

New Era 391

Chapter 391: Official Letter from the Capital City

Provincial Government Office.

The office director sat on the sofa with a face full of caution, tentatively asked: "Should we suppress it?"

The Provincial Chief held a letter about the invitation to reward Chen Shouyi at a recognition ceremony in the Capital City, his brows tightly furrowed, and he hadn't finished speaking for a long time.

He had been looking at it for a long time, and just reading it gave him a headache.

Although most letters with clear intentions to manipulate, he would just glance at them and throw them in the trash, like inviting some famous experts to the Capital City for a meeting, or reviewing the certification again for martial artists and martial masters from various provinces.

Such letters clearly meant to manipulate, only a fool would fall for them.

The province has its own situation, with some areas still in a state of occupation!

Taking care of his own province has already left him exhausted, where is the extra strength to support the central government? Even if he agrees, others won't.

But this letter involves a powerful martial master, so it can't be handled rashly.

Looking at the information on the letter, the opponent killed a demigod this time, even though it was just a heavily injured demigod, it's an amazing feat!

Back when much of Hedong was occupied, it was only by one demigod.

A heavily injured demigod, even with severely reduced strength, is far stronger than the average martial master.

Such a martial master is of significant importance to Jiangnan Province, enough to serve as a stabilizing force.

Their role is comparable to that of a battalion.

Moreover, this martial master is still young, only just an adult. From the documents, he is basically a martial arts fanatic, with no desire for power. He normally abides by the law, truly a model citizen of the new era.

If he suppresses the letter here, and the person on the other end hears about it and feels discouraged, just pack up and go to the Capital City with his family, how can you stop him?

After a long time, the Provincial Chief put down the letter and solemnly said: "We definitely cannot suppress it! He surely has to go to the Capital City, but we must send people to closely monitor, strict prevention, and avoid him getting manipulated away."

"I will certainly send competent personnel to accompany," the office director quickly stood up and said, "Deputy Director Huang Jian has interacted with him more, so they can communicate better."

"Huang Jian? No, he's too old. Even as a martial master, no matter how mature, he's only eighteen, what common language does he have with someone in their forties?" The Chief immediately denied.

"Then Han Jiangang, Deputy Director, thirty-nine years old!"

"He's also somewhat old, are there no other options?" The Chief said discontentedly.

The office director suddenly understood: "Then how about Deputy Director Zhang Miaomiao from the Second Secretary's Office, she's twenty-eight years old, just the rank is a bit low."

"Low rank doesn't matter, as long as the task is accomplished, I think it's fine!"

...

The other world was growing colder.

In the desert where Chen Shouyi trained, the temperature had already dropped to below minus forty degrees.

He kept a thick coat in his backpack at this time.

Due to the low temperature, the Shell Lady also seemed like a quail, not too fond of moving around, she curled up in a small nest Chen Shouyi specifically arranged for her, stuffed with velvet.

In the cold wind, her whole body was huddled in it, only revealing a pair of mung bean-sized eyes, staring unblinkingly at Chen Shouyi who was naked, steaming all over.

Beads of sweat dripped from his body onto the ground, and within seconds, they had already frozen into ice.

After finishing his Thirty-Six Horizontal Training Styles, Chen Shouyi wiped off his sweat and quickly put on his clothes.

It's really too cold here.

He picked up the Shell Lady's small nest and walked into the cave.

Inside, a pot of meat soup was bubbling away.

The pot and bowl were brought from the outside.

Just roasted meat can get tiring after a while, even though Chen Shouyi is not picky, he's recently been eating to the point of nausea.

He took off the pot lid, and steam rushed out, emitting a rich meaty aroma.

Large pieces of meat rolled in the milky white boiling water, along with mushrooms, green vegetables, bamboo shoots. Except for the meat caught here, the rest were brought from outside.

In this desert, especially in the cold winter, prey is extremely scarce and rarely comes out, but if one is attentive, they can still find some.

With his keen hearing and perception, he could easily notice them even underground.

The meat was ready!

Chen Shouyi sprinkled a bit of salt into it.

Served a large bowl.

The fragrant meat soup shimmered with cheerful oil flowers, aptly seasoned, the meat was aromatic and substantial, devouring it piping hot with the soup gave rise to warmth in the belly, causing slight perspiration.

In the cold winter, a pot of piping hot, delicious meat soup is truly an unparalleled pleasure.

Chen Shouyi heard a rustling sound and looked up at the darkened sky.

It's starting to snow!

Next to the charcoal fire, the rejuvenated silly Shell Lady looked at the snow outside with excitement as she left her warm nest and flew out. The result was she got hit left and right by the snow, staggering, yet still enjoying it inexplicably.

She grabbed a snowflake and stuffed it into her mouth.

By the time Chen Shouyi noticed, she had already eaten several.

He quickly focused his mind, his will like tentacles, pulling the silly Shell Lady back: "This can't be eaten!"

"Why can't it be eaten?" The Shell Lady asked puzzled.

"Your stomach will freeze!" Chen Shouyi said.

"Oh!" Feeling her stomach already numbed by cold, she was so frightened she quickly discarded the remaining snowflake in her hand and burrowed into Chen Shouyi's furnace-like chest, though her eyes still constantly watched the snowflakes drifting outside.

Outside, the cold wind howled, eerie and mournful!

Yet inside the cave it was warm as spring, shielding from the wind completely.

Chen Shouyi soon finished the entire pot of hot soup.

He rested for a while, waited for the food to digest, then removed his clothes and continued practicing amidst the storm.

To become strong, one must endure hardship and solitude.

Although the 'Book of Knowledge' played a major role, without daily effort ten times harder than ordinary people, he wouldn't have become one of the few peak martial masters in the Great Xia Country within just a year.

...

By evening, when Chen Shouyi returned home, he saw Bai Xiaoling standing at the door with two unfamiliar people, a man and a woman.

Looks like it's not a mission notice!

Chen Shouyi muttered inwardly.

"Chief Consultant, let me introduce them. This is Director Zhang from the Provincial Secretarial Office," Bai Xiaoling stood up and said.

A graceful and beautiful young lady immediately stood up with a smile without speaking: "No need to call me Director Zhang, Chief Consultant, just call me Zhang Miaomiao!"

"And this is Zhao Ding!" Bai Xiaoling continued introducing.

A young man with acne and a rather unremarkable appearance instantly sprang up nervously: "Chief... Chief Consultant, hello, I just handle miscellaneous tasks and serve the leaders."

Chen Shouyi glanced over their faces, utterly bewildered: "Hello, what brings you to me?"

"Here's the situation: a letter from the Capital City regarding the recognition for your achievement in killing the demigod during your last mission. However, you have to go to the Capital to receive it. To ensure you are familiar with the specifics, the provincial committee specially appointed us to accompany you on a trip!" Zhang Miaomiao said with a smile.

Upon hearing this, Bai Xiaoling's eyes widened in shock.

A demigod, how could that be?

How could my Chen Shouyi be so formidable!

Chen Shouyi seemed oblivious to Bai Xiaoling's astonishment, his face flashed with excitement: "When are we going?"

"At ten o'clock tonight, on the train!"

Chapter 392: Train (Part 1)

At eight in the evening, after saying goodbye to his parents, Chen Shouyi walked out the door with a briefcase and a long sword in hand.

A black high-end car, now a rare sight, was already parked at the entrance.

Bai Xiaoling and Zhang Miaomiao were leaning against the car, talking quietly, while Zhao Ding sensibly took a few steps away to stay nearby.

Nowadays, gasoline and diesel are scarce, mostly used for military and lighting purposes. Although there have been breakthroughs in gasoline and diesel engine technology, except for special engineering vehicles that can't yet be manufactured, most of the cars on the road are crude steam engines, even the government vehicles.

Seeing a car with a sleek, technological beauty from the pre-cataclysm era, even Chen Shouyi was somewhat amazed.

"This car was modified by Jiangnan Engine Manufacturing Company as a gift to the Provincial Government. It's been sitting in the parking lot unused!" Zhang Miaomiao observed and said with a smile, "If the chief advisor likes it, I can apply to have it transferred to you."

"No need, even if you give it to me, I can't drive," Chen Shouyi said.

In this war-torn era, such a car is too conspicuous, and it's just for show with no practical use.

When used, it's not even as fast as his bicycle!

As the driver and general handyman, Zhao Ding diligently came over to open the door for him: "Chief Advisor, watch out!"

The car door closed with a "bang bang."

Sitting beside him, Zhang Miaomiao said, "Chief Advisor, let me fasten your seatbelt!"

Chen Shouyi was about to refuse when a soft, gentle fragrance drifted over.

He swallowed his words at once, his body tensed as the soft, supple chest brushed past him. His mind was instantly filled with all sorts of chaotic images, and he quickly shook his head slightly to drive those dirty thoughts away.

This certainly wasn't intentional!

Just seemed enthusiastic!

He sat upright with a serious demeanor until she finished fastening the seatbelt, then finally breathed a sigh of relief.

Bai Xiaoling secretly observed through the rearview mirror, her fist clenched tightly. Watching the other's proper and dignified face, she didn't expect her to be such a coquettish woman; it was utterly shameless.

She discreetly straightened her C-cup chest, only to find with dismay that she couldn't quite compare.

"Chief Advisor, can I interview you? How did you kill the demigod?" Zhang Miaomiao's face showed a hint of blush as she coyly asked, tucking her hair behind her ear.

Driving in front, Zhao Ding listened without a change of gaze, wishing his ears were deaf and his eyes blind as his usually stern boss acted coquettishly.

"That's too bloody, nothing much to talk about!" Chen Shouyi said.

Zhang Miaomiao looked at the slightly embarrassed expression of her counterpart, her eyes glistening with admiration, finding it too cute and handsome. It's hard to believe he's a terrible martial artist. She shifted her body slightly, leaning forward: "Come on, it can be just a casual talk!"

Initially, when she received this task, her heart resisted, and her mouth refused.

Martial artists are brutal and violent figures. Ordinary people instinctively feel fear when interacting with them, especially with someone who killed a demigod and stood at the pinnacle among martial artists.

Interacting with such a person is overly stressful, feeling like she could be crushed by a finger at any moment, especially being a female. Suppose some humiliating things happen during this period, probably wouldn't have any place to complain, ending without a resolution.

However, upon hearing that the mission was assigned by the Provincial Government, she had felt despair.

Until... she saw the man in person, all the pressure and reluctance in her heart vanished instantly.

So handsome!

Utterly extraordinary!

And gentle, unlike the fierce and vicious other martial artists, obviously non-threatening!

Facing such a self-familiar older woman, Chen Shouyi found it hard to resist, unable to just knock her out with a punch: "Alright!"

Everyone perked up their ears immediately.

Chen Shouyi roughly recounted the incident: "That's about it. I hid in the corner, waited for her to come over, rushed out immediately, exchanged a few blows with her, and finally chopped off her head!"

Isn't that too simple?

There's no twist or turn!

Zhang Miaomiao couldn't help but ask, "Did the demigod just die like that?"

"Without a head, of course, she's dead!" Chen Shouyi looked with a strange gaze and replied.

...

The car sped all the way.

After more than an hour, they arrived at the train station.

There were only a few dozen people in the waiting hall. With the current restrictions on movement, most of the people here were government, enterprise officials, and soldiers on business trips.

After Bai Xiaoling let Chen Shouyi sit down, she immediately sat next to him, pulling out a thermos from her small bag: "Chief Advisor, do you want some water? This thermos is new; I haven't used it."

"No, thanks." Chen Shouyi said. Watching her with the thermos, he was reminded of a question: "By the way, how long does it take for the train to the Capital City now?"

"Thirty to forty hours, I guess," Zhang Miaomiao said from the other side.

Chen Shouyi was stunned. Thirty to forty hours!

Doesn't that mean a day or two on the train!

Zhang Miaomiao immediately explained: "Initially, we could arrange for a helicopter, but considering the long distance and the lack of safety in helicopters, trains were chosen instead!"

In fact, safety was part of it. With helicopters, the speed is faster, arriving in a few hours. But then there wouldn't be time to get acquainted, and spending a day and a night on a train, even strangers become familiar out of boredom.

Chen Shouyi instantly accepted this explanation in his mind.

Indeed, planes are quite dangerous. If a problem arises and it crashes from high altitude, even he risks falling to his death.

...

"Woo woo woo..."

An hour later than scheduled, a large, retro locomotive, spewing white steam like a giant beast, slowly approached the station.

A group of people filed into the carriage.

The ticket booked for Chen Shouyi was a high-class single sleeper.

Inside was a single room with a table, chairs, a sofa, and even an independent bathroom.

"This is like a hotel!" Bai Xiaoling exclaimed, "What kind of tickets do we have?"

"The two of us have regular soft sleepers, and Zhao Ding has a hard sleeper."

Zhao Ding chuckled beside them. Given his lowest status, with fewer people traveling by train now and even fewer train services, without a certain rank, even a hard sleeper ticket couldn't be booked.

Chen Shouyi looked around, saying, "It's late already, let's rest early."

After shoohing the three away, he closed the door.

Finally, quiet at last!

He took the Shell Lady, who had been awakened long ago, out of his briefcase and asked with a smile: "Are you hungry?"

"Hungry!" After emerging, the Shell Lady sneakily examined her surroundings, then jumped onto the window, cautiously opened a gap in the curtain, looked at the scene retreating outside, and said with a vigilant face: "Great Giant, we're moving! Where is this place?"

Chen Shouyi laughed, taking out honey from his briefcase and a thermos, preparing it for her: "The train!"

The train?

Images of a train she'd seen before floated in the Shell Lady's mind.

"Is it the big train? So big, it's a big, big train!"

"Here, quickly eat the honey and then go to sleep!"

"Okay!" The Shell Lady answered verbally, but her body remained curiously perched on the windowsill, motionless.

Chapter 393: Too Blunt

The next day!

After lunch, Zhang Miaomiao sat on the bed, looking bored, and said to Bai Xiaoling who was on the floor, "Xiaoling, is the Chief Advisor always like this? I mean, not really into socializing!"

From morning till now, Chen Shouyi hadn't shown up. She'd gone to his room several times, only to find him training each time.

She didn't want to disturb him, which dashed Zhang Miaomiao's hopes of getting to know Chen Shouyi during this time.

"Miaomiao, don't worry, the Chief Advisor is always like this. He trains in another world every day. You won't see him until the evening," Bai Xiaoling said, feeling secretly pleased.

My Chen Shouyi isn't someone who can be seduced by a flirtatious woman like you.

A pot-bellied middle-aged man beside them chuckled and said, "This Chief Advisor you're talking about must be a great Martial Artist. For people like him, nothing matters but Martial Arts. Otherwise, they wouldn't become a great Martial Artist."

Sharing a room with two beautiful ladies and having a chat sure makes the dull journey pleasant.

"Every great Martial Artist has their own personality, not all are the same," said another middle-aged man in the same compartment, who was fit and agile. "I'm more easy-going. Which compartment is he in? I'd like to meet him and have a chat."

The chubby middle-aged man was surprised, not expecting that there were hidden talents along the journey, and was about to flatter them. Just then, Bai Xiaoling casually said:

"The Chief Advisor is a Martial Artist!"

Can a great Martial Artist even compare to a strand of my Chen Shouyi's hair?

Even a Martial Artist can't compare to a strand of my Chen Shouyi's hair!

No matter how strong, can they compare to my Chen Shouyi in looks?

The atmosphere suddenly went silent!

The chubby middle-aged man was dumbfounded: "Martial... Martial Artist!"

The great Martial Artist was shocked too, secretly relieved that he hadn't boasted.

I hope that wasn't considered bragging just now?

He then cautiously asked, "Is the senior here on a mission? If it's confidential, never mind."

"It's not confidential. The Chief Advisor killed a Demigod and needs to go to the Capital City to receive a national award. We're just his entourage," Bai Xiaoling said, looking at everyone like a fox pretending to be a tiger.

There's nothing to hide, it's an honorable thing.

My Chen Shouyi is just that amazing!

As Chen Shouyi's liaison officer and secretary, she felt proud.

She even felt a bit inflated now!

The great Martial Artist was stunned, unable to believe it.

A Demigod is a godlike nightmare of an existence.

To a human Martial Artist, they might as well be ants in front of such an entity.

How could they be killed so easily!

If it were, his province wouldn't have resorted to a nuclear strike in the end to deal with a Demigod.

He wanted to question it but wisely kept silent even if the girl was exaggerating. At least this Chief Advisor was indeed a Martial Artist.

By evening, he finally saw the legendary Chief Advisor.

Very young and so handsome it's unrealistic.

Two women surrounded him enthusiastically, fawning over him.

To be honest, he secretly despised it.

What use is it for a man to be this handsome?

Can you eat it?

Just as he was mentally grumbling, the other party suddenly looked over.

The next moment, he felt an overwhelming pressure surging toward him. His body tensed up, goosebumps rising everywhere as he forced a smile.

The other party smiled, and the pressure quickly dissipated as if it were an illusion, then shifted his gaze away.

"Whew!"

He breathed a sigh of relief, realizing his back was drenched with sweat.

...

Along the way, there were many traces of war. Villages reduced to ruins and even entire cities were visible.

This railway, an artery of transportation, had clearly undergone repeated destruction and repair.

Since boarding the train, the Shell Lady had been crouched by the window, peeking cautiously through the curtains, watching the world with curiosity, occasionally exclaiming in astonishment.

This shocking and new world hit her with a strong emotional impact.

"Great Giant, look, is that a big kitty?"

"Uh-huh!" Chen Shouyi glanced at a small cat on the distant path and nodded.

"Will it eat the little one?" the Shell Lady asked.

"Yes!" Chen Shouyi thought for a moment and said.

Cats are the fiercest.

If a cat caught the Shell Lady, Chen Shouyi wasn't sure if it would eat her but would definitely play her to death.

Soon after, she exclaimed again, "Great Giant, look, is that a big rooster?"

"Yes!"

"Will it eat the little one?"

"Yes!"

This one is even fiercer, it really might eat the Shell Lady.

Whenever she saw an animal or something new after that, she would shout, her eyes gleaming in excitement even late at night.

Chen Shouyi found it immensely annoying.

Eventually, he chose to ignore her entirely.

After spending two nights and a day on the train, mostly in training, they finally reached the Capital City by noon on the second day.

The three of them walked out of the train station.

They saw someone already waiting outside.

A man and a woman holding signs with Chen Shouyi's name on them were waiting at the station's exit.

The three of them went over and introduced themselves.

"Hello, Mr. Chen. We've long awaited you. I'm Sun Jianhua from the Martial Arts Bureau and this is Qian Feiyan from the Rapid Response Unit."

Martial Arts Bureau?

This is the highest authority managing Martial Artists, a department at the ministerial level.

Chen Shouyi hadn't heard of the Rapid Response Unit, but it seemed to be another Martial Artist Department.

"Hello!" Chen Shouyi shook hands with them one by one. "Sorry, the train was delayed."

Qian Feiyan jumped in, "Mr. Chen, there's still time. Would you like to go to the hotel or visit our place? Our Rapid Response Unit is fully equipped with training facilities and there's a Spatial Passage beside us. Many Martial Artists like to train there; you could all exchange experiences."

Zhang Miaomiao immediately became alert upon hearing this and stepped forward bluntly, "No need to go to your place. You're not the reception, right? The Chief Advisor has been on the train for two days and is already tired. Let's head to the hotel first!"

Hearing it wasn't the reception, Chen Shouyi lost interest and asked Sun Jianhua, "When can I collect the reward?"

Sun Jianhua froze for a moment. Although aware of the directness of Martial Artists, this one was too direct, without a hint of subtlety:

"Well... the exact award ceremony is arranged for two days later, with important leaders attending. You don't have an official national Martial Artist certification yet, do you? How about tomorrow we make time for the certification, if you find it suitable?"

Chen Shouyi nodded, "Sure, no problem. Let's head to the hotel first, then."

Chapter 394: Sneaky

The two arrived by car.

It was an ugly steam-powered van.

The group got into the car, and Chen Shouyi looked outside the window. The Capital City no longer seemed as prosperous as before. Even though it was noon, the streets were sparse and desolate.

There were military and police everywhere on the road. On top of every skyscraper, there were rapid-fire cannons installed, all with calibers above 50mm, giving the entire city a solemn appearance.

Chen Shouyi occasionally saw a few dilapidated buildings, and even collapsed ruins, clearly showing that this place had also undergone many hardships.

However, this area was undoubtedly much better than Hedong District, where there had been hardly any significant destruction!

"The population density in the Capital is too high. Over the past year, several migrations have been organized, with most people moving to the newly built industrial zones on the outskirts, so it appears somewhat deserted," Sun Jianhua explained with a smile. "Mr. Chen, how is it on your side in Hedong?"

Chen Shouyi replied, "Hedong is similar to here. The new zones are a bit more prosperous, but the old zones are rather dilapidated."

...

After half an hour, the van stopped at a luxurious guesthouse.

This place was located in the city center, not far from Tiananmen and the Great Hall. The guesthouse was splendid and luxurious, with artificial lakes inside, rock gardens, small bridges, and a lush artificial forest on a tiny island in the middle.

"It's very close to the Martial Arts Bureau. Mr. Chen, when you have time, you should come and visit," Sun Jianhua said, personally leading Chen Shouyi to the room. "I hope Mr. Chen finds this satisfactory?"

"You're too kind, it's quite nice," Chen Shouyi said, glancing around.

The room was a large suite, very spacious, with luxurious decor and all kinds of appliances.

Of course, these were all just for show now.

"Mr. Chen is a pillar of the nation. The director instructed me to ensure you are well taken care of. If you have any requests or find anything unsatisfactory, just let the manager here know; I've specifically briefed them!"

Chen Shouyi smiled.

So now he's qualified to be called a pillar of the nation!

Sun Jianhua and Qian Feiyan accompanied the group to a meal, chatting about some amusing anecdotes from the martial artist circle in the Capital, but without any obvious attempts to win them over, and soon took their leave.

This made Zhang Miaomiao relax her tense nerves.

Chen Shouyi returned to his room, put away his luggage, took a shower, dressed in silk pajamas, and lay on the soft rocking chair, feeling totally at ease. He checked his attribute panel.

The training on the train these past two days was not completely fruitless; his strength rose to 17.3 points, almost reaching two tons of strength.

He clenched his fist tightly, producing a crackle in the air.

Then he spread out his hand, with fingers pristine, slender, and fair, showing no trace of the terrifying power contained within.

With a thought, the briefcase on the coffee table flew straight up into the air, landing on his lap.

He unzipped it, and the Shell Lady jumped out impatiently. She didn't bother with Chen Shouyi, observed the surroundings, leapt onto the carpet, ran a bit, and then jumped like a flea to the one-meter-high windowsill.

She squatted on the ledge, pulled open a gap in the curtains with her small hands, and carefully peered outside.

After a while, she ran over quickly, about to cry: "Why isn't it the big train here!"

"The train arrived, so we got off!" Chen Shouyi said casually, leisurely rocking the chair.

He planned to get a rocking chair in his room once he returned to Hedong City.

"Boohoo, give me back my big train, I want the big train!"

Chen Shouyi was speechless.

What's so great about the train? Even though he had a private luxury sleeper cabin, after two days, he felt like he was in a prison, feeling confined and irritable, while she, on the other hand, seemed to enjoy it endlessly.

"Don't worry, we'll be riding it again soon enough!" Chen Shouyi quickly reassured her.

"One sunrise and sunset, or one, one sunrise and sunset, or one, one, one sunrise and sunset..." the Shell Lady whimpered.

"Three!" Chen Shouyi replied.

"Promise you didn't lie to the little one?" The Shell Lady wiped away her tears, which magically retracted.

As if implying he had tricked her on purpose.

"I promise!" Chen Shouyi said crossly.

In three days, they'd definitely be going back!

At that moment, there was a knock on the door.

The Shell Lady was startled, scampered to the sofa base, and squirmed in like a worm.

Such a scaredy-cat!

Chen Shouyi chuckled, glanced at her, and got up to answer the door.

At the door stood Zhang Miaomiao, dressed in a cotton T-shirt and short skirt, exuding a gentle air. Her gray pencil skirt perfectly accentuated her curvaceous figure and presence. She smiled and said, "Chief Consultant, want to go shopping? Xiaoling and I are going!"

"You guys go ahead; I'll pass," Chen Shouyi replied.

What's fun about shopping? He's hated it ever since he was little.

Zhang Miaomiao felt disappointed. Without a handsome guy accompanying them, the thrill of shopping dissipated significantly. "Then, Chief Consultant, is there anything you want us to buy for you?"

Chen Shouyi thought for a moment and said, "Nothing comes to mind!"

"Alright then!"

...

After Zhang Miaomiao left, Chen Shouyi smacked his forehead.

Almost forgot.

The Shell Lady's clothes were almost gone, having worn and torn through them over the past half-year.

Especially since she often crawls under the bed or the sofa, burrowing into every nook and cranny, and sometimes even digs in the soil, her clothes get ruined easily.

Now she had very few left, and most were shabby or stained with stubborn stains.

It's high time to buy some.

It's just that it's been very hard to find in Hedong City recently, so I don't know if there are any in the Capital?

Of course, buying this kind of thing can't be delegated to anyone else; I have to do it myself!

Otherwise, if a distinguished Martial Artist like me got found out, it'd be embarrassing.

After waiting for about ten minutes, he changed his clothes, tucked the Shell Lady into the briefcase, and walked out the door.

However, upon stepping out of the guesthouse, he saw Zhang Miaomiao, Bai Xiaoling, and Zhao Ding.

Darn it, still dawdling here and haven't left yet?

Chen Shouyi hesitated for a moment; there were people all around, and there were young and attractive receptionists just next to him. Going back now would be too obvious and suspicious.

"Chief Consultant, you're coming out?" Bai Xiaoling asked, surprised to see Chen Shouyi first.

Chen Shouyi nodded, carrying his briefcase, and walking steadily, he said, "You all go about your shopping. I'll just wander around nearby."

"How about we accompany you?" Zhang Miaomiao suggested.

"No need, no need, I just want some peace and quiet by myself!" Chen Shouyi quickly said.

Feigning departure until they left, he then returned to the guesthouse, motioning to a service attendant with a wave of his hand.

A young service attendant hurried over with a blush in front of envious looks from the crowd. Gazing at the handsome Chen Shouyi, she shyly smiled and asked, "Hello, what services do you need?"

"Do you know where I can buy Barbie dolls nearby?" Chen Shouyi asked softly.

The young service attendant was slightly stunned for a moment.

Reading her expression, Chen Shouyi quickly explained, "Uh, it's for a relative's daughter. Her birthday is coming up soon, so... you understand."

"No need to explain. The manager instructed that you are a distinguished guest of the guesthouse, and all expenses during your stay will be covered by us. If you need Barbie dolls, please wait a moment, and we'll have them brought to you. No need for you to make a trip!"

But I don't just need one!

"That's too kind, but there's no need. I prefer buying it myself; that makes it more heartfelt," Chen Shouyi said with an awkward smile.

"You truly are compassionate!"

...

After finally getting the address, Chen Shouyi stepped out onto the street, breathing a long sigh of relief.

He felt that was more exhausting than a battle.

Chapter 395: Testing the Goods

Recently, the martial artist circle in the Capital City has not been calm.

The appearance of a second demigod slayer and the news of this strong person coming to the Capital have spread rapidly within the circle, causing quite a stir.

For lower-tier martial artists, such a grand figure naturally brings shock and excitement.

But among martial artists, it aroused quite a bit of curiosity.

Although not explicitly stated, many people feel discontent in their hearts.

Ye Zong is certainly not included in this; he has always been high above, far surpassing the concept of a martial artist, like a towering Great Mountain, dominating the entire Great Xia Martial Arts, representing the pinnacle of human strength, the God of Martial Arts!

Countless astonishing battle achievements have made all martial artists accustomed to Ye Zong's fearsome reputation. Even after consecutively slaying two demigods, though shocking, it seemed only natural, earning their respect.

However, now a martial artist from a lower region, by sheer lucky chance, also slew a demigod and is to receive a national award. The first reaction is to attribute it to luck, the second, to discontent.

The Capital City is where martial artists gather, with seven out of ten martial artists residing there, making this feel almost like a slap in the face to them.

...

In the morning, a table full of dishes was set.

A middle-aged couple sat at the dining table eating.

At this moment, a thirteen or fourteen-year-old girl hurriedly came down the stairs: "I'm going to be late, Mom and Dad, I'm not eating, I'll buy something on the way!"

"If you know you're going to be late, why not get up earlier! All you know is snacking. With such good conditions, you still slack off, if you were diligent, you'd have become a great martial artist by now." Wang Lie said sternly, reprimanding her.

"Why the bad mood today, did you eat gunpowder?" his wife said unhappily.

"A doting mother raises a spoiled child, go on and protect her, a good martial arts talent is ruined by you." Wang Lie said irritably, she's thirteen and still not proficient in swordsmanship, it's embarrassing to say, and all because of her pampering.

"Why can't I protect her? She's my daughter, if I don't care for her, who will? What's so good about martial arts, every time you go out, I'm on edge, fearing you won't come back!"

Unlike you and your thoughtless heart, you even hang out with vixens outside, do you think I'm old and worn compared to those young pretty vixens?"

"Why bring this up again, it was years ago, why mention this in front of the child, I said I broke it off a long time ago!" Wang Lie said, looking pained.

The girl stuck out her tongue and promptly left the villa.

"How would I know? You're a martial artist, if you want to sneak around, I might never find out!" his wife continued to nag.

Wang Lie felt choked, opened his mouth, and finally wisely chose not to argue.

"Why aren't you speaking, guilty conscience? Or think I'm annoying? You weren't like this when you were after me."

Clearly you were interested in me first!

Otherwise, why would I pursue you.

Wang Lie felt stifled, thinking he should have kept his mouth shut and just eaten his meal.

He quickly finished the rice in his bowl, placed his chopsticks down: "I'm full!"

"You only had one bowl."

"I'm filled with anger!"

He said as he stood up and walked out of the villa with his hands behind his back.

"Chief Advisor Wang!"

"Chief Advisor Wang, out for a stroll!"

Wang Lie nodded along the way and quickly arrived at the Martial Arts Bureau's martial artist examination center entrance.

It turned out he was not the only one here today.

"Elder Wang!" a newly minted martial artist greeted respectfully.

Wang Lie nodded slightly in acknowledgment. A new martial artist and a peak martial artist, though both are martial artists, are on completely different strength levels, like a child facing an adult.

"Lao Wang, you're here too!"

"Lao Hu, call me Lao Wang again and I'll lose my temper!" Wang Lie said with a blank expression, looking at him.

The middle-aged man called Lao Hu laughed instead of continuing, knowing if Wang Lie truly got angry, he couldn't beat him anyway.

Besides Ye Zong, within the martial artist circle, Wang Lie's strength faintly ranks among the top three:
"What made you restless today?"

"Came to see if there's anything special!" Wang Lie, though skeptical of the other's strength, wanted to see for himself, yet didn't dare to speak too boastfully, lest he end up embarrassed.

The arrival of the big shots quickly alerted the staff, who hurriedly came to open the door, welcoming them into the guest room, and serving tea.

Subsequently, martial artists occasionally entered.

Some lived quite far from the Martial Arts Bureau, even taking several hours by car to come specifically.

...

In the hostel, Chen Shouyi opened his eyes.

Seeing the Shell Lady still meticulously tidying her little clothes.

He couldn't help but be speechless.

Yesterday, Chen Shouyi had bought out all the Barbie Dolls in nearby malls, discarding the dolls, totaling more than three hundred sets of clothes, which greatly excited the Shell Lady.

From yesterday afternoon until now, she had been busy through the night, still energetic and enthusiastic.

"Oh, Giant, you woke up, Little Thing didn't sleep a wink from sunrise to sunset, busy to exhaustion." She sighed dramatically.

Serves you right!

Little drama queen!

Chen Shouyi snorted lightly, ignoring the already obsessed Shell Lady, got up and dressed, then went to the bathroom to brush and wash.

"Knock knock knock!"

Chen Shouyi went to open the door, a pretty service worker smiled shyly: "Mr. Chen, your newspaper!"

"Oh, thank you!" he said as he took it, closing the door.

He quickly flipped through it, the front-page headline was a piece of good news:

"A major breakthrough has been announced by the Beijing Electronics Research Institute. After over a hundred days and nights of effort, the institute has successfully developed the first integrated circuit, marking significant progress. Reportedly, this circuit utilizes a new technique...overcoming the difficulties posed by high voltage breakdowns, allowing stable operation of the integrated circuit.

Though this integrated circuit only matches the level of the 1960s before the anomaly, its impact is of great significance. Academician Jin Shouming, who led this research, pointed out that its rebirth signifies that humanity has once again set foot into the information age..."

He felt a surge of excitement.

As a high school dropout from the science field, Chen Shouyi had some understanding of integrated circuits.

From household appliances to missile guidance systems, all need integrated circuits. Once mass production stabilizes, human capabilities will undoubtedly level up again, with military strength reaching the levels of the fifties and sixties.

Moreover, with such a starting point, with the accumulation of human technology, redevelopment will rapidly advance.

Perhaps it won't be long before chips reappear.

By then, he could go... back online!

Next, Chen Shouyi quickly flipped through other news, finding that information about various places was sparse, only briefly mentioned, with no mention at all of the situation in East Sea Province.

Chapter 396: Shattering the Three Views

Chen Shouyi practiced the Horizontal Training Thirty-Six Styles for a while, then went to the internal restaurant of the guest house to have breakfast.

At eight o'clock, people from the Martial Arts Bureau came to pick him up.

It was still Sun Jianhua from yesterday.

Bai Xiaoling and others also followed along.

Sitting in the car, Chen Shouyi felt peaceful, yet he watched Tiananmen pass by with interest.

With his level of strength, the martial artist assessment was just a formality.

There was basically no suspense.

Sun Jianhua hesitated for a moment, but still reminded, "Mr. Chen, there will be many martial artists coming to observe the assessment today."

Chen Shouyi withdrew his gaze and asked, "Many? How many?"

"Before I came, ten had already arrived," Sun Jianhua said. Basically, those without assignments who could come were already there.

Ten!

Chen Shouyi chewed on this number silently, knowing only six martial artists in the capital.

"Do they want to meet me?" Chen Shouyi suddenly made a joke.

Sun Jianhua couldn't help but cough, "Well... I'm not sure, but I suggest you give your best effort for the assessment!"

"I'll do my best!" Chen Shouyi nodded and said.

Thoughtfully, he pondered, "Do they want to see my weight? After killing a demigod, though I've gained fame, I probably also invited skepticism from the martial arts circle."

Chen Shouyi remained expressionless.

Although he took advantage of the demigod's severe injury to kill him by luck,

it wasn't something an ordinary martial artist could question!

He became serious in his heart.

He could lose anything but not his dignity!

And especially not in the capital, losing face across the martial arts circle.

Now his strength was considered weak among peak martial artists; his strength was nearing the limit of martial artists, and his agility even exceeded it, but his intelligence was a significant shortfall.

"Such strength is still far from enough!" Chen Shouyi looked at the attribute panel and thought, "I must use additional means."

"Super God state?"

"Better not, it's too wasteful, it's just an assessment after all."

"Just use the Giant Transformation!"

He glanced at Bai Xiaoling and Zhang Miaomiao, hoping the stretchy underwear he bought with the Barbie Doll yesterday was of decent quality and could last for a while.

Zhang Miaomiao and Bai Xiaoling remained silent, not wanting to affect his state.

The car roared all the way, quickly turning into a cluster of buildings.

The national emblem at the entrance gave a sense of solemnity, with four vigorous gilded characters below.

"Martial Arts Bureau!"

Before the mutation, all major martial artist and martial artist apprentice assessments were held here.

With resources, geographical advantages, economy, and even special policies, there was a deliberate talent siphon effect, and most chose to stay in the capital.

This also led to most of Great Xia Country's martial artists being in the capital.

Soon, the car passed through a crimson maple forest and stopped at the entrance of an oval-shaped single-story building.

Chen Shouyi opened the door, jumped off the car with his sword!

The forest here provided cover, making it tranquil amidst the hustle, with beautiful surroundings.

"Mr. Chen, it's just up ahead, please follow me," Sun Jianhua politely said.

At this moment, someone inside heard the commotion, and two people walked out.

"Chen Shouyi, you're finally here!" Zhu Xueqing smiled and walked over quickly, giving a friendly punch to his chest.

"Not late, it's you who came early," Chen Shouyi gestured with his hand, glanced at her B-cup chest, then calmly put it down and said.

"Buddy, you've done such a big thing we don't even recognize you!" joked Lu Shouhu, whom Chen Shouyi had met during the mission to recover a nuclear bomb. "We're all here today to see you embarrass yourself; you don't mind, do you?"

As Chen Shouyi was about to speak, Zhu Xueqing interjected, "Soon you'll see, it was Elder Luo who reported the demigod killing!"

Though she hadn't seen Chen Shouyi kill the demigod, she had witnessed his strength.

Back then, in the Qujiang City naval port factory, when faced with those terrifying giant monsters, after transforming into a giant, he turned the tide and killed fiercely, even surpassing Elder Luo by far.

Otherwise, the perilous mission back then might have ended with their complete defeat.

"Watch all you want!" Chen Shouyi said indifferently.

Mere fame!

With that, he walked inside.

Sun Jianhua quickly stepped forward to lead the way.

Chen Shouyi stepped into the reception room, where some people stood up with a smile, while others remained expressionless.

However, martial artists are all dignified people with a superior status.

And there was no conflict of interest.

Though they were dissatisfied internally and wanted to see the worth of this "lucky guy," no one spoke maliciously or insulted him.

Chen Shouyi nodded to everyone and entered the assessment field.

It was almost as big as half a football field inside.

The ground was covered with thick steel plates, full of footprints, exuding a metallic scent.

Chen Shouyi glanced around, feeling as if something had shattered inside him.

Apart from its size, it felt similar to the martial artist assessment, lacking any mysterious feel, and due to post-mutation effects, many detection devices were absent. By comparison, the martial artist apprentice assessment he once accompanied his sister to seemed more technologically advanced.

But now, there was not much more to expect.

The martial artists originally in the reception room also entered the assessment field one after another.

Facing the strong presence of so many martial artists watching.

The few examiners and martial arts notaries sweated on their foreheads, nervously asking, "Mr. Chen, are you ready?"

"Ready!" Chen Shouyi nodded.

"Then we'll start with the strength assessment!" The examiner tried to stay calm.

The strength assessment involved a gigantic bench press machine, resembling a piece of machinery where weight could be freely added at both ends.

Starting with one ton.

Lying on the iron bed, Chen Shouyi effortlessly lifted it, "Too light!"

Quickly, the weight increased to one ton two.

"Still too light!" Chen Shouyi continued.

As the weight kept piling on, the surrounding chatter and conversation gradually dwindled.

When the final two tons were lifted and completed in a standard set by Chen Shouyi, all the martial artists fell silent.

Wang Lie looked on with a heavy expression; even he lacked such strength.

Two tons were considered the conventional limit for martial artists; of course, those with larger physiques had innate advantages and could surpass it more easily, but his physique was clearly still in the normal to lean range among martial artists.

"However, to kill a demigod, this is far from enough," he thought to himself:

"At most, just another peak martial artist similar to him."

...

Next, the speed test was conducted.

Compared to the martial artist assessment, the speed test for martial artists covered a distance of three hundred meters.

Inside the changing room of the assessment field, Chen Shouyi changed into sportswear and stood on the track, taking off his shoes.

Suddenly, a starting pistol fired, and his foot stomped fiercely.

With a "boom," the steel-plated floor shook slightly, leaving a deep footprint at the starting point, while his body shot off like an arrow, creating a breeze throughout the spacious assessment field.

The distant examiner only felt a silhouette flash before his eyes and hurriedly pressed the stopwatch, "2.1 seconds!"

"Buzz!"

The crowd burst into uproar.

"How is this possible!"

"His speed is almost one hundred fifty meters per second, how did he run that!"

"Incredibly terrifying, simply a monster!"

The crowd was abuzz with chatter.

In fact, once a martial artist reaches a certain level of strength, speed becomes hard to further improve.

No matter how fast the steps or how great the power, speed can't be enhanced.

Wind resistance, gravitational effects, especially the upward airflow at high speeds that causes the body to lift when running (except for short bursts)

F1 racing cars can lower the chassis, use front and rear wings along with a set of aerodynamic kits to provide additional downforce, keeping the car firmly on the ground.

Humans cannot!

The center of gravity during running cannot be lowered endlessly.

It's generally accepted that human speed tops out around one hundred meters per second, but now this limit was completely broken, shattering all the martial artists' perceptions.

Chapter 397: You're Not as Handsome as Him

"He has the innate ability to control the wind!" Lu Shouhu said with a smile at this moment.

"No wonder!"

The crowd was abuzz with chatter.

"I see!" Wang Lie overheard nearby, and suddenly felt a bit relieved.

With the ability to control the wind, one can greatly reduce air resistance and the effects of ascending air currents while running, naturally breaking speed limits and continuously improving.

However, this is only useful for escaping, not much for enhancing combat.

There are quite a few people with innate abilities, most of them on Earth, but they are just some tricks to fool people.

True combat strength relies on the Martial Artist's tirelessly refined body and the sword in hand.

He thought bitterly to himself.

...

The next test is for testing reaction ability.

The examiner asked Chen Shouyi to stand in front of a huge machine full of holes, with considerable distance between each hole, about one meter apart, and a full five meters between the holes on the far left and right. There were as many as ten holes.

"Mr. Chen, this machine will fire rubber bullets later, the firing speed is equivalent to that of a regular handgun bullet. The test requires that within half a minute, you block as many bullets as possible!" the examiner said politely.

"I understand!" The rules were clear, and Chen Shouyi nodded and said.

Soon, he stood ten meters away.

With the word 'start', the bullets began to fire.

At first, the frequency wasn't high, almost one bullet per second, but the firing positions were different.

Chen Shouyi easily sidestepped and deflected them with his sword.

But gradually, the speed became faster and faster, from one bullet per second to two per second, four per second... after ten seconds, it had become five per second, and his figure to an ordinary person's eyes gradually became a blur.

After twenty seconds, the bullets were already ten per second.

His figure moved like a phantom, drifting and dodging, bullets either deflected, shot down, or cut in half with a sword, each taken on.

At this point, Chen Shouyi began to feel quite strenuous, the bullets weren't fast, he could completely react, but the range was somewhat large.

Sometimes, bullets in front and behind were a full five meters apart, and once a bullet was sliced into two, the body had to swiftly return, if even a little slow, bullets would be missed.

Of course, he could also use his will to halt the bullets.

But that would be cheating.

Chen Shouyi disdained doing so.

Finally, the first bullet slipped through, and as the shooting speed continued to accelerate, the number of missed bullets increased, by the end of thirty seconds, he stopped, gasping for breath, drenched in sweat, steam rising!

The Martial Arts examiner immediately ran to the board a hundred meters away and began counting the missed bullets.

Soon the result was announced:

"25 bullets!"

The Martial Artist crowd buzzed again!

"Is this score good or bad?" Zhang Miaomiao asked Zhu Xueqing next to her, puzzled.

Bai Xiaoling also looked over upon hearing this.

"Of course it's good, as long as you miss no more than one hundred and fifty, that's the passing line for a Martial Artist, missing twenty-five bullets is almost at the level of a Peak Martial Artist!" Zhu Xueqing said with a smile.

This test is the most intuitive way to see a Martial Artist's overall strength.

The Martial Artist Assessment Center, unlike other lower-level assessment centers, is open to Martial Artists, and any Martial Artist with interest can come by anytime to test their strength.

Among all the Martial Artists in the Capital City, only five, including Ye Zong, can exceed this score.

Zhang Miaomiao and Bai Xiaoling both breathed a sigh of relief upon hearing this.

Not far away, Wang Lie also gradually relaxed, and started chatting with Lao Hu next to him: "Youngsters these days are more impressive, much stronger than you!"

"Why involve me, I'm just coasting along, have long lost ambition." Lao Hu didn't take the bait, snorted lightly: "I think you're just jealous, they have the luck and the courage. If it were me, even if facing a heavily injured Demigod, I probably wouldn't dare to step forward!"

"Me, jealous, what do I have to be jealous of!" Wang Lie snorted and said.

...

Soon, the archery test began again on the field.

Both of them immediately turned their gaze ahead.

Since Chen Shouyi didn't bring a bow and arrow, the assessment site provided a war bow of the same poundage.

After adapting for ten minutes, the assessment began.

...

Chen Shouyi stood at the marked line, looking at the row of ten targets, small as soccer balls, more than a hundred meters away.

He finally couldn't remain calm, and couldn't help but ask the examiner:

"Is this the hundred and fifty-meter target?"

He always relied on his intuition for shooting, within a hundred meters it was fine, beyond that there was no accuracy to speak of.

"Yes, Mr. Chen, the Martial Artist Archery Assessment requires a hundred and fifty-meter target, and next, high-speed moving targets!" the examiner said politely, and then seemed to notice something, cautiously asked: "How about you practice a bit more to adapt to the war bow?"

Adapt to what?

He already controlled every muscle in his body with precision, the war bow was calibrated, no much difference from his own, and with the ten minutes of practice earlier, he had become extremely accustomed to the war bow.

"Forget it, let's begin!"

Hoping luck is on my side today!

Chen Shouyi drew an arrow, took a deep breath, and fiercely drew the bow and shot.

"Bang!"

In the next instant, the target blew out a big hole between the three and two rings.

The distant crowd murmured and began whispering.

Every Martial Artist, from the Martial Artist Apprentice, to Martial Artist, to Great Martial Artist, to Martial Artist, had long trained in archery for seven or eight years, or as long as ten years, already well-practiced.

Especially with such a fixed target indoors, not every arrow hit the ten rings, but they rarely shot such low ring counts.

Chen Shouyi remained expressionless, continuing to draw the bow.

Bang bang bang...

When the result was about to be announced, the Martial Arts examiner, hesitating as if he had eaten something unpleasant, finally said loudly.

"28 rings, not qualified!"

Among them, one arrow missed the target in an embarrassing way.

Chen Shouyi's face turned black.

In hindsight, he should have found a seasoned archery teacher to start from the basics and practice step by step, instead of trying to push himself like a fool and arrogantly thinking he could manage. Truly, self-conceit can be deadly!

...

"He's still too young, probably hasn't practiced much with a bow. If he dedicated one or two years to practice, he'd likely pass!" Wang Lie couldn't help but grin, feeling refreshed and at ease seeing the other embarrassed, as if the morning's annoyance had dissipated.

"Indeed, it's quite lacking. Way too one-sided, and doesn't match his actual strength." Lao Hu said frankly, "I've never seen a Martial Artist hit such low scores; even an apprentice could do better!"

Bai Xiaoling listened to the conversation not far away, clenching her fists, her face turning pale with anger!

The Martial Artists in the Capital City are really too much!

So rude!

Even someone like Xiao Bai knows that Chief Advisor Chen's scores are a bit lackluster.

But do you know how hard and diligent Chief Advisor Chen has worked?

Motivated by a burst of impulse, disregarding her fear of the Martial Artists, she shouted at the two of them:

"Chief Advisor Chen just arrived in the Capital City yesterday and took two days by train. He came for the test today; isn't it normal to be off his game? Don't talk nonsense when you don't know the whole story!"

Wang Lie and Lao Hu exchanged glances, their faces a bit embarrassed; they hadn't expected to encounter such an ardent female fan of the opponent.

Lao Hu couldn't help wanting to argue back, but Wang Lie quickly pulled his sleeve at the side.

With twenty years of rich experience in sparring with his wife, he knew better than to argue with women. You never win, and you'd end up embarrassed. No way could you hit them; the best solution is to keep quiet.

Lao Hu was pulled back to reality, feeling a chill of fear.

The two quickly forced a polite but awkward smile and soon hid in the crowd's corner.

They let out a long sigh.

Looking back at Chen Shouyi, they finally noticed his handsome features.

"Damn it, even the pretty boys deserve to die!"

"What's the use of a Martial Artist being so handsome?"

The two exchanged a glance, seemingly seeing the same thoughts in each other's eyes.

...

Several assessors and notaries quickly discussed among themselves.

According to regulations, if a single section isn't passed in the Martial Artist assessment, then the overall assessment is considered a failure.

However, Chen Shouyi's performance in the previous sections was too remarkable, and since this assessment was more of a formality, it was soon announced to continue.

Listening to the murmurs from afar, Chen Shouyi simmered inside, his face darkening.

The staff soon made preparations.

The moving target was a high-speed disc launched by a machine, moving at sixty meters per second.

Still, the distance was one hundred and fifty meters.

...

Ten seconds later, Chen Shouyi had shot all forty arrows from two quivers.

Several notaries briefly discussed the results quietly, then quickly announced:

"Hit rate of 32.5%, not qualified, assessment complete, results passed!"

None of the Martial Artists were surprised by this result; with such tremendous strength, aside from the weakness in archery, he was nearly at the peak Martial Artist level, passing was only natural.

But Chen Shouyi felt stifled; his face lost entirely this time!

He originally planned to use the Giant Transformation.

Unfortunately, there wasn't any chance, nor was there any blind Martial Artist to come out and selflessly cooperate with him in showing off; the entire assessment was uneventful and devoid of any waves, he couldn't just transform to show off without reason!

Not a minor anymore, as an eighteen-year-old adult, it would be too childish.

Too frustrating!

Chen Shouyi put down the war bow, picked up his sword, and prepared to leave.

Zhang Miaomiao, Bai Xiaoling, and Zhu Xueqing immediately came to console him.

"It's okay; it's just a poor state. A bit more practice, and it'll get better!" Bai Xiaoling said, looking at Chen Shouyi's distressed expression, feeling pained as if she wanted to hug his waist and lean against his chest, comforting him properly.

"Yes, this assessment wasn't fair at all; it's no big deal!" Zhang Miaomiao quickly added softly, taking out a handkerchief: "You're sweating a lot; let me wipe it off for you."

Seeing her genuine goodwill, Chen Shouyi couldn't bear to push her away.

He let her tiptoe, her chest gently brushing against his as she meticulously wiped the sweat from his face.

Smelling the rich feminine scent on the handkerchief, he couldn't help but sneeze.

Bai Xiaoling watched Zhang Miaomiao's actions, eyes secretly burning with anger, silently cursing her for being shameless, taking advantage of Chen Shouyi, seeing him sneeze, she quickly feigned concern, holding Chen Shouyi's arm: "Ah, Chief Advisor, did you catch a cold?"

"No!" Chen Shouyi replied.

Zhu Xueqing stood on the side.

A Martial Artist, she was squeezed to the side by two ordinary women, unable to join the conversation, and a cold? With his peak Martial Artist physique, could he even catch a cold?

After a while, she finally found an opportunity to speak: "Actually, if you use the Giant's natural ability, those unconvinced Martial Artists will naturally be convinced!"

"To me, it's just vanity, meaningless. This assessment showed me my weaknesses!" Chen Shouyi said, showing a carefree attitude.

...

The distant Martial Artists hadn't left yet, watching Chen Shouyi on the road surrounded by women, receiving endless comfort.

It was like a punch to the gut.

In their hearts, they silently spat in disgust numerous times!

A plain-looking young Martial Artist watched Zhu Xueqing from afar, her face slightly flushed, eyes seemingly glued to Chen Shouyi, his fantasy of a goddess shattered and heartbroken, he whispered sourly:

"Usually, I find Zhu Xueqing quite aloof; why's she acting like an ordinary woman now?"

Hearing this, another Martial Artist couldn't help but glance at him.

Why is she aloof with you, don't you have a clue?

If you're pursuing a demigod female or a female Martial Artist, your chances are a bit higher, but you're aiming for a beautiful female Martial Artist, where's your confidence coming from?

So he chuckled twice:

"Hehe!"

Chapter 398: Commendation Ceremony

On the road, after dawdling for half a minute, Chen Shouyi finally walked to the group of Martial Artists.

The surroundings immediately fell silent.

Even though Chen Shouyi's archery skills were a bit lacking, he was still a top-tier Martial Artist, a figure at the pinnacle of the pyramid, not someone ordinary Martial Artists could look down upon.

Moreover, when Zhu Xueqing spoke just now, she didn't intentionally lower her voice, so all the Martial Artists heard it clearly.

The opponent's strength was clearly still hidden, his true power even more terrifying.

Wang Lie took the initiative to smile and reach out his hand: "My name is Wang Lie, pleased to meet you! Pleased to meet you!"

Chen Shouyi shook his hand, exchanging pleasantries: "I'm Chen Shouyi, I've long heard of your great name!"

Immediately, the other Martial Artists also came over to greet him.

Maintaining the basic formalities.

After experiencing a bout of awkward yet polite socializing, Chen Shouyi followed the staff to the photo room, took a picture, quickly obtained a nationally certified Martial Arts Instructor Certificate, and then left the Martial Arts Bureau.

Sitting in the car, Chen Shouyi was flipping through this real Martial Arts Instructor Certificate in his hand, feeling that there wasn't much difference.

It's just that the stamp changed from the Provincial Government to the Martial Arts Bureau.

At this moment, Chen Shouyi raised his head and asked Sun Jianhua: "Who is that Wang Lie? He seems quite imposing?"

Sun Jianhua's eyelids flickered imperceptibly, thinking inwardly that he had just said he had long heard of him, and now he was asking who he was. He quickly said: "Wang Lie is one of the top four Martial Artists in the Capital City, alongside Liang Tianyu, Zhang Wenlong, and Luo Jingwen."

Speaking of Wang Lie, there's a funny story.

It's rumored that Wang Lie is most afraid of his wife.

It's said that once, when having an affair, he was caught by his wife in the hotel. Wang Lie was so scared that he jumped directly from the seventh floor without wearing clothes and hid outside for several days before daring to go home.

Of course, this is just gossip.

He naturally didn't dare to mention it!

Chen Shouyi nodded upon hearing this, stopped talking, and looked out the window, letting out a barely noticeable sigh.

Originally, today he wanted to show off, but unexpectedly, in trying to show off, he ended up losing face completely.

Who knew the Martial Arts archery assessment would be at such a distance!

"Once I get back, I must settle down and practice my archery diligently!" Chen Shouyi made a firm decision in his heart.

Bai Xiaoling, listening, was also shocked, not expecting that the middle-aged man she had scolded earlier had such a significant identity.

"By the way, at eight o'clock tomorrow morning, someone will pick you up to go to the Beijing Conference Hall!" Sun Jianhua said at this time.

"Is there anything I need to prepare?" Chen Shouyi asked.

"No need, someone will prepare everything for you. Oh, and don't bring your sword!" Sun Jianhua said.

"Yeah, I know." Chen Shouyi naturally understood this.

...

Chen Shouyi opened the door, walked out of the room, and then closed it.

The bed was scattered with small clothes everywhere.

He lifted the quilt and saw the Shell Lady hiding inside, completely naked, clutching a little dress tightly in her hands, her body taut, eyelids twitching slightly, occasionally peeking through a slit to observe.

Chen Shouyi could tell at a glance that she was pretending to sleep.

He angrily lifted one of her feet with his fingers.

The Shell Lady immediately began struggling violently like a salted eel, her body writhing, jumping around, shouting loudly: "Put Little Dot down, you bad Giant!"

"Why aren't you asleep yet?" Chen Shouyi put the Shell Lady down and asked.

The Shell Lady carefully tidied her disheveled short hair, knowing she was at fault, hummed, and turned her head: "Little Dot hasn't finished organizing yet, you gave Little Dot too many clothes, I'm exhausted from all the work!"

Chen Shouyi had a moment of speechlessness; so it's my fault now.

Who needs to try on every outfit when organizing clothes?

"Hurry up, how much is left?" Chen Shouyi asked testily, seeing her looking so lively, he realized that unless he forced her into a briefcase against her struggles where he couldn't see her, it was impossible to make her sleep.

"Little Dot will be quick, there's only one left now..." She flipped her bare little butt over to a small mountain of clothes, picked one up, and counted one with a serious face.

Chen Shouyi listened to the Shell Lady count for a minute, and the small mountain of clothes decreased by only half a circle, making his face turn dark.

Things really haven't gone smoothly today, and the Shell Lady isn't behaving either.

This life is really unbearable!

Really want to give her a good spanking!

After a long while, Chen Shouyi finally suppressed his pent-up feelings.

Ah, forget it, for this Little Dot, even if she doesn't sleep for two days and nights, it's just like a regular person pulling an all-nighter.

Out of sight, out of mind.

Chen Shouyi took off his clothes and went into the bathroom to shower.

...

Early the next morning, a set of shirt and suit was delivered by the dormitory service staff.

After changing, Chen Shouyi checked himself in the mirror again and again, feeling that wearing a suit made him look the most handsome and matched his temperament best.

"How do you do this?" Chen Shouyi asked the young waiter beside him while holding the tie.

He knew how to tie a red scarf, but had never tied a tie before.

"Mr. Chen, may I help you with your tie?" A young, pretty waitress beside him said with a shy smile.

Chen Shouyi hesitated for a moment and handed over the tie, saying, "Alright!"

The waitress took the tie and gently stood on tiptoe.

Chen Shouyi's body was tense and motionless, letting the waitress do her thing, and after several minutes of busy work, she finally finished tying the tie, panting slightly, her face flushed.

Finally, it was done!

Chen Shouyi silently breathed a sigh of relief.

He hadn't expected tying a tie to be so complicated.

He decided never to wear a tie again.

Then he thanked the waitress, saying, "Thank you, it was really a bother to you."

"Mr. Chen, you're too kind. It's my honor to serve you!"

Chen Shouyi looked at himself in the mirror and indeed appeared more handsome.

Next, he went to the dining room in the guesthouse to have breakfast with Bai Xiaoling and Zhang Miaomiao.

Before long, a car came to pick him up.

Others naturally couldn't come along this time; only Chen Shouyi alone.

After driving for over ten minutes.

The car stopped at the entrance of the conference hall. After a careful inspection, Chen Shouyi followed the staff to an award hall.

There were already quite a few people inside.

"Chen Shouyi!" Luo Jingwen called out, standing up from his seat and warmly welcoming him.

As soon as the venue heard this, buzzing sounds came forth, and many people curiously and respectfully looked over, but now he could easily handle such big occasions and never again be awkwardly unsure of what to do.

Chen Shouyi looked at Luo Jingwen and smiled. The last mission had forged a deep friendship between them: "Long time no see."

"Yesterday you took the Martial Arts Instructor assessment, I planned to come and watch, but things got delayed. By the way, how did the assessment go?" Luo Jingwen patted Chen Shouyi's arm and asked.

Actually, these days, he had been trying the tiresome force of will in a quiet room, completely detached from outside affairs. Had no one invited him to this award ceremony, he would have forgotten about it.

Chen Shouyi's smile froze upon hearing this. It's just the thing he'd rather not be asked about, and he simply said, "Not bad!"

"Not bad" is a word with rich meanings.

It can be understood literally or as modesty, almost like a universal answer.

Soon after, Zhu Xueqing also arrived.

Fortunately, Zhu Xueqing did not mention yesterday's assessment.

...

Aside from these two Martial Artists, very few others showed up; the award ceremony was mainly attended by government officials or military personnel.

But on reflection, it made sense. Martial Artists are proud people, and if there's no particular camaraderie, who would come here just to give their support?

Yesterday's presence was merely out of curiosity; since witnessing the assessment, there's no need to come again.

Led by the staff, Chen Shouyi took a seat in the front row.

The time reached nine o'clock.

The host came onstage, first describing the difficult situation facing Great Xia Country today, as well as the central government's resolve to stand against the other world and firm belief in victory, along with technological advances and breakthroughs in various areas.

After half an hour of speaking, they finally got to the main topic Chen Shouyi was anticipating.

"Martial Artists are one of the forefront forces resisting the other world. In our most challenging times, powerful Martial Artists have emerged from various places, writing admirable and touching stories, especially some outstanding tales teaching us that even a Barbarian God is merely a powerful being and humans can indeed become Godslayers..."

Chen Shouyi felt a bit embarrassed listening, his body involuntarily sitting upright.

"Now let's welcome Mr. Chen Shouyi!"

Amidst a burst of enthusiastic applause, Chen Shouyi stood up amidst the focus of the crowd, striding to the award platform, receiving a red certificate and a medal from an elderly gentleman he vaguely recognized from TV.

The two shook hands afterward.

"Xiao Chen, do you mind if I call you that?" The old man asked with an affable attitude.

"Of course not," Chen Shouyi quickly replied.

"You're excellent, the future is yours, but practice archery more!" The old man said with a kindly smile.

Chen Shouyi's face immediately became a bit awkward.

Can we please not mention archery!

Fortunately, the old man said a few more words and then hurried away.

Officially, the award ceremony ended quickly, but for Chen Shouyi, it felt like just the beginning and was the most anticipated part.

Soon, a neatly dressed staff member led Chen Shouyi to a small conference room. After some pleasantries, the staff immediately presented a document with unusual politeness, saying, "Mr. Chen, here are your merits, and the list of resources available for exchange by the nation. Please take a look."

Flipping through a few thin pages, he glanced over it: "Fifty merit points!"

The staff promptly explained, "Merits for slaying a Demigod are one hundred, but because the Demigod you defeated was severely wounded by the army, you are only awarded a quarter of the merits, and additionally with the Divine Corpse, as a principle to further strengthen human Martial Artists' power, it cannot be privately owned, therefore you are compensated with twenty-five more merit points, making a total of 50 points. Are you satisfied?"

Chen Shouyi nodded.

He felt it was quite reasonable; the Demigod he slew wasn't even a tenth of its full strength state, earning a quarter of the Demigod's merits was indeed a lucky gain.

His heart then pounded as he started going through the list of exchangeable resources.

Chapter 399: Deep Malice

The first item on the supply list is Divine Marrow.

The highest grade is the Primordial Divine Marrow with weak Divine Power, each with a volume of only three milliliters, and costs as much as 30 points of merit.

Chen Shouyi stared at the numbers still wet with ink.

With his eyesight far beyond that of ordinary people, he stared for a long time but couldn't see the black dot between the 3 and the 0.

His eyelid twitched slightly.

So expensive!

His fifty merit points could only buy a little more than one vial.

One wonders if there are any loose ones for sale?

Chen Shouyi's heart pounded violently as he looked, and after a long while, he moved on.

Next is the Primordial Divine Marrow with weak Divine Power, also three milliliters in volume, valued at 10 merit points. This is not expensive; with his fifty merit points, he could buy five bottles.

The task reward for his last trip to the East Sea Province should have been of this type.

Next was the Demigod level Primordial Divine Marrow, again three milliliters in volume, costing only 1 merit point.

Compared to the low-grade Divine Marrow, the Demigod Marrow is as cheap as if it costs nothing, but unfortunately, it probably has no effect on him.

After looking at the Divine Marrow, Chen Shouyi turned to the Primordial Divine Blood.

The specifications are similarly divided into weak Divine Power, weak Divine Power, and Demigod levels.

Not only does each have a volume of five milliliters, but its merit value is only one-third of its former counterpart, evidently indicating that wisdom's significance to human civilization is higher than all other attributes.

Besides Divine Blood and Divine Marrow, Chen Shouyi discovered another category called the Martial Artist's Sword.

These weapons are all Divine Artifacts seized from slain Barbarian Gods and then forged and polished through special methods.

Barbarian Gods generally have huge bodies, and their weapons are equally enormous, making them completely unusable by humans; not to mention that even with suitable sizes, martial artists are not accustomed to the bizarrely shaped weapons of the Barbarian Gods.

Even though many have lost their supernatural abilities after damage, their materials themselves are an unreplicable product of current human technology and can withstand various physical limits far beyond Earth's alloys.

These metals are strategic assets of significant importance to human industry.

Extravagantly made into Martial Artist's Swords, they are extremely expensive. There are only five listed, and the cheapest one, with no extraordinary abilities, requires 35 merit points.

And the most expensive Martial Artist's Sword weighs as much as 25 kilograms, heavier than the sword he captured from the God of Hunting, possessing exorcism, calming, and concentration effects, with miraculous effects on practice and self-cultivation.

In a state of mind unity, this sword can trigger more than triple sword Qi amplification.

Chen Shouyi looked for a while, then moved his gaze without a trace of reluctance.

This sword and the one he captured from the God of Hunting each have their merits. It's hard to say which is better, which is worse?

While the threefold amplification of sword Qi is indeed appealing, using this sword, his sword Qi could reach a terrifying length of four to fifty centimeters, significantly enhancing his strength, but the augmentation of perception by the sword he holds is equally important.

Of course, all these are but illusions.

The real reason for no reluctance is that it's damn too expensive!

merit points, why not just rob!

Fifty merit points can't even buy half!

Wait, are swords like this all priced so high?

Chen Shouyi pointed to the swords on the list, unable to resist asking the staff: "Do you recycle weapons? It should be the same type!"

Even if his sword is not a Divine Artifact, it should still be made of Divine Artifact Material; otherwise, as the weapon used by the Divine Hunter in its descent, it would be too demeaning.

It doesn't need to match the highest price; just a hundred merit points will do.

Compared to external objects, one's strength is most important!

Selling his sword and buying all weak Divine Power Marrow, wouldn't that be delightful!

The staff was dumbfounded by the question; they were ***, not businessmen, to recycle anything, but still, they said tactfully, "In principle, we don't have this business."

"So it's possible!" Chen Shouyi said.

In principle?

A principle is meant to be broken, isn't it?

The staff was in a dilemma, with beads of sweat forming on their foreheads: "This, well, if you have something to sell, we can contact the relevant department for you; after the appraisal result is passed, it will be purchased at a certain price, but it really cannot be exchanged for merit points; merit points are national rewards for those who make outstanding contributions, and cannot be obtained through trading!"

He finished in one breath and let out a long breath.

"Alright!" Chen Shouyi said disappointedly.

What use is there for him to have so much money?

His home cabinet is already full of moldy cash.

One day when the weather is nice, he should air it out well!

...

Next, some miscellaneous items.

However, as things require merit points for exchange, the treasures collected by the country over the years are obviously not ordinary.

For example, the "Soul Stone" that can protect the soul after death, worth 35 merit points.

The "Lucky Gem" that can make a person have strong intuition to foresee danger and make archery as if aided by the divine, worth 45 merit points.

The "Ice Crystal Fruit" weighing 100 grams, enables a person to have a 100% ice attribute ability, worth 60 merit points.

The "Sanctuary Necklace" capable of generating a defensive field, worth 85 merit points.

The "Mysterious Substance" that can nourish the body and gradually change the constitution, price 130 points.

...

All of them are good things.

Unfortunately, these prices bear deep malice towards him.

Completely unaffordable.

One or two points, Chen Shouyi would buy without hesitation.

Above ten points, he has to consider.

As for ten, twenty points above, he doesn't even bother to look.

After hurriedly scanning through, he folded up his materials.

The staff timely asked: "Mr. Chen, may I know what you'd like to exchange for?"

"Exchange all for Divine Marrow!" Chen Shouyi sighed.

"May I know which type you would like?" The staff wasn't surprised and asked.

"Do you have weak Divine Power Marrow for sale in loose quantities?" Chen Shouyi asked, somewhat short of breath.

"This... no!" The staff replied seriously. He was through rigorous training, no matter how funny or bizarre the question, he would never lose composure.

"Really not?" Chen Shouyi confirmed.

"Really not!" The staff shook his head with genuine earnestness.

"Alright, then one bottle of weak Divine Power and two bottles of weak Divine Power!" Chen Shouyi said helplessly, then he remembered something: "By the way, the reward for my last trip to the East Sea mission hasn't been issued, it's also a bottle of weak Divine Marrow!"

"I know about this matter, it was intended to be settled after you come to the Capital City, and it will be delivered to you together in the evening!" The staff quickly explained: "Anything else Mr. Chen?"

"Where can I buy super elastic stretching... clothing." Chen Shouyi suddenly thought of something and asked.

"You mean, with a high degree of stretch?" the staff asked tentatively.

"Able to stretch multiple times and not easily damaged." Chen Shouyi quickly said.

"I'll help you inquire with the relevant department!"

Chapter 400: Another One Lost Their Mind

Walking out of the conference hall, Chen Shouyi found Luo Jingwen and Zhu Xueqing still waiting outside.

"Let me see your Godslayer Medal!" Zhu Xueqing said with a smile.

Chen Shouyi took a gold medal out of his pocket and handed it over.

Zhu Xueqing caressed the medal, reluctant to part with it, and said excitedly: "This is the highest honor for a Martial Artist, you are now the second person in the Martial Arts Realm of the Great Xia Country."

The first, of course, is Ye Zong.

Luo Jingwen looked displeased at these words.

If Chen Shouyi didn't have such powerful talents, he wouldn't be as good as me!

Sigh, the world is just that unfair.

Being praised made Chen Shouyi a little embarrassed, and he humbly said: "Actually, I still have a lot of shortcomings!"

"Not having great archery skills doesn't matter, right?" Zhu Xueqing thought Chen Shouyi was referring to his archery skills, and in a brotherly way, gave him a punch to cheer him up: "As long as you're good enough, otherwise, how could others survive?"

Chen Shouyi was speechless.

I was just being modest on the surface, was I really talking about archery?

Why does it always have to be about archery?

"What's this about not being great at archery?" Luo Jingwen looked at Chen Shouyi and asked in surprise, as he hadn't heard about it yet?

"During his assessment yesterday..." Zhu Xueqing immediately began to chatter, recounting everything that happened the day before.

Chen Shouyi felt a wave of frustration, yet had to appear unbothered on the outside.

"Hahaha..." Luo Jingwen laughed heartily and patted him on the arm, "I never thought you'd be so bad at archery, couldn't even pass the assessment. But considering your age, it's understandable... This isn't the place to chat, let's find somewhere to sit down!"

He had many questions to ask Chen Shouyi.

Such as how to maintain a unified mind and spirit for extended periods!

As an old bachelor living a solitary life, he had secluded himself from the world and trained for over ten days. Unfortunately, other than becoming more adept at using Sword Qi, he hadn't made any progress in controlling everything like Chen Shouyi!

It was also nearly time for dinner, and soon the three found a nearby high-end restaurant and reserved a private room.

Once the dishes were served.

Luo Jingwen couldn't wait to voice his doubts.

"Isn't it simple, just maintain it," Chen Shouyi said matter-of-factly.

It made perfect sense.

Luo Jingwen thought to himself, and showing a flattering smile, he said: "Could you show me again?"

Hearing this, Chen Shouyi's thoughts shifted, and the dishes on the table floated up and started to rotate randomly: "Just like this."

Although Luo Jingwen had seen it more than once, the shock and incredulity in his heart didn't diminish in the slightest, he quickly asked: "Are you now in a state of unified mind and spirit, without any distractions?"

"Yeah!" Chen Shouyi replied: "Right now, my mind is incredibly serene."

"Then how do you speak? Without using your brain?" Zhu Xueqing asked in confusion.

Chen Shouyi's mind wavered upon hearing this, causing all the dishes to slightly sway and almost drop.

Fortunately, he quickly regained control.

What do you mean without using my brain?

I do use my brain when I talk!

"I'm not sure about that, but apart from talking, I really have no distractions right now. It's probably multitasking, with part focusing and part handling surrounding matters, or rather, my conscious mind disperses and subconscious mind focuses, it doesn't interfere with thinking at all," Chen Shouyi said after some thought. Recently, he had been reading books mostly about these aspects of thoughts.

Luo Jingwen listened, feeling numb, taking a mental 10,000-point blow.

This subconscious and conscious stuff?

It's like divine manipulation!

Can a person actually do this?

"Can you try using Sword Qi?" Luo Jingwen asked, slightly doubting its authenticity, thinking this young lad might be bluffing.

"Alright!" Understanding the doubt, Chen Shouyi prepared to put down the floating dishes.

"Wait, just like that!" Luo Jingwen immediately stopped him: "Aren't you able to multitask? Try it like this?"

"The power will be much weaker like this," Chen Shouyi explained.

"It doesn't matter if it's weaker, I just want to observe." Luo Jingwen said, thinking if he could use Sword Qi in this situation, he'd be... truly convinced.

Chen Shouyi felt a bit helpless.

A weaker demonstration wouldn't be impressive!

He extended his hand, with his index and middle fingers together like a sword, quickly slicing towards a floating yet unopened bottle of red wine. Silently and without a trace, the top half of the wine started to separate slowly, and inside, the reddish liquid seemed to freeze, not a single drop spilling out.

The box fell silent.

"He's definitely hiding something in his hand!" Zhu Xueqing said this, not seeing any external item, immediately grabbing Chen Shouyi's hand, examining it closely.

His hand was long, white, smooth like jade, perfect like an artwork. Zhu Xueqing blushed, trying hard to suppress her shyness, pretended to scrutinize a bit more before hurriedly withdrawing her hand and fixing her bangs to cover her embarrassment: "There's nothing!"

Luckily, no one noticed Zhu Xueqing's unusual behavior at that moment.

Luo Jingwen looked utterly incredulous: "This is impossible, it makes no sense..."

He then turned to Chen Shouyi: "How did you practice this? If it's inconvenient to say, forget it!"

"It's no inconvenience, it would be good if you can spread it around!" Chen Shouyi said with a smile.

He lowered all the floating objects, and the bottle of cut wine reassembled.

Sword Qi is formless and colorless, the cut was at a micron level, even after releasing his will control, not a single drop of wine leaked out, as if it had never been cut.

"My practice differs from ordinary people, the speed of refining is faster, and it also significantly enhances unity of mind and spirit, as well as willpower," Chen Shouyi said.

The two of them immediately became spirited, pricking up their ears.

Subsequently, Chen Shouyi explained the optimized meditation and self-refinement method.

He had no intention of hoarding his skills selfishly, if they could learn them and spread them around to popularize, that would be for the best.

Unfortunately, it's very challenging, controlling the subconscious is a hundred times harder than controlling one's body.

There's also no effective method to train it, it relies solely on talent.

His younger sister and cousin had been taught long ago, but unfortunately, after a few tries, they completely gave up; none succeeded.

When Chen Shouyi was able to practice it, it was with the help of the Book of Knowledge, as if he had practiced countless times before, and learned it all at once.

He wondered if Martial Artists who have been immersed in meditation and self-refinement for many years could actually manage to practice it.

If they could, by then he could secretly distribute the second optimized version of the thirty-six styles of body refining (the first optimized version is the same as the current human cultivation version), the human strength, at least at the Martial Master Level, would have an explosive improvement.

...

The second optimized version of the practice was built on the basis of an optimized meditation and self-refinement method. At that time, even with the help of the Book of Knowledge, it still took Chen Shouyi a huge effort to finally master it.

If one cannot achieve the kind of clear-headed meditation he demonstrated earlier, it's impossible to practice the second optimized version of meditation and self-refinement.

...

Following that, Luo Jingwen and Zhu Xueqing lost all interest in eating.

Those who could become Martial Artists, though having diverse personalities, invariably had a deep love for Martial Arts. Upon hearing about such a mystical form of meditation, they were eager to immediately go back and practice, leaving no room for a dining mindset.

In less than ten minutes, the meal was over.

They soon went their separate ways.

Before leaving, Luo Jingwen asked for Chen Shouyi's current address, planning to come back for guidance if things weren't going smoothly.