

New Era 501

Chapter 501: Shankui Province

The helicopter emitted a buzzing noise, and the body slightly swayed.

"This mission is in the northern part of Shankui Province, where some strange things have happened..."
A young, valiant-looking female officer in her twenties, leaning close to Chen Shouyi, shouted loudly amidst the loud noise.

Chen Shouyi felt the soft, elastic sensation coming from his arm and felt a bit awkward, but since she didn't seem to mind, he had to pretend not to notice and asked, "What do you mean by strange?"

"The first signs of the situation appeared in Tuoan City, about three months ago, with people mysteriously disappearing from time to time, turning into monsters hidden in the shadows. Initially, the local government did not pay much attention.

By the time they realized it, it was already too late, and the area expanded from Tuoan City to nearby cities, and the situation became completely out of control."

Chen Shouyi frowned slightly as he listened and couldn't help but ask, "People turned into monsters?"

"Although it's hard to believe, it has been confirmed. It's an evil and terrifying monster that can hide in shadows, very hard to detect and quite difficult to deal with. Our military sent an elite team consisting of a Martial Artist and five great warriors to investigate the source of everything, but they have not returned yet, and their life or death is unknown!"

Originally somewhat nonchalant, Chen Shouyi's heart suddenly became serious.

There must be great terror behind this incomprehensible mystery.

Barbarian God?

Or something else?

...

Shankui Province is located in the west of the Great Xia Country.

The helicopter flew for a full four or five hours before arriving at Shankui Province.

...

In the evening, the helicopter slowly landed on an open ground in a village.

He bowed his head as he walked out of the helicopter, and a group of people were already there to greet him. Besides the military personnel, Chen Shouyi also spotted two familiar faces.

One was Wang Lie, a Peak Martial Artist whom he had met once in the Capital City, and the other was Zhu Xueqing.

After a simple handshake and greeting with the people from the military, Chen Shouyi looked at Wang Lie, extended his hand, and said, "Elder Wang, hello, hello!"

"Don't mention it, don't mention it, just call me old... Wang Lie will do." Wang Lie hurriedly said.

Chen Shouyi couldn't help but smile, then looked at Zhu Xueqing, but before he could speak, she punched him in the chest.

What's with this girl?

Why does she always hit my chest!

Zhu Xueqing's eyes sparkled, her face slightly flushed as she said, "Long time no see, you've become quite famous lately, even more than celebrities!"

Sigh!

Why is it always so hard to keep a low profile!

It's so annoying.

"Forgive me, I didn't know it would cause such a stir!" Chen Shouyi said humbly. Recently, for some unknown reason, the decreasing Faith Value began to surge again.

"You really are legendary?" Zhu Xueqing continued to ask.

"I don't know how, but suddenly I broke through!" Chen Shouyi continued to downplay.

Wang Lie, standing beside him, seemed as if he wanted to speak but hesitated, almost exasperated by Chen Shouyi's words. After all, he had been stuck at the Peak Martial Artist for three whole years without such luck.

...

Through the conversation, Chen Shouyi realized they had arrived two days earlier.

Due to the sandstorm in the other world causing a delay, he arrived two days late.

The entire village had no villagers, obviously relocated, and had now become a temporary command center.

In the evening, the local military enthusiastically treated them to dinner, and Chen Shouyi also obtained more firsthand intelligence.

Chen Shouyi discovered that this strange event had already affected nearly half of the province and showed signs of spreading further.

To halt this trend, the entire northern part of Shankui Province was now under military lockdown.

After dinner.

Chen Shouyi and the other two returned to their temporary residence, a small three-story building.

Zhu Xueqing was making tea while saying:

"Yesterday, Elder Wang and I checked the area and found a few shadow monsters. They weren't very strong, a Martial Artist could handle them. Then we went to a suburb village and found that the villagers were living as usual, except..." Zhu Xueqing recounted.

"Except for what?" Chen Shouyi asked curiously.

"Except it felt a bit strange. When asked if they knew about the shadow monsters, their faces turned pale with fear, and no matter how we asked, they wouldn't say anything. We didn't dare delve deeper and withdrew."

"We also found this, every household had this thing hanging at the entrance." Wang Lie took something out of his pocket and tossed it over.

Chen Shouyi caught it with his hand.

He discovered it was a palm-sized wooden triangle with a concentric circle carved in the center.

It faintly resembled an eyeball.

"Divine Emblem?" Chen Shouyi's face became serious.

"Very likely!" Wang Lie said.

No real body revealed, no war, just some power revealed, and several cities subtly controlled. If it really is a Barbarian God, this Barbarian God is unbelievably powerful.

...

The sky quickly turned dark.

Chen Shouyi closed the door, lit the kerosene lamp in the room, and when the Shell Lady didn't come out for a long time, he reached into his clothes and pulled her out.

He found that she had already fallen asleep.

Woken up by the commotion, she groggily opened her eyes, glanced at Chen Shouyi with difficulty, and mumbled resentfully, "Good Giant, the little one has waited for you for so long, but you didn't pay attention to the little one and kept talking to the bad Giant..."

"Alright, alright, next time I won't talk for so long. Go back to sleep." Chen Shouyi said with amusement.

This jealousy is really something.

Hearing this, the Shell Lady finally reassured, and her eyelids drooped as she fell back into a deep sleep.

Chen Shouyi gently placed her by the bed and covered her with a blanket.

He walked to the window. Outside, the sky was dark and gloomy, and the cold wind howled, occasionally accompanied by a strange roar, seemingly from a creature of another world.

He fished out the triangular emblem and gently stroked it with his fingers.

The Divine Emblem showed no sign of Faith's radiance.

It felt like an ordinary object.

"Is this really a Divine Emblem?" Chen Shouyi questioned in his heart.

"However, we'll know by tomorrow!"

At this moment, there was a knock at the door.

It was Wang Lie.

Chen Shouyi opened the door: "What do you need me for?"

"Well..." Wang Lie's face was a bit embarrassed, then seemed to make a decision and took a black notebook out of his pocket, saying: "General Manager Chen, could you give me an autograph?"

Autograph?

Chen Shouyi paused for a moment, a bit at a loss, thinking he misheard: "What?"

Wang Lie's face turned red, feeling that his lifetime reputation was lost in a single moment: "My daughter... no, my relative's daughter, really admires you and specifically instructed me to get your autograph!"

"Oh!" Chen Shouyi blankly took the black notebook and pen, opened the first page, and quickly signed his name.

"A blessing message!" Wang Lie reminded.

A blessing message too?

"What should I write?" Chen Shouyi asked.

"May Wang Yuting practice martial arts well, not waste time, and strive to become a powerful Martial Artist!" Wang Lie said.

This must be your daughter, right?

Chen Shouyi couldn't help but think to himself, quickly wrote it down, and handed it over.

Chapter 502: Monsters in the Shadows

AM.

The alarm suddenly sounded piercingly.

Chen Shouyi opened his eyes, quickly turned off the alarm, got up, and dressed.

After washing up in the bathroom, he grabbed Shell Lady, picked up his sword, and headed out of the building.

Zhu Xueqing hadn't come out yet, but Wang Lie was already up.

At the moment, he was in the living room, warming up with the Body Refining Thirty-Six Forms, it's the second optimized version from the Book of Knowledge he published.

Chen Shouyi was a bit surprised, he hadn't expected someone to finally master it.

After finishing the set, Wang Lie exhaled deeply and noticed Chen Shouyi standing nearby. His expression turned a bit unnatural, but he quickly adjusted mentally and humbly asked for guidance: "General Manager Chen, pardon my awkwardness, could you please offer some pointers?"

Actually, it's nothing embarrassing. All Martial Artists should be grateful to Chen Shouyi. Ever since he started practicing the Chen Clan Body Refining Technique, he felt a breakthrough looming. In ancient times, bowing with tea and honoring him as a master would be only fitting.

"You did well. The movements are still not fluid in transitions. Don't practice them one by one; connecting them will yield better results."

Upon hearing this, Wang Lie tried again, but hadn't gotten halfway before being interrupted. Embarrassed, he said: "The modified Chen Clan Body Refining Technique is really tough. I've only just mastered it recently!"

Chen Clan Body Refining Technique?

Chen Shouyi's eyes brightened, thinking the name was well-chosen.

"Practice more, and it'll become easy!"

As the two chatted while waiting, Zhu Xueqing finished up and joined them.

The group had some snacks brought by soldiers, and then left under the cover of night.

...

Outside, the wind was biting, with occasional drifting snowflakes.

The road was hardened, seemingly solidified like stone.

Shankui Province is located in the northwest, colder in winter compared to Jiangnan Province.

Especially now, at deep night, it's almost minus thirty to forty degrees, freezing everything.

Fortunately, the weakest here were Martial Artists, with strong vitality, not fearing this cold in the short term.

They rushed along, occasionally passing through deserted villages.

To prevent the spread of terrifying forces, as a precaution, the population on the perimeter was relocated en masse, even nearby mountains had been burned, appearing cold and desolate, devoid of any sign of life.

They didn't take the main road, swiftly advancing along rural paths.

"We encountered Shadow Creatures up ahead last time!" Zhu Xueqing reminded.

Upon hearing this, Chen Shouyi looked ahead, but all he could see was darkness, nothing discernible?

However, within half a minute, Chen Shouyi keenly sensed a trace of malice. He swung around quickly and saw, not far away in the shadows at the corner of a wall, a blurred silhouette hidden within.

It lay beast-like on the ground, its body seemingly blurred, merged with the shadow.

If not observed closely, it easily gets overlooked.

"What kind of monster is this?"

He took a step, covering more than ten meters instantly. The shadow creature tried to escape but it was too late.

A big hand easily grabbed its neck, lifting it up.

Its body was covered in scales with a black aura, strangely sinister, with sharp black claws on its hands and feet, and gray-yellow eyes filled with savagery and malice, exuding an evil and horrific aura.

It was like a nightmare monster.

There was no resemblance to humans at all.

If he didn't know it had transformed from a human, Chen Shouyi might have thought it was another species.

At this moment, Zhu Xueqing and Wang Lie came rushing over.

"We saw the same kind!" Wang Lie said.

"Hopefully, they are all like this." Chen Shouyi said solemnly.

It shrieked shrilly, struggling fiercely. Chen Shouyi let go, and as the monster fell, a large foot stepped on its head. With a slight pressure, a crisp bone-cracking sound followed.

The head was instantly crushed.

...

Not long after, they arrived at Guangcheng County.

Guangcheng County, a small city with a population of four to five hundred thousand, looked no different from a typical county.

At that moment, dawn hadn't broken yet, steam trucks loaded with goods were flowing ceaselessly along the roadside, along with passing patrol soldiers, giving Chen Shouyi a vague illusion that this was not a place of danger but just an ordinary county.

They hid in a corner, quietly waiting for a troop of soldiers to pass.

Wang Lie asked: "Should we go straight to Tuoan City or check the situation here first?"

Tuoan City is the source of everything and the final destination.

"Let's stay for a day or two, see how things are!" Chen Shouyi said cautiously after pondering.

For some reason, Chen Shouyi felt the whole city enveloped in a gloomy and manic aura.

It's better to be careful.

"Alright!" Wang Lie had no objections.

In martial arts, the strong rule. It's an established rule: if you seek power, prepare for danger, and that others might not help you; they could even kick you when you're down.

This isn't being negative but survival wisdom.

An old Martial Artist like him, understands this well.

Day began to break.

They unexpectedly found a hotel open for business by the roadside.

"Three single rooms!"

A plump young lady wrapped up like a rice dumpling glanced at the three, yawned covering her mouth, and said: "Bring your residency permits, single rooms fifty, deposit one hundred per person."

"Can we use ID cards instead of residency permits? We can pay extra?" Chen Shouyi asked.

To prevent the spread of cults, now people cannot move freely, they need a letter of introduction from their unit to travel to different places.

The plump young lady was fully awake now, turning hostile immediately: "Go, go, go, don't involve me. We don't accept anyone without residency permits!"

"Is there strict monitoring here?" Wang Lie stepped forward and asked quietly.

"You're from outside?" The plump young lady showed a hint of wariness.

"We're from the government investigating here, hope you'll cooperate." Wang Lie showed a Martial Arts Instructor Certificate solemnly.

Wang Lie's formidable physique paired with the golden emblem on the martial arts certificate promptly intimidated the young lady.

"I... I can't say, find someone else, please leave now!" The young lady stammered, pale.

"Why can't you talk, is someone threatening you?" Chen Shouyi asked from the side.

"No... no, I know nothing... I'm just an ordinary person, don't ask me..." She backed away in fear, glancing suspiciously everywhere, then abruptly turned to flee.

The group exchanged looks, ruefully exited the hotel.

"They acted just like that villager last time!" Zhu Xueqing said seriously.

"It seems they're afraid of something?" Wang Lie said: "Do you think it might be those shadow monsters?"

"Could also be fear of that source!" Chen Shouyi said, feeling inexplicably oppressed; he exhaled: "Since there's still order here, let's directly go to the county government!"

"Good idea!" Wang Lie said.

As they walked down the street, Chen Shouyi glanced up, seeing the sky glowing red, the vibrant morning glow resembling a fiery blaze.

Chapter 503: Taboo

"Ring, ring, ring..."

The city began to regain its vitality.

Passersby, steamy breakfast shops, and dense bicycle traffic formed a perfectly normal and peaceful scene.

Who could have imagined that to contain the spread of terrifying forces, this place had been sealed off from the outside world for more than three months?

"Let's have breakfast first!" Zhu Xueqing suggested.

Everyone had no objections.

The three quickly entered a breakfast shop, with only a handful of people inside.

Each of them ordered breakfast, eating silently while listening to the conversations around them.

"You know the limping Zhang who picks up garbage in our neighborhood every day? He's disappeared too!" A tall young man said in a suppressed voice full of fear.

"Ah, he was quite kind! He's a good person!" the young man with a short haircut across from him said in surprise.

"Good person? Nonsense, who knows what bad things he did in the past? Otherwise, how could he become a 'messenger of evil'..."

"You two have a death wish, don't you? Stop discussing this or go somewhere else if you want to die." A middle-aged man nearby angrily interrupted.

The two young men's faces turned pale, and they dared not speak again.

For a moment, the entire breakfast shop became eerily silent.

Chen Shouyi and the others exchanged glances, all finding it somewhat baffling.

After breakfast, Wang Lie paid, and the three walked out of the breakfast shop.

"Messengers of evil... from what those two said, it seems like those mysteriously influenced and transformed into monsters are specific people, like those who've done evil deeds," Wang Lie suddenly said.

"It seems so!" Chen Shouyi looked at pedestrians on the street with a strange and silent aura, saying, "But how do we judge good and evil? Subjectively or absolutely objectively? Does killing Barbarians count? Does killing chickens or sheep count?"

If all of this counts, then we would have been evil through and through, and no one in humanity would be innocent."

"Speculating here is useless. Let's head to the county government." Zhu Xueqing said.

...

The winter sun was lazy and powerless, providing no warmth when it shone on them.

It wasn't long before the dilapidated county government building appeared in front of them.

Many windows in the building were broken, simply covered with newspapers, the fences wrapped in barbed wire, and occasionally embedded bullets and patched craters with slag could be seen on the road.

The entrance was heavily guarded, and it was evident that fear loomed on the soldiers' faces.

Wang Lie stepped forward and presented his credentials.

A soldier took a glance and quickly ran into the building to report, soon coming out with a large group.

...

"Hello, hello, I'm Shao Qianjin, Secretary of the Guangcheng County Party Committee. I've been eagerly awaiting your arrival." A small, middle-aged man in his forties or fifties rushed excitedly towards Wang Lie and shook his hand vigorously.

Wang Lie shook his hand slightly, then released it, taking a step back nonchalantly and said with a smile, "Let me introduce you, this is our leader, General Manager Chen Shouyi."

Everyone was surprised, having thought the oldest among them was the leader, only to find out it was the young, handsome man beside him.

"General Manager Chen, I apologize, I didn't recognize you. Please forgive me!" Shao Qianjin quickly apologized and shook hands with Chen Shouyi.

After some pleasantries, everyone welcomed Chen Shouyi and his group into the county government building.

...

A small meeting room.

"What you're talking about is just rumors, distorted as they spread. It's hard to carry out public propaganda work now, rumors are widespread, and people often believe anything they hear." Shao Qianjin's eyelids trembled as he spoke with a strained voice:

"Of course, there are creatures from another world, but there's nothing to hide about that, and where isn't that the case? You're all Martial Artists, surely well-versed in these things, don't you think?"

"Stop avoiding the question, you should know, this area has been quarantined, and without concrete evidence, such measures wouldn't be taken. This concerns the lives of tens of millions of people, so I hope you will cooperate." Zhu Xueqing slammed the table and said coldly.

Shao Qianjin's face showed a struggle: "Why force me? Since we are already sealed off, let us be left to our own devices!"

"Barely surviving?" Zhu Xueqing continued sternly, "Don't forget that you are a high-ranking official of the county."

He sighed, his face suddenly looking haggard and weary: "Ask what you want to know!"

"Why are you so afraid when we ask?" Chen Shouyi asked.

"No one isn't afraid; this topic is taboo here. 'Gaze into the abyss, and the abyss also gazes into you.' This phrase came from Tuoan City and has been proven true, without exception. 'Messengers of evil' are everywhere, hiding in every corner, and no one can escape their pursuit."

At this point, Shao Qianjin glanced nervously under the table as though shadow creatures were lurking there.

Chen Shouyi listened half-credulously, but looking at his terrified expression, he couldn't help but believe him.

He took out a triangular badge and placed it on the table: "What is this?"

Shao Qianjin examined it carefully and, after some thought, said, "This is likely something from the Justice Sect, popular in rural areas. With the current chaos, all sorts of cults like the Fear Demon King Sect and the Shadow God Sect have emerged. Given the current situation, we dare not crack down on them."

"So there's no Barbarian God?" Wang Lie asked.

"I'm really not sure about that..." Shao Qianjin replied, a flash of fear crossing his face: "Tuoan City is far from here, how would I know..."

Afterwards, he began to frequently lose focus, falling into a state of anxiety, sometimes even giving irrelevant and incoherent answers.

Chen Shouyi and others could only give up.

...

The guest house next to the county government.

The group stood at the entrance, watching the people coming and going outside.

Wang Lie offered a cigarette, and seeing Chen Shouyi refuse, he lit one himself, exhaling a thick smoke ring and asked seriously, "Do you think they were lying?"

"Hard to say, true and false mixed together!" Chen Shouyi said, his fingers stroking the triangular badge.

There was some oppression in his heart.

This matter was truly too bizarre.

Suddenly, he felt a strange sensation and abruptly looked up. From a room in the county government building's fifth floor not far away, behind a gap in the curtains, a pair of eyes stared directly at them.

It was Shao Qianjin!

Chen Shouyi frowned slightly.

Not sure if it was a play of light and shadow, but the man's face seemed gloomy, as if shrouded in shadow.

Perhaps he noticed Chen Shouyi's gaze.

He hurriedly pulled down the curtain and disappeared.

"What's wrong?" Zhu Xueqing asked.

"Nothing!" Chen Shouyi said, applying a bit of force to crush the badge into fragments, which he then threw into a trash can: "We'll stay overnight and head to Tuoan City early in the morning."

"Alright!" Wang Lie said, extinguishing the cigarette butt.

"Oh, and be careful at night." Chen Shouyi suddenly reminded. "If what they said is true, tonight may not be peaceful."

"If it's just those shadow creatures, we'll kill as many as they come." Zhu Xueqing said, feigning lightheartedness.

Chapter 504: Extremely Nourishing

Night.

Outside the window, the cold wind howled, ghostly wails and wolf calls echoed, causing the newspaper covering the window to rustle loudly, seemingly ready to be torn apart at any moment.

After several months of lockdown, coupled with power outages, supplies here seemed to have become extremely scarce, even window glass could not be supplied normally.

Chen Shouyi sat on the edge of the bed, silently pondering his thoughts.

A nearby lamp with a dim yellow flame flickered incessantly, making the room's light alternate between brightness and darkness.

The longer he stayed here, the more he felt a kind of manic and evil force present, very faint yet ubiquitous.

He opened his attribute panel.

Strength: 19.0

Agility: 19.0

Constitution: 19.0

Intelligence: 18.7

Perception: 16.9

Willpower: 17.7

Energy Accumulation: 4.54

Faith Value: 1048.1

Looking at the faith value that had accumulated to 1048.1 points.

Chen Shouyi's thoughts shifted.

1048.1 points of faith value instantly transformed to 148.1 points.

The next moment,

"Boom!"

A powerful heat flow filled his limbs and bones, and his entire body emitted a scorching high temperature, steam billowed.

After half a minute, the heat across his body subsided.

Originally "Giant Battle Body (Advanced): 12.05%"

became:

"Giant Battle Body (Advanced): 21.05%."

He exhaled a misty breath.

"Whether you're a Barbarian God or whatever else."

Chen Shouyi clenched his fists, producing a creaking sound.

"Good giant..."

Shell Lady crawled onto his thigh, nestled between his legs, as if wanting to make a home there.

Chen Shouyi could feel her unease, as if she sensed a certain dangerous aura.

"Don't be afraid!"

Shell Lady nodded vigorously: "With a good giant here, little one... not afraid."

...

The night grew darker.

Outside, an occasional sharp scream echoed, quickly swallowed by the howling cold wind.

"Rip!"

The sound of paper tearing was heard, and fierce cold wind poured into the room.

Chen Shouyi opened his eyes and saw the window paper had been torn by the wind, leaving a large gap.

He pulled back the covers, got up from the bed, and picked up the newspaper from the bedside table intending to patch it up again.

At this moment, his expression froze, a hint of coldness in his gaze.

"Courting death!"

In his perception, six shadows were lurking behind the window, motionless, stuck to the wall like giant spiders.

He reached out and opened the window.

The first shadow couldn't help but jump in, its movements gentle and silent.

Yet, while still airborne, a seemingly oddly indistinct pale hand gently gripped its neck.

The explosive power erupted.

The entire neck was blasted into two segments.

With a wave of his hand, Chen Shouyi's gust of wind sent the corpse, along with scattered flesh and blood, flying out of the window, with no trace left in the room.

Meanwhile, he leaped on foot, his body darting like a fish out of the window.

The second shadow monster crouching under the window didn't even have time to respond before its head was burst open by the pinpoint of his toe.

Chen Shouyi, mid-air, moved with surprising agility.

With a willpower of 17.7, his telekinesis had reached six hundred kilograms, able to move his body at a 3G acceleration, while his maximum flight speed had reached two hundred meters per second.

These shadow monsters, at most Martial Artist Level, were utterly unable to put up a fight.

The last one attempted to flee, sprinting quickly along the shadows upon landing, Chen Shouyi reached out to the wall, digging out concrete from its tough surface like fluff, then forcefully hurled it at the fleeing shadow.

"Boom!" A sound.

The shadow monster's body was struck mid-run, forcibly flipped into the air, black-red blood scattered, its chest pierced through.

Floating in the air, Chen Shouyi's gaze swept coldly across the surroundings.

The silent, pitch-black street was deserted.

But he felt numerous eyes subtly watching this place.

...

Chen Shouyi knocked on Zhu Xueqing's room.

Zhu Xueqing, clad in a nightdress, held a sword in her hand.

Without the constriction of a chest binder, her large bosom was fully visible, clearly full of elasticity at a glance.

Such large breasts seemed like they would affect combat, right!

Chen Shouyi secretly thought, glimpsing briefly before sincerely reining back his gaze: "Are you alright over there?"

"I'm fine!" Zhu Xueqing replied solemnly: "What happened on your side?"

"A few shadow monsters, but they've been dealt with. Stay cautious." Chen Shouyi said.

At this moment, the opposite door opened, and Wang Lie emerged, stained with black-red blood, evidently having encountered an attack, luckily unharmed. His expression was solemn: "We've been targeted."

...

Indeed, they were being targeted.

Since this morning, Chen Shouyi had faintly felt a sensation of being watched.

From then onward, no one slept, staying together in Chen Shouyi's room, fortunately not subject to further attacks.

...

Dawn broke, early on, a deputy commissioner seen last night suddenly arrived with a terrified expression: "The county secretary is dead!"

"Dead? How did he die?" Chen Shouyi's mind stirred as he asked.

"He committed suicide by jumping off a building!" The deputy commissioner said: "For unknown reasons, he didn't go home last night, staying at the county office building all night, found frozen stiff this morning."

Looking at his panicked demeanor, unlike someone lying, Chen Shouyi inwardly dismissed his own suspicions.

But why the suicide?

Fear of those shadow monsters?

Although those monsters were elusive, able to blend into shadows, they were basically at Martial Artist Level. With a few Martial Artist Apprentice-Level soldiers, pre-arranged traps, and a few machine guns, they could be easily taken down.

Or perhaps... fearing the source of all the terror.

He couldn't help but recall the shadow-shrouded face he last saw.

...

Until the group left Guangcheng County, Chen Shouyi remained furrowing his brows.

The sky was dull gray, shrouded by dark clouds.

Though it was daytime, it felt almost like dusk.

Shankui Province was vast and sparsely populated, Tuoan City was over two hundred kilometers from Guangcheng County, to accommodate Wang Lie and Zhu Xueqing, Chen Shouyi deliberately slowed the pace. But by noon, Tuoan City was already in sight.

Chen Shouyi looked ahead, suddenly said:

"Let's rest for a while, eat something to replenish strength."

He retrieved a piece of Divine Flesh from space, cut it in three with his sword, tossing two pieces to them.

Wang Lie and Zhu Xueqing instinctively caught them, entirely unaware of where Chen Shouyi retrieved it from.

"What kind of meat is this, feels strange." Zhu Xueqing remarked as she accepted it, feeling a vague sense of oppression and asked.

"This meat exudes... Divine Power!" Wang Lie blurted out, his hair standing on end, nearly dropping it.

Chen Shouyi took a big bite, chewing, golden blood spilling forth, said: "It's just Divine Flesh."

Zhu Xueqing's eyes widened abruptly at the words, stammering: "Di... Divine Flesh... are we just... just going to eat it like this?"

"Don't worry, it's not from a humanoid creature, very nourishing!" Assuming she had concerns due to the creature being sapient, Chen Shouyi explained.

"No, that's not what I meant. What I meant was..." Zhu Xueqing tried to explain, but after saying a few words, she resignedly gave up: "Forget it, with a freak like you, nothing more to say!"

...

Divine Flesh was very tough.

The two of them couldn't easily tear it with their teeth like Chen Shouyi.

After slicing it with their swords for ages, they managed to cut off a few small pieces, chewed them futilely in their mouths for a bit, and then swallowed them whole. They didn't eat much more, after eating a few chunks, they carefully stored the remaining Divine Flesh in their backpacks.

Using Divine Flesh to replenish strength was truly too extravagant and wasteful.

Chapter 505: Tuoan City

Passing through a village.

The desolate village, old buildings, looked drab and gray.

The air seemed to be filled with a desperate and dark aura.

A group of dirty little children watched at the group, their small faces split and red from the cold wind, hands and ears covered in frostbite, their eyes full of unease with a hint of curiosity. As the group approached, they quickly scattered.

After Chen Shouyi passed by, he looked back.

He found that the group of children was still watching this way.

He exhaled a breath of white mist. The closer Chen Shouyi got to Tuoan City, the more oppressed he felt. The sky seemed to turn hazy, and the light dimmed.

It was somewhat like the Domain of Faith, yet entirely different.

More like some kind of... accumulation of negative emotions.

At this moment, he turned his head to look.

In the nearby reed thicket, a pair of fierce and cruel eyes stared unblinkingly at Chen Shouyi and his group.

Chen Shouyi raised his brow, and a lot of pebbles shot up from the ground into his hand.

He swung his hand violently.

Whoosh... whoosh...

Pebbles shot out like bullets, breaking a lot of reeds in the thicket.

Surprisingly, the shadow creature didn't die. It let out a sharp scream, its body flickered, jumped out of the thicket, leaping seven or eight meters, and charged at the group.

Chen Shouyi didn't move, while Zhu Xueqing stepped forward, her body like an arrow from a bowstring, the two passed each other in an instant.

In mid-air, the shadow creature's movement stalled. In the next moment, its body was split in two, blood splattering everywhere.

"This shadow monster already has the strength of a great martial artist!" Zhu Xueqing said seriously after returning.

A great martial artist is nothing to a martial artist, but with the ability of this creature to blend into shadows for ambushes, it poses a considerable threat to her, especially at night, where a single misstep could lead to death.

...

After several consecutive attacks, the group finally reached Tuoan City.

"If things don't go well today, everyone stays together tonight," Chen Shouyi said.

"With General Manager Chen here, we can rest easy," Wang Lie said with a smile.

Along the way, he had already discovered that General Manager Chen's strength was far from just being a newly-acclaimed legendary figure.

He originally thought that even if the other party became a legend, the gap wouldn't be significant since he himself was only a step away from being a legend, just one breakthrough short. But in reality, it was quite discouraging.

The other party was simply a monster, with strength that was unfathomable.

Sometimes, when the other party attacked, he couldn't even see the movements clearly.

...

An old man lay stiffly on the roadside, motionless.

His body was covered in frost.

Evidently, he was already dead.

When passersby came across him, they all made detours.

The entire Tuoan City was dead silent, the ground littered with trash, every person's eyes filled with deep unease and despair.

At this time, a commotion came from afar, and Chen Shouyi showed a hint of surprise on his face, exchanged a glance with the others, and then moved to the roadside with the crowd.

Soon, a group of people wearing black clothes came, beating gongs, blowing suonas, making a ruckus all the way, scattering flyers from time to time. An old man with a goat beard, leading, sang in a melodious tune:

"The heaven has eyes, rewards good, punishes evil, good and evil will have their retribution..."

Chen Shouyi picked up a crude flyer printed in ink and glanced at it.

"Redemption Sect!"

The flyers were filled with bewitching words, claiming that as long as you joined, you could keep your family safe.

"It seems that as society panics, all sorts of monsters and demons come out," Chen Shouyi noted that many pedestrians had already shown interest, tightly clutching the paper.

In just half an hour, the group had encountered several waves of cult propaganda teams. It was simply a parade of demons. The entire city had no sign of police or soldiers, yet miraculously, there was no chaos.

No riots, no looting, and certainly no murders in broad daylight.

There seemed to be an invisible deterrent preventing all this, barely maintaining basic order.

But it was just... basic order.

Unattended frozen corpses, streets like garbage dumps, the despair-ridden civilians like walking corpses, the whole city gave Chen Shouyi the feeling of slowly rotting, covered in maggots.

The group walked into a narrow, deserted alley.

"I can't take it anymore," Zhu Xueqing exhaled a breath of white air, saying.

The environment here made her inexplicably agitated and oppressed, she suspected she would go crazy if she stayed too long.

"Something is very wrong here!" Wang Lie said gravely.

Chen Shouyi was about to speak when he suddenly put a finger to his lips. Then he flashed and broke through a wall, instantly piercing the chest of a shadow creature, retrieving his fist, shaking off the blood.

He then turned to look behind, spotting several more shadow creatures appearing at the entrance of the alley.

One shadow creature was much larger than the others encountered. Even though it was slightly hunched, it stood two and a half meters tall, and if it stood straight, it could be three meters. The black shimmering silhouette made it look somewhat blurred, at first glance, just like a mass of shadows, exuding a chilling aura all over.

"There's also in front," Zhu Xueqing reminded, drawing her sword, her body tense, as if facing a formidable enemy.

"And above, we're surrounded!" Wang Lie also changed color, quickly drawing his sword and forming a wedge with Zhu Xueqing.

"I'll go to the rooftop," Chen Shouyi said.

"Okay!" Wang Lie replied.

The buildings on both sides of the alley were two to three stories high. He lightly leaped and easily reached the top. A shadow creature, just about to pounce, had its head chopped off by a flicker of a sword light.

With a few continuous slashes, he cleared the rooftop of shadow creatures ready to ambush.

At this moment, the shadow creatures below could no longer hold back, charging towards Zhu Xueqing and Wang Lie.

Chen Shouyi's lips curved slightly; he was not afraid of being besieged. His hand blurred, and the long sword was sheathed. He drew out a war bow and arrow from the space, nocked an arrow, and pulled it into a full moon, aiming at the largest shadow creature, firing an arrow.

The five-thousand-pound war bow let out a "boom!"

The terrifying shadow creature, running at high speed, was instantly hit as if struck by a heavy cannon, its chest exploding with a large hole. At the same time, its body was knocked back, tumbling over from the massive impact force.

Chen Shouyi shot arrows swiftly, his hands like afterimages.

In no time, arrows rained down like a storm.

Within less than half a second, the last shadow creature, one or two meters away from the two, was blown in half by arrows.

Chen Shouyi wrapped up and jumped down from the rooftop.

Wang Lie, in a daze, sheathed his sword, looking at Chen Shouyi, opening his mouth but not knowing what to say.

Too fast.

He and Zhu Xueqing hadn't even touched a hair on the shadow creatures, and all of the twenty-something shadow creatures had already been shot dead in an instant.

Right, where did his bow come from?

At this moment, he suddenly realized.

Chapter 506: Pursuit

"This is my innate ability."

Faced with the two people's doubts, Chen Shouyi shut down all suspicions with just one sentence, then proceeded to put the bow and arrow into the space right in front of them.

The two stared with wide eyes, like children who had just emerged from a great mountain.

Zhu Xueqing couldn't help but circle around Chen Shouyi, attempting to prove that this wasn't a magic trick, incredulously saying, "Isn't your innate ability wind control and giant transformation?"

"This is another one I've recently discovered by chance." Chen Shouyi modestly replied.

This guy must be God's illegitimate child.

Wang Lie silently cursed in his heart, how can there be someone with three innate abilities?

For ordinary people, having one is already rare; two is something he has never heard of, let alone three.

The key point is, this person is still a legendary strongman.

It's simply... leaving no path for others.

Seeing the two people's expressions were somewhat off, Chen Shouyi added, "Actually, it's not very useful, it can't attack, and it can't defend, it can only store some sundries!"

Unfortunately, for those without any innate abilities, this obviously offered no comfort.

...

No one dared to linger, and they quickly left the place.

In an empty cellar.

The air was filled with a bloody scent.

"I don't know, I really don't know, even if you kill me, I still don't know, I beg you, please let me go..." A middle-aged man was tied to a chair, his hands bloodied and struggling desperately.

This was a cult leader captured by Wang Lie.

Currently, Tuoan City doesn't have much else, but there are plenty of all sorts of scoundrels deserving of death.

"No worries, I'm not in a hurry, take your time, I'm skilled in interrogation, never had the opportunity to try them one by one before, this time let me enjoy it first." Wang Lie said with a sinister bloodthirsty smile.

He then suddenly grabbed his hand, prying open one finger, and began to slowly bend it.

"Pain, pain, pain... no, no, no... aaaaah..." The middle-aged man let out a heartrending scream.

Chen Shouyi took the cigarette from the bench left by Wang Lie, took one and lit it, taking a deep breath, feeling anxious.

This was already the fifth one, yet no useful information was gleaned, only that the mutation happened three months ago.

Where is the source?

Is it the Barbarian God?

Nothing is known!

Chen Shouyi lowered his head and carefully looked at a map provided by the military before he came, the entire Tuoan City has no spatial passageway at all.

Clearly, this passageway is undiscovered.

This is also the main purpose of this mission.

"I'll talk! I'll talk!" At this moment, the middle-aged man finally could not hold on any longer and shouted loudly.

Chen Shouyi immediately walked over, grabbed his collar, lifted him up along with the chair, coldly pressuring him, "Where exactly is the source? You should know who we are, and what we want to ask?"

If you tell us, we guarantee you'll be released immediately. If not, you're on a path of death, it's up to you to gamble.

Are you going to bet our knife isn't sharp?

Or are you going to bet that by revealing the truth, you can miraculously survive the being that doesn't dare show its face?

Do you want to die miserably, or die as a hero, your choice!"

The middle-aged man's face showed struggle, he glanced at the three with a full of murderous intent, gritted his teeth, and said, "Fine, I'll tell. I hope you'll keep your promise... Not many people know about this, and I happen to live nearby.

About... three months ago, there was a loud noise at Ox Head Mountain Mine, followed by a collapse. As it was an abandoned mine, the government didn't pay much attention, and then, terrifying things began to happen..."

Just as he was speaking, a sudden sense of unease filled Chen Shouyi's heart, and the atmosphere became depressingly heavy.

The next moment, infinite negative emotions in the air gathered like a tidal wave, the light dimming, eventually converging into the body of the middle-aged man:

The middle-aged man sensed the abnormality, his body began to tremble, his eyes filled with deep fear and despair, he said, "No... no... I was wrong... Forgive the sins of the small..."

Before his words were complete, his eyes quickly turned dull.

Meanwhile, his muscles gradually swelled, the bones cracked, scales with black halos punctured through his skin, bloody and revealing.

Chen Shouyi gripped his hand violently, the middle-aged man's neck snapped instantly.

...

The cellar fell silent, breaths were rough.

Witnessing such a bizarre scene firsthand, nobody could remain calm.

No wonder the army only blocked off this area but didn't dare to advance further.

As the cult leader, the middle-aged man was not exceptionally strong, but barely had the strength of a martial artist, even martial artists couldn't avoid it, let alone ordinary soldiers.

It took a long moment, Zhu Xueqing spoke with difficulty, "How can the Barbarian God be this powerful!"

Chen Shouyi's expression was grave, this was undoubtedly the most powerful Barbarian God he had ever encountered, yet it displayed such strength, it was beyond his understanding.

This is still Earth.

Unless...

He recalled the earlier sense of unease, his expression changing.

That Barbarian God is likely at the Ox Head Mountain Mine.

"We've been discovered by the Barbarian God, let's go!" Chen Shouyi shouted.

He quickly dashed out of the cellar as he spoke.

The two others realized something as well, their hearts sank, and they hurriedly followed.

It was already dusk, the sky was gloomy.

There were only a few passersby on the road.

The air was vaguely agitated, with an impending storm-like feeling.

Chen Shouyi's anxiety grew, the trio dashed along the way.

Shadow creatures appeared one by one on the road, their dark gray eyes gleaming fiercely.

The pedestrians screamed in fright and ran desperately.

Chen Shouyi, with an impassive face, took the war bow and arrows from his space, repeatedly drawing the bow.

Bang, bang, bang...

Along the way, a large number of shadow creatures were shot one by one.

He sprinted while shooting arrows, his speed not a bit slower than the two who were running at full speed.

The number of shadow creatures in front increased.

From rooftops, from under trees, from sewers, from all corners, they came to block them off.

Clearly, they wanted to keep them in place.

Once the arrows were exhausted, Chen Shouyi prepared to retrieve more arrows from the space but found that all the arrows were used up. He quickly put the bow back into the space and drew his sword, continuing to charge forward.

The number of shadow creatures increased, at a glance, the entire street seemed shadowy and full of eyes.

But with Chen Shouyi leading as the arrowhead, the three of them broke through, and for him, these shadow creatures were hardly better than stationary stakes,

A fully unleashed Chen Shouyi, like a high-efficiency killing machine, left behind severed limbs and sprayed blood, only the struggling corpses twitching on the road remained.

In just over a dozen minutes, the group had left the city.

Yet the sense of unease not only didn't diminish, it continued to grow.

The air was filled with an almost congealing sensation.

"General Manager Chen, leave us, just quickly relay the news." Zhu Xueqing said despairingly from behind, breathing heavily, as an ordinary martial artist, after this sprint, she was already struggling to keep up.

Chen Shouyi was silent for a moment, then said:

"Just a small scene... and it's already too late!"

He slowly stopped, turned around, a massive and hideous monster was rapidly approaching, leaving a trail of dust like a dragon in its wake.

Chapter 507: Death's Apprehension (Part 1)

In recent years, the Tam World has been anything but peaceful.

The downturn of the Original Force has led many gods to fall from their godly status, with some even descending from True Gods back to Demigods.

For the many gods in the Tam World, this has been an unprecedented calamity, reshuffling everything so that no god could remain aloof. The entire Tam World has been engulfed in frequent divine wars, rife with turmoil.

The number of deities fallen in just two years exceeds the total of the past ten thousand years.

However, as over two years have passed, the flames of war in the Tam World have gradually begun to subside.

More and more deities have turned their gaze towards Earth, the culprit of the Tam World's Original Force recession, and covet its abundance of awe-inspiring faith resources.

Among them is the ancient deity, the God of Shadow and Fear, whose very name sends shivers down the spines of many gods.

These fear-based deities, or evil gods, stand apart from the orthodox deities because they have no need for faith or church. They spread fear and harvest fear.

For orthodox deities, the resentment of all sentient beings is something to be avoided, but for these gods, it is the best nourishment.

Fear is the strongest emotion among all sentient beings' feelings, surpassing faith and everything else, and it's much easier to obtain.

After all, instilling devout faith in every believer is difficult, but making every believer feel fear is easy.

Thus, fear-based deities often become powerful quickly in the beginning.

Of course, nothing is perfect.

On one hand, fear-based deities lack lasting power. Orthodox deities accumulate more and more worshippers in their Divine Countries over time, providing amounts of faith that could surpass earthly believers. Fear-based deities, however, have pathetically few or even none, and as they spread fear more widely, they more easily come into conflict with other deities.

On the other hand, it's hard work. They need to frequently assert their existence and spread fear. After all, if everyone forgets you, how can you harvest fear? Especially on Earth, where they must descend in person to cultivate this fertile ground.

...

Everyone slowly came to a stop.

They turned around with difficulty, their faces turning pale.

In the distance, dust billowed up as though a sandstorm had risen. A massive black creature, as tall as two or three stories, was sprinting towards them at high speed, leaving buildings of the city collapsing in its wake, the ground subtly trembling.

Its lower half resembled a spider, yet its body was humanoid, with a pitch-black exoskeleton like armor wrapping its feminine chest. In its right hand, it held a gigantic Steel Fork, surrounded by faint glows of fear.

As it quickly approached, even the surrounding light dimmed, akin to a Demon God emerging from the abyss.

"Why aren't you running?" Chen Shouyi watched for a moment and then turned his head, shouting loudly.

"I... I... I won't run!" Zhu Xueqing snapped out of her fear, her voice trembling loudly.

She knew her strength was the weakest and might not be of any help, but she didn't want anyone dying for her to escape alone, burdened with a lifetime of guilt. Since her brother's death, she vowed never to escape alone again.

Wang Lie touched his chest, where he kept a family photo, and said with a bitter smile, "Maybe we can't escape at all, might as well give it a shot!"

"Give it a shot!?" Chen Shouyi felt troubled, swore, and said, "Do you think it will work?"

"This is just a Demigod. If we kill it, when the True God goes mad, don't expect me to look after you, run quickly, and it's best to scatter and escape!"

They both looked stunned upon hearing these words.

A Demigod, just a Demigod?

"But..."

Zhu Xueqing swallowed, trying to say something. Beside her, Wang Lie, recalling the rumors of Chen Shouyi's god-slaying feats, hurriedly pulled her: "Staying here will only burden President Chen, we'll leave and meet at the command center later."

Then, Wang Lie pulled the reluctant Zhu Xueqing to retreat quickly.

Chen Shouyi tore off his clothes; the Shell Lady, long terrified, could no longer hide. She fell like a stone, hitting the ground without a care, curling into a trembling ball.

After a while, blown by the cold wind, she finally sensed something wrong, shivered all over, and hurriedly climbed up Chen Shouyi's leg with hands and feet.

Chen Shouyi grabbed her: "Fly far away and wait for me to take care of it."

"Oh!" The Shell Lady nodded, her body trembling ceaselessly, her eyes full of deep concern, "But... but hurry up Giant, the Little One will... will think well of the Giant!"

Chen Shouyi nodded, then forcefully tossed the Shell Lady into the distance.

He withdrew his gaze and looked at the increasing proximity of the gigantic creature, a sinister smile appearing on his face.

...

Leoni, as one of the God of Shadow and Fear's last remaining progeny, was not the strongest, nor the smartest, but the most obedient and least threatening.

All disobedient offspring, including some who had become True Gods, were consumed by their mother over the years. Yet Leoni still lived in fear that their fate would eventually mirror that of siblings.

Only upon reaching Earth did Leoni feel truly safe and was even promised power and freedom to become a True God.

This low Original Force world severely limited their mother's power, even within her domain of fear, unless she abandoned that damned cramped cave and the spatial passage.

But such a sacrifice was profoundly painful for any deity.

Mother must rely on Leoni.

"Human legend." Leoni roared, "Arrogant fool, you think you can stop a deity? Under mother's domain of fear, no one can escape, tremble in fear!"

Her voice was sharp as if nails scraped against the glass.

Chen Shouyi seemed oblivious, devouring a piece of demigod meat.

This made Leoni's pupils contract.

She sensed the essence of her kind within the meat; it was the flesh of a Demigod.

Chen Shouyi quickly swallowed a piece of meat, wiped the blood from his lips, and looked up coldly:

"Stop you? No, I just want to kill you!"

Before the words were even finished!

"Boom!"

He stomped the icy ground, blasting a small pit open, his body swiftly advancing towards the opponent like an arrow leaving the bowstring. Simultaneously, he rapidly enlarged, bones thickening, flesh emerging from nowhere...

Two meters, three meters, until he ballooned to a height of five meters and finally stopped.

With a terrifying surge of power, each step spanned forty to fifty meters.

No, impossible!

This was merely a legendary human from a low Original Force world!

How could he possess such a terrifying bloodline?

Leoni's beautiful yet venomous face changed dramatically, becoming completely alert. She halted her steps, eight scythe-like black spider legs moving nervously, clutching the Steel Fork tightly, on full alert.

Chapter 508: The Terror of Death (Part 2)

Three hundred meters...

Two hundred meters...

The two swiftly approached, and Chen Shouyi began to burn faith value.

Strength: 19.0+7.5

Agility: 19.0-0.4

Constitution: 19.0+7.5

Intelligence: 18.7+2.8

Perception: 16.9

Willpower: 17.7

Energy Accumulation: 4.60

Faith Value: 218.1

With already over two hundred points of faith value, it was enough for him to indulge in extravagant consumption.

The wind began to slow, the surroundings became exceedingly quiet, accompanied by an ethereal tranquility, as countless pieces of information flooded into his mind, a sense of complete control over information spontaneously arose.

"Now I am truly unprecedentedly strong," he murmured to himself.

The next moment, he looked up at the terrifying Spider Lady a hundred meters away, his gaze sharp and fierce.

With a thought, the 3.5-meter long sword appeared instantly in his hand, simultaneously he concentrated his will, transforming it into body momentum, stomped down fiercely, his body instantly breaking through the sound barrier of the atmosphere, with a blast echoing in his ears, everything became utterly silent.

His body pierced through the viscous air like a fleeting shadow, the two instantly came close.

"Snap!"

Beside him, a large tree was uprooted by the wind.

Oni's seaweed-like hair fiercely flew backward, golden spiritual light sprang from her eyes, watching the rapidly approaching figure, she took a step back, hurriedly positioning the steel fork horizontally.

"Clang!"

A terrible shockwave radiated out.

The dazzling sparks made the dim light surrounding all bright.

The terrifying force nearly broke Oni's hands, her scythe-like spider legs deeply embedded into the ground, she spat a mouthful of golden blood.

Chen Shouyi's weight at this moment wasn't light, his five-meter tall body weighing four tons, his arm strength reaching a dreadful eighty tons, combined with the kinetic energy of his supersonic body, a full-force chop could easily cleave a heavy tank in half.

Chen Shouyi was blown away dozens of meters, before stabilizing his body in the Air Imprisonment, seeing the Spider Lady already locked in place from the recoil, his heart settled, the demigod once extremely dangerous to him now seemed so trivial, no longer posing any threat.

Chen Shouyi landed, his foot lightly touched down, closing the gap again at high speed.

Oni, terrified, sprung from her momentary rigidity, forcefully flung the steel fork at Chen Shouyi, then... turned to flee.

"Trying to escape?"

Chen Shouyi sidestepped to dodge the whistling steel fork.

In close combat, his lack of agility might be troublesome, but for ranged attacks, with the triple thought speed from burning faith value, he could easily respond.

He quickly pursued, his speed surpassing even the eight-legged demigod.

Within just a few seconds, the distance closed to less than fifty meters.

"Mother God, save me quickly!" Oni felt the ever-approaching figure, her scream was piercing and hysterical.

This human legend is terrifying, if killed, her body would surely be devoured!

As soon as she spoke, the atmosphere suddenly became oppressive, the light rapidly dimmed.

Infinite fear and resentment began to converge in the sky, with black clouds rolling overhead, thunder roaring and lightning flashing!

A great will descended.

Chen Shouyi's face drastically changed, seeing the Spider Lady nearly within reach, yet unwilling to give up, biting his teeth, roaring fiercely:

"Pretentious tricks!"

Teeth clenched, neck veins bulging, exerting all his strength, he pushed fiercely on his foot.

"Boom!"

His body surpassed the speed of sound again...

"No!" Oni sensed this, emitting a scream of despair.

She turned to resist.

But it was too late,

In the next instant, a chilling gleam sliced obliquely through her body, splitting the entire body in half.

Everything was concluded!

"Kaboom..."

Suddenly lightning ripped through the sky.

The heavens brightened.

"Ant, death is your final destination, you have utterly angered me, savor the fear before dying..." an enraged voice echoed, grand and ethereal, as if heaven and earth resonated.

"Damn! Damn! Damn!"

Isn't it exaggerated?

As soon as Chen Shouyi landed, he quickly turned and fled desperately.

Not escaping now, was he waiting for dinner?

The sky grew increasingly dark as if night arrived early.

Snowflakes began to flutter, initially white, quickly turning into strange black ones, his heart pounding wildly, his legs felt light, soft and powerless.

At this moment, a small figure flew headlong towards him.

He almost instinctively avoided it under great tension.

Luckily, he reacted in time.

It was Little Dot.

He reached out, scooping her into his hand.

She was trembling all over, soaking wet, obviously scared enough to wet herself.

Numerous Shadow Creatures were summoned, appearing in the distance.

A few even equaled newly ascended Martial Artists.

Chen Shouyi didn't even look, neither dodged nor avoided, barreling through, one Shadow Creature after another was fiercely knocked into the air by his massive body, accompanied by the sound of breaking bones, they fell lifelessly like ragged bags.

The light dimmed further, the sky flashed with lightning and thunder, the fear behind him continued to escalate.

Chen Shouyi couldn't resist glancing back, chills ran down his spine and his scalp tingled.

High above in the distance was an enormous vertical eye completely formed of dark mist, gradually clarifying, surrounded by lightning.

The eyelid of the giant eye had yet to open.

But Chen Shouyi had no doubt about the terror it would bring when it opened.

"Damn it!"

Chen Shouyi cursed, glancing left and right, spotting distant mountains, his eyes brightened, he increased his pace desperately, if he could escape into the mountains, into the caves, he might survive.

He regretted not taking the main road.

Otherwise, he could have slipped into the sewers...

Uh, probably couldn't fit now.

But only after a few steps.

A surge of intense palpitations came forth.

The next moment, he felt an indescribable fear permeate his body, he stiffened, his mind went blank.

His fast-running body instantly lost control, violently rolling, breaking countless trees, tumbling for several dozen meters before finally stopping.

His eyes closed tightly, face pale, his entire body motionless, even his pulse halted.

After lying for a full ten seconds, his whole body twitched, waking up, looking toward the sky.

The phantom eye was already disintegrating, slowly fading away, the light began to brighten again.

"Is it over?"

He sat up from the ground, feeling completely weak, unable to muster any strength. Suddenly, he turned and vomited violently, saliva mixed with blood and bitter bile.

His face showed lingering fear, this was far too perilous.

Had it not been for his fourth optimization cultivation technique's special features and daily practice, making his body develop certain immunity and tolerance to such fear, this time, he might have been scared to death.

On the ground not far, a small head cautiously poked out, looking around, then quickly scuttled toward Chen Shouyi, climbed up his thigh to his shoulder:

"Good Giant, are you okay?"

Chapter 509: Is It Fragrant or Not?

"No... it's nothing!" Chen Shouyi comforted, quickly pulling back his body, and disengaging from his divine state.

At this moment, a thought struck him as he glanced at the Shell Lady, with a hint of surprise on his face.

"Good giant, why are you looking at little one?" the Shell Lady asked.

"Weren't you affected just now?" Chen Shouyi asked in confusion. Earlier, during the eye's mental attack, the Shell Lady was hidden in his hand. Logically, she should have been affected, but she appeared completely unfazed.

"What effect?" The Shell Lady looked puzzled, then thought for a moment and said: "It just hurt when I fell!"

She showed a pitiful expression.

Chen Shouyi didn't really want to deal with her.

Forget it, pretend he didn't ask.

However, she seems to be immune to mental attacks; even licking divine blood didn't show any effect on her.

Chen Shouyi struggled to stand up shakily, spurring out another mouthful of fresh blood.

He glanced at the many bloodstains and bruises all over his body and sighed.

When the human body faces extreme fear, it self-destructs and cells collapse. Apparently, even though he survived this terrifying attack, his body was already on the verge of collapse.

Everything hurt... Fortunately, they were just minor injuries!

"I was really too careless this time. Those shadow creatures are probably an extension of the Barbarian God's power.

When I killed the first shadow creature, it might have already alerted the Barbarian God. As the number of shadow creatures killed increased, their attention grew, yet we remained oblivious, stepping closer to the edge of a cliff.

Until that cult leader finally revealed His presence, utterly enraging Him."

Chen Shouyi looked toward the distant mountain forest, deep in thought:

"If humans are like sheep herded by the Barbarian God, in some ways, the shadow creatures are the sheepdogs. There must be very few shadow creatures in places rare for humans!"

He gathered his energy, stumbling forward.

The atmosphere filled with fear and despair had already lightened significantly. Clearly, this super long-range attack spanning tens of kilometers was also a significant consumption for the Barbarian God.

But he couldn't gamble at all. If he was attacked again, he wasn't sure he could survive.

Moreover, what if the real body was provoked to appear...

He estimated in his mind that only two outcomes were possible: either he might luckily leave an intact corpse, or be crushed into a mess unrecognizable to family.

"Damn it, one day, I'll make you kneel and cry Daddy!" Chen Shouyi thought fiercely amidst the intense pain all over his body.

A rush of cold wind blew.

"Bang,"

He shivered all over, nervously looking around, only to find that it was the snow falling from a nearby tree.

He hurriedly moved his heavy steps, staggering forward.

He took out a piece of demigod flesh, trying to replenish bodily energy and accelerate recovery.

But upon putting it in his mouth, he found it impossible to chew.

He steeled himself and simply forcefully stuffed a large piece of meat into his mouth, swallowing it whole.

"Cough cough cough..."

The meat got stuck just before reaching the throat.

Couldn't come out or go in?

After managing his throat's movements, he finally managed to swallow it with great effort, breaking out in a sweat.

"Whew..."

"In the future, I must cut a large heap of meat into pieces and store them in my space as a precaution."

Although the effect of the demigod meat was getting weaker, it still provided significant nourishment, higher than any high-energy food. As the demigod meat gradually digested in his stomach, his condition quickly improved.

The mountain forest was piled with thick snow, over half a meter deep.

It looked like waves of white cream as Chen Shouyi trudged through with difficulty.

A few minutes later, despite a lingering sense of weakness, his injuries were completely healed.

He climbed onto a tall tree, looking back into the distance, over a dozen kilometers away. The demigod's corpse lay there still, gold-red blood soaking the ground.

Chen Shouyi felt no desire for it at all. Under the Barbarian God's watch, it was tantamount to seeking death.

Moreover, the demigod's corpse in his space had only been partially consumed. The remaining might last him a year, so he withdrew his gaze without hesitation, continuing forward.

He dared not run at full speed or fly, fearing any noise that might draw the horrific Barbarian God's attention.

This Barbarian God was far more terrifying than the God of Hunting, unimaginably powerful.

Being weak requires caution.

There's no shame in it!

The Shell Lady suddenly grabbed Chen Shouyi's ear, whispering, "Good giant, there's a bad guy coming."

"Where?" Chen Shouyi asked.

The Shell Lady pointed with her little hand.

Standing high, Chen Shouyi followed where the Shell Lady pointed, quickly spotting a distant black dot, which upon close scrutiny, turned out to be a shadow creature.

"What a persistent haunt!"

He hastened his steps to avoid it.

Earlier, he and Wang Lie and Zhu Xueqing had discussed how these shadow creatures automatically found them, but they couldn't figure it out. In the end, they attributed it to being marked by some aura due to their relentless killing.

It seems that was indeed the case.

In fact, deities aligned with fear also needed sustainable development, ensuring basic biological reproduction. Without this foundation, they would have perished, while mutual slaughter among the flock would be like losing wealth from thin air, strictly prohibited.

...

With the keen senses and carefulness of the little one as a guide,

Chen Shouyi cautiously avoided several shadow creatures for hours, finally leaving the Barbarian God's domain of fear.

The oppressive feeling on his chest finally vanished.

He completely relaxed, exhaling deeply, "Finally out."

"Good giant, did little one help the good giant? Little one discovered a b-b-bad guy that the good giant didn't notice." The Shell Lady became lively again, chirping excitedly with a look saying "Praise me."

"Yes, little one is amazing, all thanks to you." Chen Shouyi grinned and grabbed the Shell Lady, giving her a hearty kiss on the face.

The Shell Lady wiped the slobber from her face indiscriminately, eagerly asking, "Good giant, does little one's face smell nice?"

"Nice, little one smells nice!" Chen Shouyi chuckled, "Your face smells the nicest."

The Shell Lady was delighted, a blush of excitement on her face, "Then good giant, kiss here, does it smell nice here?"

"Yes, everywhere smells nice."

"Hehe..." The Shell Lady giggled nonstop, "You're all slobber."

Chen Shouyi and the Shell Lady played around for a while, then he pushed hard with his feet.

With a boom, the snow was blasted apart. He soared into the sky, flying swiftly upwards.

Chapter 510: Big Balloons

The command center was brightly lit, and military officers of all ranks gathered in a circle.

Even the commander of the military district, who had already retired for the night, rushed over upon hearing the news.

Under the inquisitive eyes of several aides, Wang Lie and Zhu Xueqing meticulously relayed the intelligence from the sealed zone, particularly the information disclosed by the cult leader during the interrogation and the subsequent significant response from the Barbarian God.

The commander of the military district finally couldn't keep his expression neutral any longer and stood up excitedly: "Niu Jiao Mountain?"

He immediately looked at the surrounding aides, "Quick, check where Niu Jiao Mountain is located. The Barbarian God is likely there."

He paced back and forth excitedly.

In war, intelligence comes before action.

However, the military's intelligence on the sealed zone was extremely limited, and several times, the special operations personnel sent by the army had never returned, clearly sacrificed. The entire sealed zone was like a black hole, and even the existence of the Barbarian God could not be confirmed.

This time, obtaining the intelligence was indeed too important, even potentially decisive for an entire battle.

"Sir, we found it. Niu Jiao Mountain is located in the northwest of Tuoan City, in Niu Jiao Town. The coordinates are..." an aide examining a map loudly announced.

...

Zhu Xueqing and Wang Lie returned from reporting the intelligence, their expressions heavy, showing no sign of relief from their narrow escape.

Wang Lie glanced at his watch, sighed, "It's almost ten, General Manager Chen..."

"General Manager Chen will definitely be fine!" Zhu Xueqing interrupted excitedly, her eyes slightly red, "He's so strong, with Giant Transformation, even killed a Demigod; he'll surely survive this ordeal!"

Moreover, he's so handsome; there's no way he could die so easily.

Isn't that how it always plays out in TV dramas?

In fact, she knew in her heart that the hope of Chen Shouyi surviving was slim, but she was unwilling to believe it.

When the vertical eye in the sky opened, they hadn't run far, only covering a few kilometers, and the terrifying aura of despair behind them made her feel utterly hopeless, as if she were plunged into an icy abyss, sensing her life slipping away.

This was just the aftermath of the power!

Impossible to imagine.

What kind of terrifying attack did Chen Shouyi, who bore the brunt of it, encounter?

Wang Lie remained silent for a while, opened his mouth but eventually said nothing.

This might already be the strongest warrior among humans, an unparalleled talent whose creation of the Chen Clan's training method is destined to have a far-reaching impact on Great Xia and all of humanity.

Yet even such a powerful figure was powerless against the True God from another world.

Like a meteor, a fleeting brilliance.

Recalling the sealed zone, full of humans like living corpses, he felt the future was bleak, with no sign of hope.

Living in the Capital City, he knew more about the inside story.

Two full years of war had begun to show signs of weariness in Great Xia, this giant. Although it still maintained a semblance of peace and stability, it was merely managing to hold on.

Fighting on three, four, even five or six fronts simultaneously had severely drained Great Xia's national strength.

The nearly twenty years of prepared war reserves of arms and ammunition were gradually depleting.

Under the influence of Original Force, the industrial recovery of Great Xia over the past two years was also not optimistic.

Not considering other factors, just the military manufacturing industry alone had a production capacity less than one percent of what it was before the otherworld invasion, even under wartime conditions with frantic development.

As for the number of wounded and dead soldiers, it could be counted in the tens of millions, and combined with civilian casualties, the death toll may have exceeded even a hundred million.

World War I and World War II?

In the face of such a brutal war between two worlds, they were merely child's play.

If it weren't for Great Xia's population of 1.7 billion and its vast territory, where a localized war wouldn't influence the overall situation, it might have already collapsed completely.

...

The two, each absorbed in their own thoughts, walked silently, with heavy steps, back to the small temporary abode.

Dim, warm light filtered through the door crack, emanating outside.

"Did we forget to extinguish the gasoline lamp when we left?" Wang Lie asked in confusion.

As soon as they escaped back, they rushed to the command center to report the intelligence, without even returning here!

"I definitely turned it off, clearly remember. Even if I didn't, after two days, it would've gone out by now!" Zhu Xueqing replied, her breathing becoming slightly rapid as she thought of something.

She trembled as she pushed open the iron gate of the fence, step by step slowly walking towards the main door.

The main door was slightly ajar, leaving just a narrow gap, through which familiar yet heavy footsteps were clearly heard, resonating with both weight and lightness.

Zhu Xueqing's eyes welled with tears.

Just as she was about to push the door open, someone from inside opened it.

"Ha, so you all are back. I thought you... were delayed on the road," Chen Shouyi said with a smile.

He felt a burden lift from his heart; it was great that everyone was safe.

Before he finished speaking, he was punched in the chest:

"I knew you were okay!" Zhu Xueqing said, her eyes reddening.

Chen Shouyi took a step back speechlessly to relieve the force, wondering, what was the problem with this girl, always hitting people?

Seeing the teary-eyed Zhu Xueqing, Chen Shouyi was just about to crack a joke but found himself pulled into a strong hug.

The two large softnesses pressed tightly against his chest, completely flattening.

With a dazed expression, Chen Shouyi's hands were suspended mid-air, unsure whether to embrace or to release.

Thankfully, it wasn't long before Zhu Xueqing released her arms and wiped her tears, "Congratulations on making it back alive. Don't misunderstand, I was just too excited!"

Chen Shouyi expressed understanding inwardly; hugs in moments of excitement and joy were normal between men and women.

He had seen it so often on TV and in novels.

Beside them, Wang Lie also found it hard to maintain his composure, his face filled with excitement as he came over to pat Chen Shouyi hard on the back. The battlefield easily forged deep friendships, and one could quickly see through a person's character.

Especially Chen Shouyi's rearguard action at the last moment moved him deeply; it was nothing less than saving his life.

After releasing him, he asked, "General Manager Chen, how did you manage to escape, especially since even the True God acted?"

With a sigh, Chen Shouyi recalled with emotion, "Ah, it's a long story. That Barbarian God was terrifying, almost died, but fortunately, I have a strong will to live and managed to pull through in the end."

Even now, the memory filled him with lingering fear; the sensation of a soul's deathly silence and a body destroying itself under extreme fear was too terrifying.

Wang Lie and Zhu Xueqing looked on in bewilderment, observing the seemingly unscathed and still vigorous General Manager Chen.

Was that a near-death experience?

"What happened next?" Zhu Xueqing asked in a daze.

"Then, I just came back!" Chen Shouyi said.

The two exchanged bewildered glances, and Wang Lie couldn't help scratching his head.

If not for knowing he was a legend, if not for not being able to beat him, if not for... he'd have wanted to hold him by the neck and make him speak human language properly.

"I'll chat with you later. I need to go to the command center first to report the intelligence on the Barbarian God," Chen Shouyi stated.