasion, seeing that Chen Shouyi was uninterested, had no choice but to give up resignedly.

...

After returning to the Safe Zone, Chen Shouyi did not head straight home but went first to the Provincial Government.

The Provincial Government Building was not far from the City Government Building, merely a few kilometers apart.

After showing his credentials and stating his purpose, the guard at the gate immediately changed expression, saying to another guard, "Xiao Li, help the Chief Security Advisor register, I'll send someone to notify them!"

Chen Shouyi didn't pay much attention and patiently waited at the gate. A few minutes later, a deputy director from the office and a guard following behind came over quickly, greeting warmly, "General Manager Chen, hello, hello! Nice to see you again."

Chen Shouyi nodded, "Thank you!"

"No trouble at all, even if you hadn't come, we were planning to bring this to you. Please follow me."

They went to the second floor, where the deputy director took out a key and opened a storage room at the end, pointing at a coarse cloth bow pack on a shelf, and said, "Here it is."

The bow is two thousand pounds, it might be a bit heavy. But this is the only bow we've purchased recently.

It was fortunate that our resident office in Beijing staff got it first at a high price, otherwise, it wouldn't have reached Jiangnan Province."

He had no interest in listening to the deputy director's introduction, impatiently unzipped the bow pack, took out a bow limb to examine carefully, finding it smooth to the touch with a matte texture, its weight quite light.

Chen Shouyi knew that this was a type of nanocomposite material, extremely strong.

Though it was a second-hand item, it looked as good as new, with no surface scratches.

Wait a minute.

His heart skipped a beat.

From the very first weapon he purchased as a Martial Artist Apprentice, it seemed everything was second-hand.

He shook his head slightly, dispelling such idle thoughts from his mind.

He then quickly assembled the bow components.

Within half a minute, a complete war bow appeared before him.

The entire bow measured 1.65 meters, similar to that of an eight-hundred pound bow, yet its power was two and a half times that.

The bow handle seemed to be made of titanium alloy, with rough anti-slip patterns, and felt very comfortable in his grip.

He tentatively hooked the bowstring with four fingers, exerting all his strength, and forcefully pulled it back.

A resonant hum filled the air as it appeared to tremble slightly.

The deputy director standing nearby felt his skin tingling as if from static electricity, swallowing saliva, realizing he'd perhaps drunk too much tea.

Chen Shouyi could only maintain the posture for half a second before his hand started to tremble, leading him to gradually release it.

Looking at his fingers, he saw a deep blood groove, his knuckles dislocated.

He flexed his fingers, a series of sharp cracks, and his knuckles reset into place.

The deputy director patiently waited beside him, watching Chen Shouyi dismantle the war bow once more and place it back into the bow pack, he smiled and handed over a document: "If it's suitable, please sign here!"

"Sure," said Chen Shouyi.

The bow was naturally suitable. Without hesitation, he took the document, glanced over the terms, and signed swiftly.

...

Exiting the Provincial Government Building, Chen Shouyi let out a long sigh of relief.

It felt like a burden had been unloaded from his mind.

Although it wasn't yet usable, it wouldn't be long before he could wield this mighty war bow.

He sighed inwardly, thinking that without the Government's assistance in procurement, finding a suitable bow would have taken unknown ages.

He then hung the bow pack on the bike's handlebars, mounted the bicycle, and quickly headed home.

...

A week passed in the blink of an eye.

The effects of the parasites gradually faded. Except for the area around the reservoir, which remained under lockdown, everything had returned to normal.

...

In the alternate world.

Night.

Stripped down to his underwear, Chen Shouyi's thoughts drifted.

Countless Original Force rapidly converged here, glimmering beams occasionally flashing, casting glimmers of light.

His body swiftly began to expand.

Three meters... five meters... ten meters...

In an instant, he had transformed into a colossal figure reaching fifteen or sixteen meters in height.

Pieces of cloth fluttered down from mid-air.

His poor elastic underwear, unable to withstand such expansion, tore into pieces.

Yet by then, he was beyond caring.

An explosive kind of power filled his being.

The Shell Lady crouched in a nearby cave, dumbfounded and gazing up at Chen Shouyi, mouth agape.

At this moment, Chen Shouyi looked at a "small tree" that only reached his chest.

He strode over, creating a whirlwind, and with a single step covered thirty to forty meters, grabbing the "small tree" with his large hand, and yanked hard.

"Boom!"

The ten-meter tall "small tree" was uprooted, earth and all.

Feeling as though it weighed nothing in his hand, he hurled it skyward, and the surrounding air exploded as the tree whistled into the air.

In a blink, it had turned into a black dot.

Strong, too strong.

This power was simply terrifying.

He felt he could even punch through a skyscraper.

He quickly opened the attribute panel.

Strength: 16.1+15.9

Agility: 16.0-2.0

Constitution: 16.4+15.6

Intelligence: 14.5

Perception: 13.8

Willpower: 14.8

Energy Accumulation: 2.25

Staring at these astonishing attributes, Chen Shouyi's face reflected surprise.

Why had he grown so much?

In the alternate world, transforming into the Giant Battle Body, his strength had reached 32 points.

This was a terrifying number, and he estimated in this state, the strength of his arms reached five to six hundred tons.

This was 130 times the increase compared to transforming on Earth.

What did this represent? A heavy tank weighed between 42 and 80 tons.

Which was only about a tenth of his strength.

He could lift a tank and toss it like a shot put.

He examined his grand physique, his once pale skin turned grey and rough, seemingly thick and solid, his feet sank deeply into the soil, indicating his enormous weight.

Chen Shouyi found it somewhat unbelievable.

Where did all this excess mass come from?

Chapter 307 - Melee Combat

After transforming into a Giant, his strength, constitution, defense, weight, and body size all increased proportionally.

He estimated that in this Giant state, his mass is now approximately fifty tons.

In terms of weight, in this world with three times Earth's gravity, if expressed in tons, it would be a hundred and fifty tons.

However, his agility decreased significantly.

On Earth, his agility only decreased by 0.4 points, but in this other world, it dropped by a full two points, reducing his reaction capacity to less than half of what it originally was. At this moment, he could clearly feel that his reflexes had become much slower.

Fortunately, it was all worth it.

In this state, his attack power was explosive, and his bodily defense could be described as terrifying.

Chen Shouyi estimated that even if a machine cannon attacked him, with his current defensive ability, it would be difficult to injure him, at most only break some skin.

He now dared to engage in direct confrontation with the God of Courage.

Of course, this refers to the God of Courage on Earth.

If it were in the other world, the God of Courage's power might also be magnified a thousandfold.

The Shell Lady hiding in the cave behind, hesitated repeatedly, several times flying up and then landing back down.

The good Giant who turned into a colossal Giant, in her eyes, was towering like a majestic mountain, making him strange yet intimidating to her.

She struggled internally for a long time, finally mustering the courage to fly towards Chen Shouyi's shoulder.

However, before getting close, she was blown into a tumble in mid-air by the chaotic currents surrounding Chen Shouyi, looking disheveled. Once she barely managed to control her body in the air, she noticed the sky turning dark.

An enormous hand that blotted out the sky swiftly descended, bringing a gust of wind with it.

The next moment, she found herself grasped by the Giant hand. When she recovered her senses, the Shell Lady realized she was sitting in the palm of the Giant.

Her size, compared to Chen Shouyi's palm, appeared even smaller than a cockroach.

"Good... good Giant, you... you've grown so big?" The Shell Lady stuttered, looking up at Chen Shouyi's gigantic head.

"So do you like it big or small?" Chen Shouyi asked smugly.

Although he intentionally softened his voice, it still sounded like muffled thunder, scaring the Shell Lady, causing her body to tremble, her face turning pale.

"B... big!"

At the Shell Lady's response, Chen Shouyi chuckled silently. It seems the more one lacks something, the more they desire it!

He was about to shrink his body when suddenly a sense of intuition struck him, and he quickly looked up at the sky.

He then saw a gigantic silver-white creature, neither bird nor serpent, hovering in mid-air.

Covered entirely in silver-white, it had a pair of wings and claws, a body covered in scales. In the night, it shimmered with a mysterious glow. Its neck was adorned with vibrant, multicolored mane, fluttering freely as it flew.

It resembled a fusion of the dragon from Great Xia Country's mythology and the feathered serpent from Maya mythology.

Mysterious, beautiful, yet full of danger.

This enormous creature had been seen by Chen Shouyi several times. It was the overlord of this forest.

However, it usually operated during the day and had never appeared at night.

But today, the massive commotion from Chen Shouyi's transformation, along with the threat he exuded, evidently startled it.

It hovered silently above his head, like a ghost in the dark, its eyes emitting a faint glow, appearing cold yet fierce.

"Just in time, I wanted to test the strength of this body," Chen Shouyi thought to himself, unafraid, instead excited to try.

The enormous body that once seemed intimidating now appeared not much different from his own.

Chen Shouyi looked down and softly said to the Shell Lady, "Little one, quickly go to the cave!"

"Oh! Oh!" she replied hurriedly, standing up in a panic, almost tripping over as she did, then clumsily flew towards the cave.

He looked back to check on her, slightly worried.

At that moment, perhaps sensing an opportunity, the enormous creature dove down rapidly, like a falling meteor, slicing through the thick air. In just a breath, it covered a distance of several hundred meters.

Chen Shouyi had just turned back, preparing to dodge, but his dull reflexes caused his actions to lag. He barely avoided the gaping maw aimed at his head, with his shoulder being grasped hard by its claws.

Sharp and harsh claws pierced his skin, creating a few shallow blood wounds.

Chen Shouyi's expression remained unchanged. He stretched his hands to grab the Giant Beast, but it agilely flew into the sky.

This Giant Beast, like an experienced old hunter, was patient yet cautious. The wild wind blew, making the surrounding trees sway back and forth, howling as it did.

"Damn it, I hate these flying creatures the most, completely lose the initiative," he muttered.

Chen Shouyi moved his body around, keeping his eyes fixed on the Giant Beast without blinking. He stepped back step by step, his foot stumbled on a massive rock, and he pretended to stagger slightly.

As expected, the Giant Beast attempted to attack once more.

Its incredible speed blurred its silhouette.

Its claws enveloped in mist-like air rushed towards him swiftly.

"Boom!"

With the sound barrier shattering.

Chen Shouyi stepped his left foot back, his foot sinking half a meter into the ground. He neither dodged nor avoided, enduring the blow despite injury, trapping its serpent-like body with his arms, twisting his body to sidestep its gaping maw.

Despite his formidable defense, only a few shallow cuts were torn across his chest.

"Got you!"

Chen Shouyi shouted fiercely, using all his might to slam downwards with his hands.

The entire thirty-meter-long enormous beast crashed into the ground with a thunderous boom, causing the ground to tremble slightly.

Before it could take off again, Chen Shouyi quickly pounced on it.

This serpent-like creature, though its body was more than twice the length of Chen Shouyi, had less than half his bulk. In terms of tonnage or body size, it seemed "petite" compared to him.

He pressed its head down, discovering it was covered with a kind of flexible, slippery defensive field. His palm couldn't find the grip, sliding. He firmly held it down, raising his fist to strike it hard on the head.

Like the roar of a heavy cannon.

A tangible shockwave shattered the surrounding thorns, bushes, and dead leaves. Even distant tree branches shook violently.

However, it was a miss.

At the critical moment, the giant beast shook its head and broke free of the restraints.

At the same time, its snake-like tail had unknowingly wrapped around his body. Fortunately, Chen Shouyi noticed it in time, swiftly grabbing the slippery tail with his large hands, clenching it tightly, and with a burst of five to six hundred tons of force, crushed the scales on it and then fiercely flung it away.

"Boom!"

A large tree as thick as two people hugging it was snapped in half and crashed down with a rumble.

"Aow!"

The giant beast let out a shrill scream, scales flying, raised its head, opened its bloody mouth towards Chen Shouyi, and from deep in its throat, strands of blue-white high-temperature flames were faintly visible.

"Not good!"

Upon seeing these blue flames, a strong sense of crisis arose in Chen Shouyi's heart, and he shivered. He swiftly slammed its tail onto the ground.

The ground split open like ocean water, with countless broken leaves flying up, creating a long gully.

Unfortunately, the ground here was soft, covered with a layer of humus several meters thick. While it appeared startling, it did not cause much harm to such a powerful creature.

Next, Chen Shouyi decisively changed his target, exclusively choosing large trees to smash against.

The surrounding trees immediately suffered, one after another falling, and the beast's waist scales had all fallen off, leaving it bloody.

"Still not dead!" Chen Shouyi felt a bit surprised.

Unfortunately, he had no suitable weapon in his hand; otherwise, it might have been resolved long ago.

After smashing more than a dozen times, suddenly his face changed dramatically.

"Damn!"

He abruptly stopped his steps, then quickly turned and ran.

Barely taking two steps, his body started to shrink, and a strong sense of weakness arose spontaneously.

All the strength in his body was rapidly fading away.

By the fifth step, his body had returned to its original state, and he felt a sense of exhaustion throughout, his limbs becoming weak.

Using his remaining strength, he barely managed to continue running a few steps, bit his teeth, and leapt, his body crossing three or four meters, and fell to the ground. His legs gave way, and with a few rolls, he rolled into the cave.

He lay on the ground, holding his breath, staring blankly at the glowing fluorite above, his body motionless.

Actually, this cave was not safe either. To such a giant beast, the rocks here were little better than brittle biscuits; destroying them would be extremely easy.

Now he could only hope that the opponent did not find him.

...

The snake-like giant beast shook its somewhat dizzy head, its body curved and suspended, its wings barely flapping in midair.

Apparently, its flight did not rely entirely on wings.

It looked around cautiously, letting out a low growl, but unfortunately saw no trace of the giant.

It vented by spewing a torrent of blue-white flames from its mouth, directly hitting a large tree in front, which immediately burst into flames and within seconds turned to ashes.

After venting for a while, turning the surroundings into scorched earth,

It quickly flew up, circling around the area before flying back to its lair.

...

Chen Shouyi felt the oppressive atmosphere in the distance dissipate rapidly.

Only then did he take a long sigh of relief.

"That was close."

"I didn't expect the transformation ability to have a time limit; I must be careful in the future." Chen Shouyi thought to himself, feeling his body still weak, the feeling of exhaustion making him uncomfortable, as if all his energy had been drained completely, even making it difficult to breathe.

Chen Shouyi estimated the time; this transformation only lasted about five minutes.

Such a long time was already enough.

Earlier, most time was wasted experimenting, and the actual combat only took half a minute.

"Great giant, are you sleeping or about to die?" Once the giant beast left, the Shell Lady hiding in the small hole quickly flew over and asked worriedly.

Chen Shouyi glanced at the Shell Lady with a bit of annoyance, not wanting to speak.

"I'll give you a kiss, don't die, okay?" the Shell Lady said.

Smooch, smooch, smooch!

The Shell Lady kissed repeatedly.

"I feel much better!" Chen Shouyi opened his mouth weakly, his voice hoarse.

"Is it because I kissed you?" the Shell Lady asked dumbly with a silly expression.

Chen Shouyi immediately nodded slightly.

"Smooch, smooch, smooch... then get better soon, it's so scary here."

...

Chen Shouyi waited for more than ten minutes before his strength slowly began to return.

"So hungry!"

"This transformation seemed to have drained all the energy from my body, leaving nothing behind. Now I'm famished, can't do this for so long next time, it's too dangerous."

Supporting himself, he managed to stand up, picked up the sword from the ground, and staggered out of the cave, with the Shell Lady quickly flying up to follow.

More than ten minutes later.

Using himself as bait, Chen Shouyi finally lured an unfortunate otherworldly creature and stabbed its neck with a single sword.

...

"Finally full." Chen Shouyi patted his round and bulging belly, beside a heap of blood-stained bones.

Chapter 308 - Jealousy

As the food was rapidly digested and absorbed.

Chen Shouyi finally felt recovered.

At this moment, he remembered something, his expression changed, and he quickly focused his mind to check the energy vortex in his dantian.

With just one look, Chen Shouyi couldn't help but sigh.

The energy he had painstakingly accumulated over this period was indeed completely drained, just like his physical strength, not a drop was left.

Though he had already suspected it, actually seeing it still made his heart ache; this was nearly two months of accumulation, consumed in a single Giant Transformation. It was truly two months of hard work, and back to square one overnight.

"From now on, unless I encounter a deadly danger, I absolutely can't waste like this again!"

He stood up, dug a hole in the ground, and buried the bones properly.

Then he headed towards the cave, but suddenly felt a stir in his heart and walked to the place where he had fought earlier.

What greeted his eyes were trees all leaning askew, weeds torn apart, and the ground full of huge potholes and ravines.

Some of the pits even had diameters of seven or eight meters, and were two meters deep. The entire area of several hundred square meters seemed to have been ravaged.

When he transformed into a giant, because of the change in perspective, he hadn't felt much.

But now, having returned to his normal size, Chen Shouyi could feel the terrifying power he had in the giant state.

He walked to that area which had turned into ashes, and the white ash on the ground was already reaching up to his knees.

Chen Shouyi took a glance and his expression turned serious.

The ashes were very fine, just a silky dust, without a trace of residual carbon, indicating that the combustion was very complete at a very high temperature. On Earth, it would require at least a thousand degrees Celsius and a considerable amount of time to achieve this effect.

In this world, the required temperature is undoubtedly much higher than on Earth.

Two thousand degrees Celsius, three thousand degrees Celsius, or even higher.

"Thankfully, it didn't spew out. Otherwise, even if I didn't die, I would probably have been seriously injured." Chen Shouyi thought, feeling a sense of fear.

"This is definitely a horrifying creature. Even in my Giant Transformation state, repeatedly smashing it, it still was fine. Its defense strength almost matched mine."

"However, my defense relies on pure physical body, while that serpent-like creature probably relies on that slimy defensive force field on its body. Each of my attacks had its force reduced by the force field, which greatly diminished the effect."

Shell Lady was watching the dark surroundings with vigilant eyes, seeing that Chen Shouyi had been standing for quite a while, she quickly urged, "Great Giant, let's return to the cave quickly."

Chen Shouyi snapped back to reality, glanced at this useless coward, and said irritably:

"We'll go back right now!"

...

The weather in the otherworld was getting colder.

Especially at night, the temperature had already dropped to around five or six degrees, but even so, after practicing the Thirty-six Forms of Horizontal Training, Chen Shouyi still broke into a sweaty heat.

Feeling a faint energy vortex reappear in his dantian.

He sighed again, it was completely incomparable to before.

Truly a moment of impulse, a lifetime of regret.

After resting for a while until his strength slightly recovered, he practiced once more.

This was the first time he had come to the otherworld in half a month, so he naturally wanted to seize the time to train.

With the continuous optimization of the Thirty-six Forms of Body Training.

The proportion of Original Force in the cultivation technique was becoming increasingly higher.

In the first optimized version.

There was no demand for Original Force at all, and there was basically no significant difference between Earth and the other world or no stark difference.

In the second optimized version, there was already a certain demand for Original Force, and its effect in the otherworld was noticeably better than on Earth.

As for the third optimized version, the demand for Original Force increased further, and the effect of training in the otherworld was more than seven or eight times that of Earth; during the half month on Earth, his physical attributes only improved agility by 0.1 points, the speed was appallingly slow.

...

In the evening, as the sun descended to the west.

The increasingly severe haze made the sky seem to be covered with a faint mist, the weather was exceedingly sultry.

The Safe Zone had calmed down considerably, no longer with the previous panic among people.

As soon as Chen Shouyi returned home, he was stopped by his sister.

"Brother, I have something to talk to you about." Chen Xingyue said somewhat bashfully.

"What is it this time?" Chen Shouyi asked curiously.

"Today the principal came to see me and asked me to ask you if you could give a lecture at the school!" Chen Xingyue said.

"No time, there's nothing worth talking about!" Chen Shouyi said without hesitation, he was already too busy with his daily training to have time for such things.

"Then I'll tell the teacher that." Chen Xingyue immediately breathed a sigh of relief and hurriedly said.

Seeing her brother traipse on the stage and talk, always felt awkward, especially with the class's group of infatuated girls, who now talked about her brother in front of her every day, making her feel embarrassed yet unable to ignore it.

At this moment, Chen Xingyue suddenly remembered something and said, "Oh right, remember Zhou Xue, the landlord's daughter from when we rented a house in Changmen Town?"

"Of course I do, why?" Chen Shouyi said.

Zhou Xue, he naturally remembered, they had even gone to Ningzhou together to take the apprentice examination, a pretty young girl, just a bit cold in personality.

"I saw her today, at our college, her family moved here too, but her personality is still as arrogant; when I talked to her, she hardly responded!" Chen Xingyue said somewhat angrily.

Changmen Town is not far from Dongning, evidently it was also affected.

"I remember you didn't have any conflicts with her!" Chen Shouyi said in surprise.

"Just can't stand her, if you're going to find a girlfriend, don't find this kind!" Chen Xingyue warned in advance.

"What's my girlfriend got to do with you, you're not jealous, are you?" Chen Shouyi cast a disgruntled sideways glance at her.

Chen Xingyue immediately bristled: "What am I jealous of, I'm already a quasi-Martial Artist, she's still just a Martial Artist Apprentice, I'm in the advanced class, she's still in the beginner class, what do I have to be jealous of."

Knowing so much, no wonder, the other party treated you with indifference.

In this regard, Chen Shouyi could relate, after every exam when the papers were handed out, he would stay far from those who, while seemingly concerning themselves with his scores, were actually waiting for him to ask them, so they could ostentatiously reveal their much higher scores.

Unwilling to see his sister being so arrogant, Chen Shouyi immediately countered:

"But she's prettier than you!"

"Then you must be blind, what's prettier about her than me, in high school, I received several love letters every day!" Chen Xingyue said defiantly.

Several letters?

Boasting, aren't you?

Chen Shouyi scoffed inwardly, with your A-cup?

Just as Chen Shouyi was about to continue his verbal attacks, Mrs. Chen put the dishes on the table, saying irritably:

"You're both grown-ups, yet you bicker relentlessly every day, eat now!"

Chapter 309 - Xiao Changming's Survival (Double-Length -)

In the bedroom.

Chen Shouyi held the War Bow, drawing it tight, then slowly loosened the bowstring.

The air vibrated with a humming sound.

After drawing it seven or eight times continuously, his arm started to tremble slightly. He drew it two more times before finally stopping.

"This bow is truly too heavy," he sighed inwardly.

Even though he could now draw it several times in succession, it was practically useless in actual combat.

First of all, the speed of drawing the bowstring was too slow.

The heavier the bow, the more effort it took, and the slower the draw.

In his level of combat, it could only be described as split-second; with such a slow draw, the enemy would probably attack before he could fully draw the bow.

Secondly, the inevitable trembling of his arm also greatly compromised his accuracy.

Chen Shouyi reassembled and stored the bow, massaging his sore arm.

On the bed, the Shell Lady was admiring herself with a small mirror, adjusting her skirt and preening with a vain expression.

Ever since she got the small mirror, she couldn't get enough of admiring herself and had almost stopped playing with the glass bead.

The mirror was a women's makeup compact, which could be opened and closed.

The diameter was about five centimeters.

It wasn't that Chen Shouyi didn't want to buy a smaller mirror, like one the size of a pinky finger, but this was the smallest he could find.

He had now filled a drawer with these mirrors.

There were 50 of them.

Enough to last for quite some time.

"Good Giant, why can't I grow taller?" the Shell Lady suddenly asked with curiosity, her little head pondering over some thought as she looked at Chen Shouyi.

"How tall do you want to grow?" Chen Shouyi glanced at her curiously.

"As tall as a mountain!" The Shell Lady gestured as high as she could with her hands, "Even taller than the Good Giant—one more!"

Apparently, Chen Shouyi's transformation today had deeply stirred her.

"If you grow tall, you won't be cute anymore," Chen Shouyi chuckled wryly, "You're the cutest just as you are."

The Shell Lady fell silent at his words, staring at Chen Shouyi's face for a long while. Then she turned to the mirror, her expression changing as if weighing the importance of height versus cuteness in her mind.

After a long time, she sighed mournfully:

"Then I might as well not grow tall!"

Chen Shouyi was taken aback, his face turning dark, wanting to ask, what did she mean by that?

But thinking it over, he decided to let it go. After all, as a Martial Artist, it wasn't worth getting tangled up with this little thing that had a few screws loose.

...

"Woo-woo..."

Inside the train station, gas lamps illuminated the space brightly.

With the sound of a whistle, a steam train slowly pulled into the station and eventually came to a stop.

The carriage doors opened, and the crowd streamed out.

From one of the carriages emerged a rugged traveler, with a stout build, looking to be in his thirties or forties, his face haggard and eyes bloodshot. The surrounding people, intimidated by his aura, instinctively made way for him.

He walked out of the station, stopped under a streetlamp, reached into his pocket, and after some fumbling, pulled out a pack of cigarettes. Lighting one, he took a deep drag and squatted on the ground, his gaze vacant.

"Mortal, are you in doubt?"

"Damn it!" A flash of irritation crossed his face, and in a nervous fit, he crushed the cigarette to pieces.

"You don't think you're completely safe from my control, do you?" The whispered voice, like a devil's thought, resounded in his mind, elusive and remote.

"What have you done to me?" he muttered hoarsely, his face somewhat hysterical, "Get out of my head."

"I resurrected you from death and gave you power, power beyond all of humanity... My mighty warrior, all your struggles and resistance are in vain..."

A patrolling policeman in the distance noticed this man talking to himself, his demeanor deranged, and grew suspicious. Whistle in his mouth, hand on his gun, he cautiously approached.

"Excuse me, may I see your residency certificate or introduction letter?"

With the rampant cult activities, Jiangnan Province had become extremely strict about the movement of people. Except for refugees relocated by official organizations, ordinary people needed an introduction letter with a seal and signature from the local administrative unit to move to another city.

The middle-aged man quickly calmed his expression at this, looked up at the officer, reached into his pocket, and took out a hastily folded piece of paper.

The policeman, wary, accepted it, opened it, and sighed with relief.

It was an introduction letter from the military.

"Comrade Xiao Changming, sorry for the disturbance!" The policeman quickly returned the introduction letter, "But it's getting late, and it's best not to linger here. If you can't find a hotel, I can take you to one."

"No, thank you!"

Xiao Changming replied in a low voice, standing up with a touch of gloom and distortion on his face under the streetlight.

...

The next morning, Chen Shouyi saw Qin Liuyuan on the road.

He was walking down the street with a group of Martial Artists, chatting and laughing.

Only after they disappeared from view did Chen Shouyi look away.

"Still haven't given up, have you?"

Perhaps because of his youth, or perhaps because his power had been advancing rapidly, never experiencing the despair and helplessness of being stuck for a long time, it was difficult for him to understand Qin Liuyuan's intense insecurity.

This past year, the number of Martial Artist deaths in Hedong City almost exceeded the total yearly deaths of the previous two decades.

Only Qin Liuyuan remained among the great Martial Artists.

Chapter 310 - Xiao Changming's Survival (Double-Length -)

Martial Arts is a high-risk occupation, and the shadow of death always looms over these people.

Ever since Cui Ziwen was killed after refusing to be conscripted, this sense of insecurity has become even more pronounced.

Although other than Cui Ziwen, the authorities have only lightly reprimanded other Martial Artists, using the incident as a warning to deter others. Still, dissatisfaction has begun to simmer beneath the surface.

Many civilian Martial Artists define themselves as merely a group of mercenaries.

The City Government funds the missions, and they complete them. If the tasks are too dangerous, they have the right to refuse. This has been the practice for the past twenty years, without change.

However, in the eyes of the City Government, civilian Martial Artists are akin to auxiliary military personnel, like militia, and if special circumstances arise, they have the right to forcibly conscript them, even integrating them into the military.

The enormous conceptual difference between the two is the root of all dissatisfaction.

This sentiment is especially prevalent among veteran Martial Artists, whereas the newly emerged Martial Artists post-mutation are more accepting of this situation.

...

Three days later, in the alternative world.

Chen Shouyi finished gnawing on a half-roasted beast leg and casually tossed aside the foot-long leg bone.

"It should be about ready!"

He picked up the War Bow on the ground, stretched his muscles, and with a slight blur in his hands, swiftly drew an arrow, pulling the bowstring taut with a loud thrum, bending the entire bow into a full arc.

"0.3 seconds!" Chen Shouyi estimated in his mind.

"My hand steadiness has improved a lot!"

Over the past three days, his strength attribute had increased by 0.1, reaching 16.2.

Although the increase wasn't significant, equivalent to a gain of fifty to sixty kilograms in strength, the effect was immediate. Now, the bow could be used in practical combat.

He aimed at a tree fifty meters away, with a trunk thick enough to be encircled by a single person.

The next moment, his fingers released the bowstring.

"Boom."

A sonic boom cloud appeared out of nowhere, blowing Chen Shouyi's hair into disarray as the arrow vanished without a trace.

"Good Giant, you're amazing," the Shell Lady beside him clapped excitedly, shouting loudly.

Chen Shouyi remained expressionless.

Somehow, it felt wrong to hear it.

"I probably flinched a bit when I shot it."

He glanced at the Shell Lady who was wildly cheering, drew another arrow, quickly set it up, aimed for a while, and then shamelessly shifted the arrowhead towards a tree about ten meters away, slightly thicker than a meter.

"This time, I'm sure I'll hit it. If I don't, I'll eat dirt!"

"Boom!"

Almost as his fingers released the bowstring, the arrow became a streak of light, instantly striking the tree and blasting a small hole.

The Shell Lady cheered loudly again.

Chen Shouyi let out a long breath of relief and quickly walked over.

The Shell Lady quickly followed Chen Shouyi, sprinting along with short legs.

The diameter of the blasted hole was about ten centimeters, with a depth of around seventeen or eighteen centimeters.

Inside, wisps of blue smoke rose, emitting high temperatures.

He reached in and dug hard, extracting some wood fibers, and felt his fingers finding a large amount of iron scraps. It was apparent that upon impact, this ordinary arrow had shattered instantly, turning into a high-speed metallic stream.

After a quick look, he tossed it to the ground.

The tree's material was quite tough, with defense capabilities comparable to steel.

In fact, plain steel, with its excess hardness and insufficient toughness, couldn't effectively defend against kinetic impacts, whereas the trees in this world, with dense wood and exceptionally tough fibers interwoven like layers of natural biological armor, offered defense against arrows nearly on par with steel.

The power of this bow had surpassed that of a machine gun. An ordinary Barbarian could be cut in two with a single arrow, and if it were a tungsten steel armor-piercing arrow, it might even penetrate light tanks.

Soon, he returned to his original spot, ready to continue practicing.

"Good Giant, hurry into the cave, that fierce bird is coming again; it's coming to eat us!" The Shell Lady suddenly shouted in terror.

Upon hearing this, Chen Shouyi quickly looked up.

He saw the familiar silver-white figure in the sky swiftly flying toward them.

"Damn it, one day I'll get you."

Chen Shouyi cursed under his breath, scooped up the Shell Lady from the ground, and hurried toward the cave.

This serpentine creature was quite vengeful. Ever since it got beaten by Chen Shouyi last time, it had circled this area daily for the past few days, occasionally spewing a blaze to turn a patch of forest to ash.

Fortunately, it remembered Giant Chen Shouyi rather than Chen Shouyi in his normal state.

As long as he didn't wander in front of it provocatively, there wasn't much danger.

...

The next morning, in front of the newsstand.

"Jiangnan Province's senior official Xin Changfeng attended the relaunch ceremony of the Luoshan Island nuclear power plant. Luoshan Island nuclear power plant is the province's first and largest nuclear plant. It's reported that the reactivated Unit One will be used for a small-scale power test.

Senior official Xin Changfeng pointed out in his speech that electricity is the cornerstone of human civilization. The relaunch of Unit One at Luoshan Island nuclear power plant is just the beginning of the resurgence of electricity, which will gradually restore in the coming years..."

"The parasite prevention effort has made a breakthrough. As of yesterday, no new cases have been found for five consecutive days. Now, Changgang Town, Xuxiang Town, and Hongshan Town have officially lifted martial law and restored normal social order as of yesterday."

"Good news, war hero Colonel Xiao Changming has returned alive from the battlefield and has been recuperating in Hedong for three days. Colonel Xiao Changming is part of the Hedong Garrison District and, while serving as the commander of the special brigade, he was awarded first-class merits on multiple occasions, especially during the Ningzhou campaign..."

Chen Shouyi paused his reading, thinking he had misread, and scanned it from start to finish again.

"Xiao Changming is back? He didn't die!"

Chen Shouyi felt both surprised and delighted.

Xiao Changming was one of the two military-origin Martial Artists in Hedong City who had a fairly good relationship with him, unlike Lei Ruiyang where they often were like fire and water, mutually displeased and kept a cool relationship.

"But why did it take so long for him to return; it's been a month already." He was slightly puzzled about this but didn't dwell on it.

After finishing, Chen Shouyi flipped to the supplement section and found that several pages were dedicated to promoting Xiao Changming's achievements.

He recalled that when Xiao Changming's death was reported, the publicity wasn't so intense; it seemed there was only an obituary.

Looks like they're setting him up as a role model!

Chen Shouyi didn't feel any envy; though he completed the mission, Xiao Changming had greater sacrifices, almost nine lives gone, and surviving was already a miracle.

People need to believe in miracles.

Especially in such perilous and panic-stricken times, people need to believe in miracles.

...

During dinner in the evening, Chen Dawei suddenly brought up the topic of Xiao Changming.

"This Colonel Xiao is truly remarkable. The newspaper said he's a Martial Artist, and now he's been hailed as a war hero."

"What is a Martial Artist?" Mrs. Chen asked curiously.

"Martial Artists are the strongest fighters, even more powerful than Shou Yi's great Martial Artists!" Chen Dawei exclaimed, then turned to look at Chen Shouyi who was silently eating his meal, "Shou Yi, do you know Colonel Xiao?"

"I do!" Chen Shouyi swallowed his food and replied.

Chen Dawei's face lit up with something akin to pride, "He's your superior, right?"

"No, he's with the military, I'm a civilian. We're not in the same system, but sometimes we do missions together." Chen Shouyi explained, feeling slightly frustrated.

"There's such a distinction!" Mrs. Chen said curiously, "In that case, you should still visit him; it'll be good to have someone to rely on when you do tasks together, since you are just a great Martial Artist, whereas Colonel Xiao is a Martial Artist."

Chen Shouyi felt a sting in his heart.

I'm a Martial Artist too.

In fact, in the entire Jiangnan Province, I'm the strongest!

But these words he could only keep to himself.

It made him feel stifled.

Feeling helpless, Chen Shouyi finally said, "Alright, I'll visit him tomorrow."

"Remember to buy some nice gifts." Mrs. Chen reminded.

"Got it."

"Brother, take me with you, I've never seen a Martial Artist before, he's a legendary figure!" Chen Xingyue pleaded with an innocent expression.

"What's there to see? Aren't you going to school tomorrow?" Chen Shouyi retorted.

"But he's a Martial Artist, just understanding a bit of Martial Arts practice can benefit me for life." Chen Xingyue displayed a knowing look as if saying you don't understand.

"Shou Yi, if it's not too much trouble, take her with you, it's good to let her see the world." Chen Dawei persuaded.

Chen Shouyi couldn't find a good reason to refuse, so he reluctantly said, "Okay, I know!"

He secretly glared at his excited sister.

Such a nuisance!