

Scavengers 501

Chapter 501: Cheap Labor

Cheng Yu's lips were pursed as he gently raised his head, gazing at the figure of Green Glaze Master in the holographic screen. She was not tall and imposing; on the contrary, she was petite, with frail shoulders and a slender figure, looking as if a gust of wind could knock her over...

However—

Right now, at this moment, in Cheng Yu's heart, the image of Green Glaze Master was as majestic as a mountain, as expansive as the ocean, as if she could support the whole world with just one hand...

"Master..."

"I..." Cheng Yu felt an indescribable emotion surging in his chest and couldn't organize a complete sentence no matter how he tried.

"Stop talking!" Ji You waved her hand and spoke somewhat dictatorially, "I've made up my mind! Whatever your troubles are, you are my salesperson."

Cheng Yu opened his mouth: "Master!!!"

Ji You's lips curled into a hint of a smile and said, "Ah Da, when dealing with life, don't be timid. Just go for it. If I'm not bothered by you being a trouble, what else do you have to worry about?"

Cheng Yu clutched at his chest, where there was a warm current like floodwaters breaching a dam, fierce and rapid, filling his heart in an instant. With his mouth open, looking at Ji You, he stammered a few words: "Master... I... I..."

Ji You asked, "One word, will you continue or not?"

Cheng Yu gritted his teeth: "I will!"

Ji You said, "Good! Then you are the salesperson for my store, and the store's concerns are your concerns. Do well, and I'll give you a raise."

Only, no sooner had she said this, Ji You immediately regretted it.

A raise?

Had she lost her mind?

The landlord's family didn't even have surplus grain, why was she talking about giving a raise?

Besides, she herself was a debtor with 500 million in debt, nearly starving and about to sleep on the streets...

Ji You pursed her lips, hesitated for a moment, and then said, "About what I said just now... pretend I didn't say that."

Cheng Yu's eyes flashed with panic: "Master, you... you regret it?"

Ji You: "Huh?"

Cheng Yu, eyes wide and earnestly staring at Ji You, asked, "You don't plan to employ me anymore?"

Ji You: "..."

It was then that Ji You realized Cheng Yu had misunderstood her intention, so she quickly said, "What nonsense are you talking about? How about this, to avoid any unnecessary worries between us, I'll sign a long-term employment contract with you. It will only be terminated in the case of an irresistible force."

Upon hearing this, Cheng Yu immediately beamed with joy.

It was a genuinely happy smile, a feeling he hadn't experienced in a very long time.

"Ahem..." Ji You cleared her throat and said, "Regarding the remuneration..."

Cheng Yu hastened to say, "Master, it's my honor to serve you, I don't need any remuneration."

Ji You frowned, "What nonsense is that? Without remuneration, we can't establish a labor contract."

Cheng Yu thought for a moment and said, "Then, Master, just give me whatever you think is appropriate."

When Ji You heard this, the eyes beneath the veil suddenly brightened:

Oh my!

What an honest person.

Ji You liked to take advantage of honest people.

Ahem, ahem...

Ji You put on a stern face and scolded, "What are you talking about? Give you whatever I think is appropriate? One credit point? Or a hundred credit points? What if we dispute over this later?"

Cheng Yu: "..."

For some reason, the Master in front of him suddenly seemed to become lively.

How to say it? The Master used to be silent and sparing with words, with a cold face, looking very difficult to approach, but at this moment, he gave the impression of being alive, real, and filled with the flavor of ordinary human life.

As for those 1 credit point, 100 credit points mentioned by the Master, Cheng Yu automatically ignored them.

Just kidding, who is the Master? With just a casual flick of his fingers, he's someone who could earn tens of millions in mere minutes. Those words were just casually mentioned; how could he really give him 1 credit point, or 100 credit points?

In summary—

Cheng Yu wasn't worried at all.

Ji You lowered his head, pondered for a moment, then looked up at Cheng Yu and said, "How about this, my shop doesn't often have new items, and doesn't need much maintaining or managing on regular days. The compensation will still be as we mentioned before, hired per instance, 1,000 credit points each time. If the sales exceed expectations, I'll give you a bonus."

Where would Cheng Yu have any objections?

You know, how many people dream of the chance to assist and do miscellaneous tasks for a Soul Artifact Master? Even if it's just pouring tea and delivering water, countless people would be willing to offer their service for free.

If Green Glaze Master were to announce that he's publicly hiring a sales assistant, I estimate the people competing for the job could stretch from the First Star System to the Sixth Star System... ahem... Although that description is a bit exaggerated, it loosely reflects the prestige of a Soul Artifact Master among the masses.

Therefore, Cheng Yu hurriedly nodded and said, "Of course! Whatever Master Qingyou says goes."

Ji You said, "I'll include this in the contract."

Then, Ji You cleared his throat and said, "As for the bonus..."

Cheng Yu didn't say a word, just looked up with earnest dark eyes at Ji You, seeing his completely trusting expression, and for some reason, Ji Bapi felt a sudden twinge of guilt in his heart...

After all, he's a big internet celebrity and livestreamer with an appearance fee of at least 2 million.

And yet, he had been lured over for mere pennies.

If he truly didn't give out a single penny as a bonus, it would indeed be a bit unkind.

But—

As a poor wretch, apart from having an extremely thick skin, he had nothing else of value to offer.

So, after only 2 seconds of hesitation, Ji You shamelessly said, "As for the bonus, let's set it at one-thousandth of each sale."

A sales volume of 10 million would mean giving the sales assistant 10,000 credit points.

Not a small amount.

On a garbage planet, living frugally, it would last at least two to three years.

Ji You pursed his lips: "Cough cough... Although it's a bit little, I will consider increasing it for you in the future."

Cheng Yu didn't think too much, nor did he feel that the Master was being stingy. In any case, even if Green Glaze Master didn't give him a single penny, he would still eagerly run over and beg to be the Master's sales assistant.

With no doubts on either side, the employment contract between Ji You and Cheng Yu was quickly signed.

However—

When signing at the end, Cheng Yu caught a glimpse of an additional clause at the bottom. His finger paused slightly, and his eyes immediately reddened: This additional clause had not been mentioned to him by the Master, but had been silently added during the drafting. The clause in black and white read: As long as Qingyou's Soul Artifact Manufacturing skills were perfected, he would unconditionally craft a Soul Device tailored for Cheng Yu.

Master...

Cheng Yu turned around in a flurry, pressing his lips tightly.

On the other side, Ji You signed her name with a broad flourish in a grand style, naturally signing in the name of Green Glaze Master. After signing, she noticed that Cheng Yu remained motionless. This cheap sales assistant, he wouldn't be having regrets now, would he?

Ji You couldn't help but frown, urging, "Sign it."

Cheng Yu hastily rubbed his swollen eyes, hanging his head low, quietly signed his name.

Chapter 502: Cheng's Food

Cheng Yu, having signed his name, still refused to lift his head, and his shoulders were trembling inexplicably.

Ji You: "..."

Ji You opened her mouth: "Are you crying?"

Hearing this, Cheng Yu took a few steps back in slight panic: "No! No! No!"

But—

His obviously nasal response had explained everything, and for a moment, Ji You, as a veteran of ruthless exploitation, couldn't help but start condemning herself!

Heartless.

Too heartless.

But what's done cannot be undone, the contract with black ink on white paper was already signed.

Could it be—

It wasn't grievance that made him cry?

Ji You hesitated, then carefully asked: "Are you crying because you feel humiliated for signing a contract with me at such a low price?"

"Ah?" Cheng Yu was startled, realizing that Master had misunderstood and couldn't care less about his surging emotions at this point. He quickly raised his head and looked at Ji You earnestly, saying: "Master... It's not like that... It's my lifetime honor to work for Master. It's just..."

"Just is..."

After hesitating several times, Cheng Yu mustered the courage and seriously said to Ji You: "It's just... Master, you've been too kind to me. I'm just so grateful that I..." I couldn't help but cry.

Cough!

Haven't cried.

Just red around the eyes and a bit overwhelmed with emotion.

Definitely didn't cry.

Ji You: "..."

After a moment of stillness, Ji You took a deep breath and then let out a dry laugh, saying: "Ah ha... Is that so? Ha ha..."

With reddened eyes, Cheng Yu sincerely said: "Truly, Master! You've been too good to me."

Over the years, since losing his mother in childhood, the stepmother coming into the house, the indifferent father, the half-brother Cheng Kun's bullying, the ups and downs within the family... Cheng Yu had experienced too much indifference and seen too many entanglements of interests... But what about the Green Glaze Master?

She was, in fact, just a stranger to him.

A stranger, yet she shouldered his troubles and was willing to provide what he needed...

Cheng Yu said: "Master, about the issue with my half-brother..."

Ji You furrowed her brows and said: "That matter is indeed an issue. Tell me the details, so I'm forewarned." That move pulled by the Red-haired man wasn't very clever - claiming that Companion

Stones couldn't be used to make Soul Devices? That's clearly not true. As long as Ji You appeals afterward or if a group of rational bystanders speak out against the slander, Ji You's shop couldn't possibly be forced to close.

But, even if it's not a very clever thug's tactic, the effect is real and immediate.

In any case, the other party knows they can't beat you, but they still want to give you a hard time.

So, what does Ji You have to fear?

She's a woman in debt of 500 million, with no elders above or youngsters below, just by herself, barefoot and unafraid of those with shoes. As long as she knows who's causing trouble behind the scenes, when the time comes countermeasures will be in place.

If all else fails, then find a way to expose the opponent's secrets and stop them from doing any more harm.

Cough cough...

But if she can't beat the opponent, then she'll immediately find a way to make an escape.

Ji You kept a straight face as countless thoughts flashed through her mind, her expression however remained utterly serious, making it seem as if she was contemplating some major international affair.

Cheng Yu organized his thoughts before speaking, "Master, have you heard of Cheng's Food? It specializes in manufacturing, producing, and selling synthetic food."

Ji You opened her mouth in surprise, "Cheng's Food? I've heard of it."

The largest supplier of artificial food in the Alliance, aside from Huatai Food, which specializes in producing nutrient solutions, was Cheng's Food. Although both are in the food industry, their businesses are slightly different.

Huatai focuses on nutrient solutions, while Cheng's primarily deals with synthetic food.

Synthetic food typically uses various common and inexpensive raw materials, adding the nutrients required by the human body, and through a series of technologies, creates fresh food ingredients, such as potatoes, tomatoes, apples, fresh meat, fresh fish... Although these synthetic foods have the appearance and taste of the actual ingredients, they are artificially synthesized and not natural.

Moreover—

In terms of taste and effect, synthetic food cannot compare to natural foods. Primarily, long-term consumption of natural foods can gradually and safely enhance spiritual power, but synthetic food cannot do this.

Thus, the price of synthetic food is entirely incomparable to that of natural foods. For example, a 200-gram natural apple's price, depending on its origin, ranges from about 500-800 credit points. But what about synthetic apples?

A pound of synthetic apples costs only about 20 credit points.

The difference is massive, evidently.

But does this mean synthetic food doesn't have a market due to these drawbacks?

No!

On the contrary, there's a large audience for synthetic food, most of whom are lower-middle-income earners. For instance, citizens on the garbage planet no. 101 can't afford natural food, yet they cannot bear the taste of nutrient solutions for long. Synthetic food becomes the best choice for them.

Synthetic food tastes similar to natural food but is much cheaper. For those living on the garbage planet, buying some synthetic food to enjoy from time to time is a truly delightful treat.

Talking about this, Ji You suddenly missed the apple pie made by Grandma Jenny. Ji You remembered clearly that whenever she earned a bit of money from scavenging trash, Grandma Jenny would buy a few synthetic apples to make delicious apple pie.

The synthetic apples Grandma Jenny bought were produced by Cheng's Food.

Hmm?

Is Mr. Cheng Yu's last name Cheng?

Could it be?

Cheng Yu had already answered, saying, "My father is none other than the current patriarch of Cheng's Food, Cheng Dafu."

Cheng Dafu?

What a loud and ostentatious name. Moreover, this Cheng Dafu is indeed rolling in wealth. At this moment, Ji You, being poverty-stricken, did feel envious, yet she kept a straight face, remaining silent and listening.

Cheng Yu continued, "But everything related to the Cheng Family has nothing to do with me, since I severed ties with Cheng Dafu five years ago."

Ji You: "???"

Ji You almost wanted to exclaim if you're foolish to abandon such a vast inheritance?

Isn't that foolish?

What else can it be?

No wonder she managed to dupe him into becoming cheap labor with just a little trickery.

Sigh!

But, every family has its own difficult scripture to chant. Mr. Cheng Yu's family story, with a stepmother and half-brother from the same father, appeared complicated; Ji You had already envisioned hundreds to thousands of episodes of rich family melodrama.

Mr. Cheng Yu's decision to relinquish ties with the Cheng Family clearly had its compelling reasons.

Cheng Yu smiled and said, "Cheng Dafu is intent on leaving all his assets to my stepmother's son, fighting for it would be useless. Better to let go and escape this quagmire sooner rather than later."

As he said these words, Cheng Yu's tone was calm and nonchalant, truly indifferent to these external possessions.

Hearing this, Ji You, moved, seriously added, "Wealth is but an external possession; we don't bring it at birth nor take it at death. There's indeed no need to fuss over it. Your choice, I believe there's nothing wrong with it. Living in the moment is what matters most."

Understanding what to retain and what to forsake, living in the present, that's what's truly important.

Chapter 503: Living in the Present

Cheng Yu was surprised: "Live in the moment?"

Repeating the phrase, he suddenly smiled, nodded, and said: "Indeed, living in the moment is most important."

However, Ji You suddenly changed the topic, saying: "But, the premise of living in the moment is that you can protect yourself, and even more so, live a joyous life. Otherwise, all is moot."

Cheng Yu: "..."

Ji You: "Otherwise, your living in the moment is nothing but self-deception." Of course, this sentence wasn't only meant for Teacher Cheng Yu, but also for herself. She certainly loves money, but the premise of loving money is that she can stay alive, live well, and also protect friends, family, and loved ones around her...

So—

Money is significant to Ji You, but not the most important thing in her life.

Cheng Yu opened his mouth, hesitated for a moment, then nodded with emphasis: "Yes... that's right." So, he didn't want to deceive himself, and over the years, he has been striving to improve himself and do what he wants to do.

However—

The trees want to stay silent, but the wind keeps blowing. If it wasn't for Cheng Kun continuously causing trouble, Cheng Yu's life would have been quite free and easy.

Thinking about Cheng Kun, Cheng Yu's face darkened slightly, and he spoke very seriously: "Master, when I mention my family background, it is not to complain to you, but to tell you that my half-brother Cheng Kun is very narrow-minded and vengeful. Since his behind-the-scenes plotting didn't succeed this time, there will surely be moves to come, and the forces behind him are the Cheng Family. With Cheng Family's abundant financial and social resources, it's uncertain what he will come up with next. So, please, Master, you must be cautious."

Upon hearing this, Ji You nodded and said: "I understand."

Cheng Yu hesitated, then bit his teeth and finally spoke: "If... if I cause you trouble in the future, the contract we signed can be declared void at any time."

Ji You frowned and waved her hand: "That's absolutely unnecessary! Since I've put it in black-and-white, not only me, but you too, must abide by the contract's terms. Only forces beyond our control would lead to its nullification."

Cheng Yu looked up, stared at Ji You earnestly, and nodded vigorously: "Master, I understand."

Ji You said: "Work well for me, aim for a raise."

Cough cough...

At this point, Ji You suddenly felt a bit of heartache. Why did she always rashly bring up raises? Reflecting on it, she realized that she must have been influenced by the blood-sucking capitalists of her past life, where talk of raising wages and benefits came easily... These capitalists were best at dangling big dreams before their employees...

Alas!

Cheng Yu exclaimed loudly: "Master, rest assured, I will work diligently! Striving to get a raise and bonus soon."

Ji You: "..."

Awkward, now that she wanted to go back on her word, it would be too embarrassing to do so.

Having agreed on everything, Ji You then listened to Cheng Yu talking about his half-brother Cheng Kun's modus operandi and the complex power divisions behind the Cheng Family...

About that, Ji You boasted verbally, but she dared not take it lightly, so she listened very attentively and took note of everything Cheng Yu said.

After a while.

Cheng Yu said: "Master, this is all the information I currently have about the Cheng Family. I will try to gather more about them recently."

Ji You: "I know."

Thinking it over, Cheng Yu took the initiative to say: "Master, I'll try to contact you online in the future, avoiding offline interactions. That way, as long as Cheng Kun can't figure out your true identity, he won't be able to target you."

Ji You nodded and replied: "Okay."

Contacting through Star Network is definitely better. Otherwise, wouldn't she be exposed as soon as she has any real-life interactions?

Thinking of how she fooled Teacher Cheng Yu into working for her for a mere 1000 credits and recalling those 'Spicy Eye' behaviors Cheng Yu had to endure, if he ever found out about her real identity... Ji You couldn't help but shiver with fear...

Only online contact is exactly what she would wish for.

Once they finished communicating, Ji You logged off.

Meanwhile.

At the administrative center of the Alliance—the luxurious estate on Nami Star. A burly red-haired man knelt, head lowered, before a younger man.

The young man's appearance was delicate, his eyes showing a sharp glint as he gently lifted his hand, tapping on the table.

Tap.

Tap.

Tap.

...

Thump, thump, thump...

The red-haired man continued kneeling, not daring to utter a sound.

Aside from the young man tapping the table, there wasn't the slightest noise around.

After a while, the young man raised an eyebrow and said: "I gave you so many people, so much money, and you tell me that not only did you fail to discredit Cheng Yu, but you couldn't even steal a single soul device?"

The red-haired man stammered: "Young... Young Master... your subordinate..."

"Damn!" The young man shouted angrily, slamming the table: "What is the use of such trash?" After saying that, the young man pressed a bell and ordered: "Butler, take him away to the Northwest Mining Area to mine."

The moment his words fell, a squad of well-equipped, burly men quickly emerged, the leader of whom simply picked up the red-haired man like a chicken and dragged him out...

The red-haired man suddenly began to struggle violently: "Young Master! Young Master! Please give me one more chance!"

The young master remained indifferent.

Very soon.

The red-haired man was dragged away by the group.

After a while, the butler walked back in and quietly reported to the young master: "Young Master, it's been taken care of."

The young man: "Hmm."

His face was grave, and he said nothing.

The butler cautiously chose his words before saying: "It has been found out. Red-haired messed up the job, allowing someone to find the loophole, leading to the failure."

The young man suddenly asked: "Have you found out the true identity of the Soul Artifact Master?"

The butler shook his head and said: "Not yet."

The young man, who was Cheng Kun, darkened his expression, saying: "Find out as soon as possible."

"The Master has not had direct contact with Cheng Yu, and her identity is confidential. The Star Network prohibits the querying of citizens' identity information," said the butler, looking troubled, but knowing his young master's temperament, he still nodded: "Yes. I will arrange for people to investigate this."

After thinking, the butler continued: "A Soul Artifact Master with such strong capabilities should not be without identity or status within the Alliance. Young Master, shall we start by checking the major soul device laboratories?"

Cheng Kun thought so too. A Master who can use ubiquitous Companion Stones to create soul devices could not be a nobody; at the very least, they could be a prized disciple of some Master...

So, Cheng Kun nodded, saying: "Do that. When you find her real identity, be polite to her. It's best to make her work for us."

Butler: "Understood."

Chapter 504: Compatibility

The next day.

Ji You woke up feeling refreshed. She first checked her account balance and found the credit points earned from selling the soul device neatly lying in there, which made her feel even more energized.

After washing up, Ji You immediately put on a tank top and went downstairs to run laps.

After using Dr. Luo's prescribed medicine bath to improve physical strength for a while, Ji You realized her physical fitness had truly changed compared to before. When she began running, just one lap around the track would leave her gasping for breath, her run intermittent as she clenched her teeth to keep going.

Later, she began running 2 laps, 3 laps...

After using the medicine bath for a period, Ji You's limit was 4 laps.

But what about now?

Ji You found that today she ran 4 laps in half the usual time and still felt like she had plenty of energy left.

Without a second word, Ji You continued running.

laps.

laps.

laps.

and a half laps... By then, Ji You felt her legs swelling and dizziness coming over her...

She couldn't continue.

Ji You started to slow down gradually, and then stopped. She checked her Light Computer timer and found that she had run for 2 hours today, completing 7 and a half laps, 3 and a half laps more than usual. Ji You was very satisfied.

Keep in mind, Sheng Qingyan could only manage 8 laps in two hours, and Chu Jiaojiao, pushing herself to the max, could only run 12 laps in the same time. Thinking of the gap between her physical strength and theirs, Ji You felt hopeful of reaching or even surpassing them one day.

Just then—

Sheng Qingyan, Chu Jiaojiao, and others approached Ji You.

Ji You, holding a towel, wiped off some sweat beads and looked at them: "You guys finished your run."

Chu Jiaojiao took a quick step forwards, looked at Ji You's face, her mouth twitched a bit as she forced a compliment: "Classmate Ji You, you look really pretty today, the most charming person on Lanyue Star."

Ji You, touching her still somewhat swollen pig face, spoke somewhat speechlessly: "How can you say such conscience-twisting words? I really can't hear them."

Chu Jiaojiao, with a pained face, eagerly asked: "Then when will you go treat your face?"

Ji You: "Not going."

Chu Jiaojiao: "..."

Chu Jiaojiao's eyebrows furrowed like they could trap flies: "I'll pay, I'll buy you a flawless beautiful face, okay?"

Ji You: "..."

Ji You, with a prideful expression, retorted: "My face, do you think you can just buy it whenever you want?"

Chu Jiaojiao gritted her teeth: "Name your price!"

Ji You: "..."

Ji You clenched her teeth: "My face, how can it be measured by money?"

On the side, Sheng Qingyan, who was almost at his limit, stomped his foot and said irritably: "Do you want your face or not? Do you want your face or not?"

Yue Qiyuan: "She has no face."

Yue Qiguang: "She has no shame."

Ji You: "..."

Shen Changqing timely interjected to prevent the crowd from potential dispute. He looked at Ji You, earnestly saying, "Classmate Ji You, thank you for your generosity yesterday. Last night, I already received the Soul Device. I find this Soul Device very special. Just after wearing it, my Spiritual Silk Cleaning Rate, which had been stagnant for a long time, suddenly broke through to 16%."

Star Network Shopping uses Light Speed Express, as long as it's within the Alliance's jurisdiction, the delivery speed is very fast.

It's not surprising that Shen Changqing and Chu Jiaojiao got their Soul Devices the same evening.

Ji You replied with a smile, "I'm glad it's useful for you."

After all, she also earned a tidy sum in handling fees.

150,000 credit points.

Chu Jiaojiao said, "It's more than just useful? This Soul Device truly amazed me. I originally thought that Soul Devices made from Companion Stones would be fragile and shatter at a touch, but unexpectedly, mine has held up fine all this time."

While speaking, Chu Jiaojiao pulled out a lanyard from her neck, revealing the Clover Soul Device, and said with a chuckle, "Previously bought low-level soul artifacts would break on me in less than a night. This Soul Device is still very stable. Look at its Array Diagram, I think I can use it for at least a month..."

Shen Changqing also said, "Indeed, it's very practical." As an S-Level Spiritual Power User, his feelings were profoundest. This Soul Device differed from those he used before, and even, Shen Changqing felt its effects were even better than the Mid-level Soul Devices he had used before.

What makes it better?

Compatibility.

Using this Soul Device, when Spiritual Silk contacts it, one can draw nutrients from the Soul Device without feeling almost any resistance, and thereby significantly strengthen oneself.

Furthermore, there's almost no discomfort felt physically.

Artificial Soul Devices, plainly speaking, are man-made, relying on the creator's potent spiritual power to carve out an Array Diagram, then extracting a portion of spiritual power to sustain a circulation system autonomously within the Array Diagram. When the Array Diagram collapses, the circulation system also fails... and the user of the Soul Device then nurtures their own spiritual power through the continuously cycling spiritual power within...

However, since it's man-made, and the cycling spiritual power is from the creator, there is more or less some rejection for external users... and hence, the greater the rejection, the higher the failure rate of the Soul Device.

Smaller rejections lead to longer usage time and better effects.

Thus, a few crucial indicators to measure the level of Soul Devices include compatibility, stability of the Array Diagram structure, and the Spiritual Threshold.

Compatibility, as explained, simply refers to the degree of rejection of external forces by the Soul Device; the smaller the rejection, the higher the compatibility.

Stability of the Array Diagram structure is also easy to understand; the more stable the structure, the less likely the Soul Device is to collapse.

Spiritual Threshold is also easy to grasp. It refers to how much spiritual power is contained within the Soul Device; higher thresholds indicate a higher level of the Soul Device...

As Ji You listened to Shen Changqing's explanation, her eyes widened: "Are there really so many things to say about a Soul Device?"

That means—

She really knows nothing about Soul Devices.

She managed to create so many Soul Devices just by reckless acting and blind messing around... and to think that it actually worked for Ji You; truly, she must admit, providence has granted her a significant Golden Finger.

Shen Changqing gave a gentle smile and said, "From the discovery of Soul Devices to their widespread public knowledge, it has only been a little over two hundred years. The related knowledge involved still needs ample verification and research. What I just mentioned is not comprehensive, which is why the Alliance has not promoted it widely." With technological development up to now, the average human lifespan has reached over 300 years, with some who possess strong Physical Strength and spiritual power living up to 400 years.

The history of Soul Devices, having only been discovered 200 years ago, is not even a span of one person's lifetime.

Ji You nodded in agreement.

Regarding the difficulty of accessing knowledge about Soul Devices, Ji You deeply resonated as well. As an ordinary person, she too once tried to look up information about Soul Devices but could not find a way in.

Chapter 505:

Ji You thought for a moment and couldn't help but ask: "Classmate Shen Changqing, if I may ask, what is your compatibility rate with the Clover Soul Artifact?"

Shen Changqing said: "I feel it's at least about 80%."

Ji You blinked: "Is that high, or low?"

Sheng Qingyan, from the side, rolled his eyes ungracefully, scornfully saying, "Of course that's high! A general low-level soul artifact reaching 50% compatibility is already quite good... Even reaching 80% with a High-level Soul Device is considered very high..."

Ji You: "Oh—"

She understood.

In a word: Awesome!

I am awesome!

Ji You beamed with joy and then turned to ask Sheng Qingyan: "Little Cutie, what is your compatibility rate?"

Sheng Qingyan was so shocked that he jumped up, backing away a few steps hurriedly, adamantly saying: "What are you talking about? I don't have a soul artifact. I really don't!"

Chu Jiaojiao, Shen Changqing, Yue Qiguang, Yue Qiyuan all glared at Sheng Qingyan simultaneously: "You managed to snatch a soul artifact last night?"

Sheng Qingyan clutched his chest: "Don't listen to that poor dead guy's nonsense! There's no such thing! Nothing at all!"

In a pure tone, Ji You said, "But I saw you sneakily put away the soul artifact Heart yesterday."

As her words fell, Chu Jiaojiao took a leap forward, charging up to him. Seeing Chu Jiaojiao coming over, Sheng Qingyan shrunk his neck like a quail, and Chu Jiaojiao, with one hand on his shoulder, reached directly into his collar with the other hand.

Sheng Qingyan panicked: "Jiaojiao, that's enough! You can't bully Little Cutie like this!"

With an expressionless face and almost effortlessly, Chu Jiaojiao pulled out the soul artifact hidden in Sheng Qingyan's neck.

Everyone was struck: Good lord!

This guy had silently stolen a soul artifact and even pretended he hadn't.

In an instant, Sheng Qingyan felt as if countless murderous glares were piercing towards him...

Sheng Qingyan stomped his feet: "I just got a bit luckier... It's because I'm cuter than you all, you're just jealous of my cuteness!"

The crowd: "..."

Chu Jiaojiao threw the soul artifact back to him, cursing: "Keep it! I don't fancy a soul artifact that was worn by you, it's tainted now."

Shen Changqing, Yue Qiguang, Yue Qiyuan also stepped back a few steps, distancing themselves from Sheng Qingyan, indicating their decision not to fraternize with him.

Only then did Sheng Qingyan smile happily, carefully tucking the Clover Soul Artifact back into his collar, breathing heavily out of relief: "Almost lost a soul artifact... If Green Glaze Master knew I lost her crafted soul artifact, I don't know if she'd be mad."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You couldn't bear to watch, she quickly spoke out, cutting off Sheng Qingyan's cringeworthy behavior, asking: "So, what is your compatibility rate?"

Sheng Qingyan sulkily said, "You're not cute, I won't tell you."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You felt the veins throbbing on her forehead, about to lose her patience and punch someone. Grinding her teeth, she creaked: "If you don't tell, don't think I'll testify for you today!" She still held control over this guy's allowance.

Sheng Qingyan pouted: "This Little Cutie is so angry! 85%!"

"Ah?"

"So high?" Ji You was astonished.

Seeing Ji You's surprised, incredulous look, Sheng Qingyan immediately boasted proudly, "This is the incredible skill of Master Green Glaze." His compatibility with this new soul device had indeed reached 85%.

The previous pink earring also reached 80%, so this was why he was so fascinated by Master Green Glaze. — Even though Master Green Glaze has only sold low-level soul artifacts and has never sold middle or high-level soul devices... Sheng Qingyan immediately decided to become a hardcore fan of Master Green Glaze.

With Sheng Qingyan's family background, it was not difficult to purchase middle or high-level soul devices, but where was the difficulty? The difficulty lay in the fact that the medium and high-level soul devices he had used before had not been very compatible with him. With low compatibility, the soul devices greatly rejected him, so the medium and high-level soul devices he used often broke down very quickly.

What about the products from Master Green Glaze?

Even though it was just a low-level soul artifact, Sheng Qingyan had been using it for two months now; the earring soul device he wore on his ear was still in good condition.

This showed the true power of Master Green Glaze.

...

Ji You turned to Chu Jiaojiao and asked, "Jiaojiao, what is your compatibility with the soul device?"

Chu Jiaojiao touched her chin and said, "Mine is less than theirs, perhaps because my spiritual level is lower than theirs? But my compatibility is also 65%."

Ji You surprised, "Only 65%?"

The first one to be unhappy was Sheng Qingyan, who said, "If you can do it, then go ahead! You're not allowed to look down on Master Green Glaze's creations."

Chu Jiaojiao scratched her head and said with a smile, "65% is quite high too. It's much higher than ordinary soul devices."

Shen Changqing said, "Indeed, it's very high."

Yue Qiyuan glanced at Ji You, "Ignorant."

Yue Qiguang said, "This fool is so poor, and you still expect her to be knowledgeable? Don't be too hard on her."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You decided to ignore the mocking above and turned to Shen Changqing, asking, "So, is it because the spiritual threshold is low that the soul devices made by Master Green Glaze are classified as low-level?"

Her soul device had high compatibility with users, and the array diagram was also relatively stable. The only issue was this spiritual threshold.

Shen Changqing thought for a moment before replying, "What you said is also not wrong. It is unknown whether Master Green Glaze lacks spiritual power or set it up intentionally. The spiritual threshold in her soul devices is very low, so the few soul devices she has sold are all about low-level."

Ji You felt truly regretful, "That's unfortunate."

If this indicator was met, wouldn't she be able to make middle and high-level soul devices now? Which means, a vast fortune would flow towards her?

But!

A feeling inside Ji You suggested that the reality shouldn't be that simple. Firstly, her own spiritual threshold was pitifully low. Even if she transferred it all to the soul device, it would still be just a little bit.

Shen Changqing continued, "Actually, there has been a recent debate in the Soul Artifact Realm regarding the 'spiritual threshold' indicator, led by masters like Kong Zhe, Jiang Hua, and Deng Mingguang. They proposed to redefine this indicator and rename it to 'Soul Power'. The main basis is that the spiritual power divorced from the artifact makers, after transforming through the array diagram and forming a cycle system, theoretically, should no longer be called 'spiritual power'. It is actually considered a form of power surpassing spiritual power... therefore, it should be changed to 'Soul Power'. However, masters like Bert Beich and Mickey Dodge strongly opposed this view! These masters believe that no matter how the spiritual power in the soul device evolves, it is still a form of spiritual power and should not be classified outside of spiritual power range. Currently, both viewpoints have their supporters and opponents."

Yue Qiyuan added, "The two sides are fiercely quarrelling. It seems they might come to blows soon."

Shen Changqing said, "In fact, I am quite curious about the newly emerged Master Green Glaze. I wonder which viewpoint she supports?"

Ji You muttered secretly: Master Green Glaze, this newbie, she knows nothing at all, who can she support? Support a ghost.

Chapter 506: Stirring Up Trouble

After hearing Shen Changqing, Yue Qiyuan, and others popularize the knowledge of Soul Devices, Ji You finally understood where her current weakness lay.

Spiritual power.

Her shortcoming was the extremely low level of her spiritual power. Therefore, the Soul Devices she produced, even if their Array Diagrams were stable enough, even if the compatibility with the person was high, the spiritual power circulating within the Soul Devices was too little. If she couldn't overcome this shortcoming, the level of the Soul Devices Ji You made would never improve.

Haste makes waste, and Ji You didn't expect to achieve success in one step. Now that she knew the three key points to improve a Soul Device, she was no longer completely clueless... This also provided a general direction for her future crafting journey. One must walk step by step, eat bite by bite; she was not in a rush, not in the slightest.

...

After finishing the morning run, Ji You and several classmates were walking back to their dormitory when they bumped into Lin Lele and her group. Lin Lele crossed her arms and her expression immediately darkened upon seeing Ji You.

Yue Qiyuan stopped in his tracks, ready to turn around immediately.

Yue Qiguang's brows knitted in a flash.

Seeing this, Ji You simply stood still.

Lin Lele caught a glimpse of Yue Qiyuan's turning motion, and said with a bad tone, "Yue Qiyuan, why are you avoiding me? What unspeakable things have you done? Or are you ashamed to see people because you've been hanging out with trash?"

This 'trash'...

Lin Lele's eyes unintentionally shifted towards Ji You, the implication clear...

Before Yue Qiyuan could speak, the hot-tempered Yue Qiguang already clenched his fists, cursing, "Lin Lele! Don't think I won't dare to beat you up! Get lost immediately, you eyesore!"

Lin Lele's pretty face flushed with anger as she threatened, "Yue Qiguang, just you wait. Once the final exams are over, you'll realize your mistake."

Yue Qiyuan turned back, his gaze coldly sweeping over Lin Lele as he crossed his arms and asked with a slightly raised tone, "I'm quite curious as to what the 'mistake' you're referring to exactly is."

Lin Lele faltered, stomping her foot: "You two brothers, ganging up to bully me!"

Yue Qiguang swatted away an imaginary fly, waving his hand, "Are you going to go tell your mother? Hurry up! Hurry up! I'll despise you if you're a second late!"

Lin Lele opened her mouth: "You—"

Yue Qiguang sneered: "How shameful."

Lin Lele's figure halted, struggling to control her rage, and she lifted her foot, about to turn away when suddenly, behind her came the cold and slightly chilling voice of Yue Qiyuan: "Lin Lele, before your brain goes out of control next time, remember that your Lin Family still can't control our Yue Family."

Lin Lele whirled around furiously: "You..."

"You..."

"I remember."

"You just wait!"

Having said that, Lin Lele glared fiercely at Ji You and spat out, "Copycat dog!"

Ji You: "..."

Ji You raised her hand, calling to her, "Wait a moment!"

Lin Lele proudly lifted her face, speaking arrogantly, "What, did I say something wrong?"

Ji You shook her head, her tone indifferent, "No! You're wrong. You are wrong because you're blind and your mouth is crooked."

Lin Lele: "..."

The color in Ji You's eyes deepened in an instant, her tone exceedingly cold, "Lin Lele, this is the last time. If there's a next time, I won't waste so many words on you."

Lin Lele opened her mouth, arrogantly saying, "A copycat dog should be forever nailed to the pillar of shame, never to come out and embarrass yourself again..."

Whoosh—

Just as she opened her mouth, before Lin Lele could finish speaking, she suddenly felt a glint of cold light before her eyes, and then she was flipped onto the ground...

Clang—

Lin Lele saw stars before her eyes, her face full of confusion: "You actually dare to hit me?"

Ji You retracted her hand indifferently and said, "Sorry, my hand slipped."

Originally, as Lin Lele was bullying Ji You, Chu Jiaojiao had already jumped up, ready to beat up Lin Lele first. But before she could roll up her sleeves, Lin Lele had already been flipped onto the ground by Ji You...

Fast!

So fast indeed.

Chu Jiaojiao had no choice but to put her rolled sleeves back down and hurriedly rush to Ji You's side, asking with concern, "Ji You, did your hand get hurt?"

Ji You: "..."

Ji You forced a smile: "It's not hurt."

Chu Jiaojiao still wasn't reassured and said, "Next time you have to do rough work like this, leave it to me."

Lin Lele: "..."

Lin Lele took a deep breath: "You! You! I'm going to call the police! I'm going to call the police! I'm going to call the police!"

On the side, nobody paid attention to Lin Lele, who was hopping mad and shouting.

Yue Qiguang said nonchalantly, "Number 4444, your move was quick and decisive, definitely interesting, but the lethality is still too little. If I had done it, her head would have burst immediately!"

Yue Qiyuan shook his head and said, "The move was fast, but not elegant enough. If it were me, blood would be shed in one move."

Shen Changqing fell silent for a moment before saying, "Although it's wrong to hit people, this time I'll pretend I didn't see anything."

Sheng Qingyan covered her mouth and snickered, "Poor ghost, though you usually look miserably thrifty, it was really handsome of you to make a move today..."

...

Lin Lele was so angry she was about to explode. Just as she was about to curse, she caught sight of the police car whizzing in. She hooked up the corners of her mouth, looking triumphantly at everyone: "The police are here! You all are done for."

minutes later.

In the school police office.

Ji You, Chu Jiaojiao, Yue Qiguang, Yue Qiyuan, Shen Changqing, and Sheng Qingyan, the six of them huddled together, crouching on the ground.

On the side.

Mu Jianling held a ruler in hand, with a glint in her eyes: "Do you realize what you've done wrong?"

Silence.

Ji You gritted her teeth and suddenly shouted, "Teacher, it was all my doing. I am willing to accept all the punishment. It has nothing to do with them."

Mu Jianling glanced at her coldly.

Ji You stiffened her scalp, facing the enormous pressure coming from Teacher Mu Jianling, and said, "I was the one who acted. There's surveillance footage as proof. I believe the teacher and the police will surely enforce the law impartially."

Mu Jianling's tone became stern: "What's the rush? You can't escape anyway."

Lin Lele stood aside, the smugness on her face impossible to hide.

Teacher Mu's gaze swept over Lin Lele inadvertently before she took a deep breath, looked at Ji You coldly, and said, "Your mistake lies in knowing that you're breaking regulations and still striking others. As for them—"

She paused, her eyes sweeping over Chu Jiaojiao, Yue Qiguang, Yue Qiyuan, Shen Changqing, Sheng Qingyan... one by one, Teacher Mu continued: "Their mistake lies in knowing you were breaking regulations but not stopping you."

Ji You opened her mouth: "Teacher... I accept the punishment."

Teacher Mu snorted coldly: "Shut your mouth! If you dare make a sound again, you'll receive a heavier punishment."

Even though Teacher Mu's tone and expression seemed very calm on the surface, the rage hidden beneath this calmness was enough to make Ji You and the others tremble in fear. They silently bowed their heads, listening quietly, not daring to utter another sound.

Lin Lele, with her head held high, said, "Teacher Mu, as the victim, I demand serious punishment for them! Ji You, who led the infraction, should be expelled."

Chapter 507: Don't Cry

Mu Jianling's eyes were slightly cold.

Expulsion?

Setting aside the grave and career-ending punishment of expulsion, just the act of recording such a discipline in the file of a Military Academy student would directly affect the selection result of the Legion. Even if a student is chosen by a certain Legion, carrying this stain would impact the path to promotion...

This girl from the Lin Family has mediocre abilities, but a malicious enough heart.

Mu Jianling was very angry.

Her anger was not just because of this incident, but also because Ji You, that fool, and even Shen Changqing, who was such a steady person, could be so foolish at this time!

She was furious.

For a moment, the air in the entire police office radiated outward from Mu Jianling, as if it had all solidified.

No one uttered a sound.

Ji You wanted to speak, but she didn't understand why there was an invisible pressure from above, firmly deterring her, making her unable to open her mouth. This was— the overpowering pressure from Teacher Mu Jianling.

Very strong.

She had originally thought that with her 100% purity of Spiritual Silk, she would be able to resist Teacher Mu Jianling's intimidation. However—in the Spiritual World, even the strongest Boss among the Six Strands could not lift its head...

How strong could this be?

And Ji You was certain that Teacher Mu Jianling had not used her full strength on her, guessing that it was only about 30% or so. This also made Ji You profoundly realize the gap between herself and top-tier powerhouses.

Describing it as a huge chasm was not an overstatement.

Ji You slightly lifted her eyes and met Mu Jianling's gaze, which was full of warning, as if to say, "Dare to make a sound, I'll smack you dead."

Ji You pursed her lips and lowered her head.

Beside her, Lin Lele was still clamoring, demanding the school police deal harshly with Ji You and the other five students.

Suddenly, Mu Jianling said, "Shut up."

Her voice was light and faint, yet it carried an inexplicable weight.

Lin Lele opened her mouth but faltered under Mu Jianling's gaze, feeling a chill rise in her heart, so she immediately backed down.

Then Mu Jianling spoke, her tone neither light nor heavy, "According to school regulations, taking the lead in provoking and insulting others shall be dealt with as causing trouble. Miss Lin Lele, do you recognize your mistake?"

Lin Lele's eyes widened: "Teacher Mu?"

This—

Was this about her?

Mu Jianling continued, "Considering you are all first-time offenders, the punishment will be waived this time, but should there be a second offense, it will be dealt with severely!"

Lin Lele's eyes bulged: "Teacher Mu! This is completely unfair!"

Mu Jianling glanced at her coldly: "Has no one ever taught you not to interrupt a teacher?"

Lin Lele: "..."

Holding her mouth, Lin Lele dared not make another sound.

Mu Jianling snorted coldly: "Since someone has brought up fairness, I suggest she refers to the school rules. Causing trouble is a serious offense, which will be dealt with severely upon discovery, and if it happens again, expulsion will be inevitable."

Lin Lele mumbled to herself.

Mu Jianling said with a cold face: "It seems you are all full and idle. Since that's the case, you are all penalized to clean toilets for a month!"

Everyone: "..."

Mu Jianling continued, "The instigators, Lin Lele and Ji You, will have an additional penalty of cleaning the rabbit shed for a month."

Ji You: "..."

Rabbit shed?

What on earth? Does the school even raise rabbits?

Lin Lele stared: "..."

Me—the main culprit?

Main culprit?

Mu Jianling asked indifferently, "Does anyone have any objections?"

Yue Qiguang was the first to speak up, loudly stating, "No."

Chu Jiaojiao nudged Ji You, then loudly echoed, "No."

Ji You, gathering her energy into her dan tian, shouted, "No!"

Shen Changqing, Yue Qiguang, and Sheng Qingyan also voiced loudly and in unison, "No!"

Only Lin Lele remained...

Mu Jianling asked, "Lin Lele, what about you?"

Lin Lele opened her mouth and, ultimately worried about being punished, reluctantly nodded.

Upon hearing this, Mu Jianling nodded, "Since there are no objections, it's settled then. Everyone is dismissed."

The students who were as timid as quails, crouching in the corner of the wall, obediently left one by one after hearing that.

Seeing this, Lin Lele, though unwilling, lifted her foot, ready to leave when suddenly—

Mu Jianling said, "Lin Lele, I will report everything about your performance at school to Admiral Lin Jun."

Lin Lele trembled all over, "Teacher Mu... I..."

Mu Jianling stated, "In my school, my class, with my students, under my watch, I won't allow such malicious slander of a student to occur again, whether it's the instigator or the provocateur..."

Lin Lele's eyes reddened, and she ran out with her face covered.

Ji You heard this and knew that Teacher Mu was actively defending her. Her own eyes also began to redden slightly. Just one step from the threshold, Mu Jianling suddenly commanded, "Ji You, number 4444, stop right there."

Ji You instantly halted. She turned back, obediently lowered her head, and, like an elementary school student, pressed close against the corner, awaiting her reprimand.

Mu Jianling opened her mouth and scolded, "Fool."

Ji You: "..."

Mu Jianling asked, "What's your mistake?"

After deep reflection, Ji You earnestly replied, "I was wrong not to use words instead of taking action."

Hearing this, Mu Jianling's lips twitched as she scolded, "Your mistake is knowing there's a turd ahead and still insisting on stepping on it!"

Ji You: "..."

Ji You's hands trembled slightly, almost in disbelief at what she heard. Such vulgar words, spoken by Teacher Mu Jianling?

She—

She had hearing problems?

Mu Jianling raised her hand and touched her forehead, saying, "Such a fool who only knows how to act tough. Don't say in the future that you were taught by me; I can't teach that!"

Ji You: "..."

Mu Jianling's eyebrows were so tightly knitted they could trap flies. After a moment, her tone suddenly became extremely serious, "Some stains, if left on you too long, become impossible to wash off, some hats, worn too long, can never be removed. Regarding the accusations of you plagiarizing, if you have a plan in mind, don't delay. Resolve this matter quickly."

Ji You was shaken to the core and only after a while did she firmly nod, "Teacher, I understand."

Mu Jianling said, "I don't believe you would do such plagiarism. So, sort this mess out quickly, train earnestly, and work on enhancing your strength as soon as possible."

Ji You firmly replied, "Yes! Teacher!"

No amount of force in her voice or boiling of emotions could convey Ji You's feeling of gratitude at that moment—did Teacher Mu also believe in her?

With no excess words, no embellishments, just a simple 'I believe in you...'

Ji You bit her lip hard to prevent the tears welling in her eyes from falling...

Mu Jianling gestured dismissively, "Get out! You're in the way!"

Ji You turned around hastily, her footsteps hurrying out the door—

As soon as her foot crossed the threshold, the tears she was holding back fell in torrents... Ji You raised her hand to her heart, trying to soothe herself as well as the Xiao You inside the Iron Plate, "Don't cry, don't cry, don't cry..."

Chapter 508: Professional Bullying

Tears...

One drop.

Two drops.

Three drops.

...

Ji You raised her hand, wiped her face, and when she looked up, she saw five curious heads popping up in front of her.

Ji You: "..."

Ji You stiffened the corners of her mouth, trying to save face, and said, "I just got sand in my eyes."

Sheng Qingyan elongated his voice: "Oh—"

Yue Qiguang curled his lip: "Oh—"

Yue Qiyuan stroked his chin: "Oh—"

Shen Changqing was silent: "Oh—"

Chu Jiaojiao giggled: "Oh—"

Ji You's forehead vein throbbed: "Keep 'oh-ing,' and I'll start hitting people."

The five of them stared at Ji You with meaningful looks, chorusing, "Oh—We get it, you're mad because you got caught crying?"

Ji You: "..."

Ji You glanced at them, "You guys really are great at making things up. But I suggest you do less fantasizing, and more brain-enhancing."

The group laughed cheerily, and they all came to understand roughly what Mu Jianling had said to Ji You after she had been left alone. Hearing that the teacher Mu Jianling had not given Ji You a hard time, everyone breathed a sigh of relief.

Then.

Yue Qiguang changed the topic, "Let's discuss cleaning the toilets, number 4444, you're one of the main culprits, so shouldn't this task be yours?"

Yue Qiyuan spread his hands and said, "I've never cleaned a toilet in my life, so I'm afraid this challenging task will have to be handed over to you guys."

Upon hearing this, Sheng Qingyan was visibly upset and said, "When it's time to crack jokes, how come you two don't shut up? I'm the real victim here, I only said one sentence, and I got dragged down by you lot."

Yue Qiguang nudged him, impolitely retorting, "That's what you get for having a loose tongue! You could have chosen to not say anything at all."

Shen Changqing looked up at the sky, treating all the argument as if it's just wind passing by his ears, but—facing the reality that they had to start cleaning toilets from today, Shen Changqing couldn't muster any enthusiasm either.

Chu Jiaojiao also had a trace of anguish on her face and asked, "Can we hire cleaning robots?"

Everyone: "No."

When this was said, everyone collectively plunged into despair.

Ji You impolitely added, "The teacher also said, none of you can be missing, everyone must put in the work personally."

Five people: "Shut up."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You, stroking her chin, chuckled, "Thanks."

These guys, although they can be quite annoying on a regular basis, none of them serious, but when it comes to crucial moments, they're still reliable. This thank you from Ji You came from the heart.

Then.

After classes ended that day, Ji You and the others learned what real despair was.

They looked at each other.

Yue Qiguang said, "Weren't we supposed to clean the bathroom?"

Yue Qiyuan said, "This is the bathroom."

Sheng Qingyan burst into mournful tears: "This is not a human's toilet..."

Chu Jiaojiao glanced at him and scoffed, "As if the human toilets are clean."

Shen Changqing raised his hand, rubbing his forehead, and then decided he didn't want to talk. He just looked up at the sky.

Ji You opened her mouth wide and said, "So—the so-called toilets, are actually us cleaning the stables? Our school actually raises horses?"

Horses—

The appearance of such a thing in Lanyue Star Military Academy, a school full of high-tech, is simply inconceivable. Besides, what era is it now? It is the interstellar era. When Ji You saw the horses, she was shocked on the spot.

Yue Qiguang spoke out what everyone was thinking, "Shouldn't these things be at the Agricultural College next door?"

Shen Changqing let out a long sigh and said, "They're temporarily rented from the Agricultural College territory. It's said that one is worth millions."

Ji You licked her lips: "Quite the luxury, huh."

Yue Qiyuan's voice was somewhat despairing: "So—they are bred in an ancient way, allowed to roam freely. You see that horse manure... you see it, right?"

Everyone: "..."

Shen Changqing said, "It's said that this batch of horses might be props for this year's graduation exam..."

Everyone: "What???"

"Forget all that, let's get started. The quicker we finish cleaning, the sooner we're free." Chu Jiaojiao had little patience—whether it was a mule or a horse, to them, all of these were big shots, big bosses who needed to be well looked after!

Ji You felt the same and said, "Let's get to work."

The rest of the boys followed with faces that looked as if they had lost all will to live.

Perhaps as a punishment, the stable had no modern tools at all, only very primitive brooms—those that required manual labor...

Yue Qiguang looked at the broom; his forehead veins bulging: "Isn't this thing supposed to be in a museum?"

Looking at the broom, the others, including Ji You, also felt despair. They knew the entire range of the stable was tens of thousands of square meters, even the stable itself occupied more than a thousand meters. Within sight, all was horse manure, and the key issue was the smell, which was truly unpleasant...

Then.

Ji You suddenly pulled out several masks and gloves from her person, saying, "Artifacts—do you want them?"

Everyone: "..."

Each one donned them and found that the smell around them finally became bearable. Chu Jiaojiao said in surprise, "Ji You, you're really clever. How did you think of this?"

Ji You said with slight pride, "You young people, you just don't have enough life experience." After knowing she had to clean toilets, she prepared these for herself, and, don't mention it, they really came in handy at this time.

The group of six, including Ji You, each took a broom and started working.

Meanwhile, Lin Lele stood by herself, with a gloomy face.

The robot managing the stables spoke up in time, reminding, "Student Lin Lele, please start cleaning the stables right away. If you stay inactive for more than a minute, your performance will be reported immediately to Teacher Mu Jianling, the security office, and to Admiral Lin Jun."

Lin Lele gritted her teeth: "Bastard!"

Helpless.

Lin Lele could only pluck up her courage, hold her nose, and start cleaning with the broom.

Just—

No one cared about her.

Looking at the six people on the other side who were chattering and laughing, then at herself so lonely, Lin Lele felt wave after wave of bitterness in her heart.

Suddenly—

A lump of horse manure flew diagonally past her, nearly hitting her head. She turned her head and glared at the instigator: "Yue Qiguang!"

Yue Qiguang withdrew his broom and spoke in a disdainful tone: "Seeing an idiot makes my hands uncontrollably urge to punch someone."

Fire blazed in Lin Lele's eyes, and she felt an immense sense of injustice, furiously saying, "Are you even a man? You resort to hitting girls?"

Yue Qiguang was about to speak when Chu Jiaojiao interrupted him, stroking her fingers and saying, "Leave bullying girls to me!"

Lin Lele: "..."

Lin Lele felt like crying.

She had never borne such grievance in her life.

Seeing those who were acting out of tune around her, she figured that if they weren't stopped, Lin Lele might indeed be driven to tears. Ji You heaved a deep sigh and said, "Well, the matter of bullying a girl, leave it to me. I'm more professional than you guys."

Everyone: "..."

Chapter 509: For Justice

Once Ji You spoke, everyone was speechless and choked up, even Lin Lele, who was so wronged she almost cried, now furrowed her brow and looked at Ji You.

Then.

Ji You, who prided himself on being particularly skilled at bullying girls, took out another pink mask with a simple-minded little pig printed on it from his pocket. He then opened his hand and handed it to Lin Lele.

Seeing this, Lin Lele angrily said, "Mind your own business!"

Ji You was somewhat speechless: "Are you the rat?"

Lin Lele was at a loss for words: "You!"

Ji You stubbornly handed over the mask, saying, "Put it on. If you don't, I guarantee every breath you take will stink."

Lin Lele: "..."

This description, which was disgusting in every possible way, managed to disgust Lin Lele. She snatched the mask from Ji You's hand and stepped back, glaring fiercely at him, and said, "Don't think for a second that I appreciate your fake kindness."

Ji You spread his hands, saying, "Suit yourself."

Lin Lele: "..."

In frustration, Lin Lele, holding a broom, swept vigorously at the horse dung beside her. Instantly, the stench filled the air and she covered her mouth, coughing, "Cough cough..."

"Damn it!"

"I've had enough."

"Damn it!"

Ji You: "Idiot."

Lin Lele spun around sharply: "What did you say?"

Ji You: "Whatever you heard is what it is."

Lin Lele shook with anger: "You!!!"

Ji You shrugged and backed away a few steps, then started sweeping in an orderly fashion, raising his voice as he said, "Using a broom as a gun, waving it around on purpose, scattering horse dung everywhere, and almost hitting your own mouth - if that's not being an idiot, what is?"

Lin Lele: "..."

Lin Lele, gritting her teeth: "You! That's enough from you."

Ji You spread his hands, saying, "Poor broom, reduced to sweeping horse dung, but having done nothing to deserve being wielded by an idiot."

Unable to listen anymore, Lin Lele slammed her broom onto the ground: "You asshole! I'm going to fight you!"

Nimbly, Ji You jumped back a few steps, saying, "Hey! It's all fun and games, but what's the point of taking it out on a broom?"

Nearby, Chu Jiaojiao, Yue Qiguang, and others started egging them on; Yue Qiguang slapped his thigh, full of mockery, "Exactly! Can't win in an argument, so you take it out on a broom, that's all the Lin Family's good for."

Lin Lele was about to explode with anger when she suddenly lunged at Ji You...

At that moment—

The management robot suddenly interrupted: "Warning! Warning! Warning! Fighting in the stable is prohibited. This is your first warning; repeat offenses will result in an additional 10-day penalty."

Lin Lele trembled, staring in disbelief at the Light Computer managing the horse track: "When was this crappy rule made?"

The management robot replied with all seriousness, "According to Teacher Mu Jianling's original words: To prevent these scoundrels from fighting in the horse track, a few strict rules are set: 1. No fighting, the first offense gets a warning, and a repeat offense will be punished with an additional 10 days. Prohibition of..."

Lin Lele couldn't stand it any longer and cursed: "You're doing this on purpose! You're targeting me!"

The management robot replied, "Student Lin Lele, this rule is not targeted at any one person but applies to all of you. So please abide by the rules and finish your reform labor at the earliest."

Everyone: "..."

Hearing these shameless words from the robot, not only did Chu Jiaojiao, Yue Qiguang, Sheng Qingyan, and others lose their mood for joking around, but even Lin Lele, with her temperamental nature, had lost her will to make trouble.

Silence.

Everyone silently cleaned up the horse dung...

Watching the clumsy Lin Lele, Ji You suddenly asked, "Student Lin Lele, how much did Xu Siyu pay you? How about I pay double?"

Lin Lele's fingers paused, "What did you say?"

Ji You earnestly said, "Whatever Xu Siyu has given you, I will offer double."

Lin Lele was so angry that her eyes looked on fire: "You! You are insulting me!"

Ji You corrected her: "No! I am bribing you."

Lin Lele: "..."

Others: "..."

The others turned their faces away, pretending not to see, and continued to sweep the horse manure with grunts.

Ji You touched her pants pocket, wanting to take out money, only to find that there wasn't a cent in her pocket. After a brief moment of embarrassment, Ji You nonchalantly withdrew her hand, touched the chip of her Light Computer, and looked at Lin Lele, saying: "Sister~ name your price."

Lin Lele was fuming to an extreme at this moment: "You are insulting me! You plagiarist dog! You are deliberately insulting me."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You withdrew her hand and suddenly leaned closer to Lin Lele, who was red-faced with excitement, and said with a puzzled face: "This is strange. You say you don't want money, you're not after any benefits, so why are you going to such lengths to oppose me?"

Ji You's sudden closeness made Lin Lele's eyes meet Ji You's dark, shining ones. Somehow, seeing those serious eyes with a touch of stubbornness, the curse Lin Lele was about to blurt out inexplicably choked back.

She straightened her neck, raising her voice: "I'm doing this for justice! I stepped forward to uphold justice!"

Ji You: "Oh..."

Lin Lele: "..."

Such a lukewarm reaction?

Ji You suddenly put on a serious face, earnestly said: "Then - for justice, may I ask you to stop? Please hold off on all actions and statements before I present the real evidence, don't listen to one-sided stories, don't spread rumors... just quietly wait for both sides to present evidence supporting their claims, how about that?"

Lin Lele opened her mouth: "You... don't be sophisticated."

Ji You looked at her and sighed softly, her tone suddenly becoming very gentle: "Do you know? Because of you, because of so many people blindly making a fuss like you, a girl has already died."

Xiao You—

Actually, she had died.

Even though she still exists, she couldn't really be considered alive, she had no body, no freedom, only confined within an Iron Plate...

The future?

Could Xiao You really reappear in reality in the future?

I don't know.

Ji You genuinely didn't know.

But even if there's a glimmer of hope, Ji You would try hard.

...

Upon Ji You's words, Chu Jiaojiao, Sheng Qingyan, Shen Changqing, and the others suddenly stopped their movements, all turning to look over.

Ji You waved her hands to signal them not to worry unnecessarily, smiling: "She didn't die! She was lucky to survive! But after she survived, she told herself that no hardship is more important than her life, so she won't do anything foolish again."

Chu Jiaojiao and the others looked at Ji You, listening to her words, and somehow, they could hear a deep sadness and melancholy...

What was going on?

Ji You didn't explain, she turned her head, staring seriously at Lin Lele, and said: "For justice, for not tainting the justice you uphold, please agree to my request, can you?"

Lin Lele opened her mouth.

Ji You was extremely patient.

After a long while.

Lin Lele turned her face away and grabbed the broom with a swoop, leaving behind the words: "Who cares about this nonsense."

Chapter 510: Damn Punishment

Ji You laughed.

As long as she didn't meddle in other people's business, she didn't ask for much else—even if Lin Lele changed her opinion of her or not.

Then came a chaotic cleaning session.

The cleaning process was distressingly bad, so bad that it was best left unsaid. Ji You and her group, including Lin Lele, a total of 7 people, took more than an hour to completely clean up and finally got the go-ahead from the stable management robot.

After taking off their dirty coats and removing their masks and gloves, Sheng Qingyan gasped for air and said, "I've never been so humiliated in my life."

Yue Qiyuan, fanning himself with the back of his hand, said, "What's despairing is that we have to endure this kind of day for another month."

Yue Qiguang, irritable, clutching his head, continuously cursed, "Dad regrets this, Dad really shouldn't have meddled."

Shen Changqing didn't make a sound.

Chu Jiaojiao grimaced and said, "I'm suffocating... How are we going to last this month."

Ji You: "..."

Looking at everyone, Ji You pursed her lips and said, "Well... I have an inconvenient request."

Sheng Qingyan said, "I can't hear you."

With that, she turned and walked away.

Yue Qiyuan followed, "Let's go, let's go."

Afraid of being left behind, Yue Qiguang quickly passed them both, muttering, "Dad doesn't want to stay here for a second."

Shen Changqing looked at Ji You, seemed to want to say something, but in the end, he didn't speak and followed them.

Chu Jiaojiao widened her eyes at Ji You, chuckled and said, "Ji You, you know... regardless of how messed up your face is now, as long as you're willing to mend it, you'll always be the top beauty in my heart."

Then,

After these words, in the blink of an eye, they were far away...

Ji You: "..."

"Hey! Wait a minute!" Ji You yelled, "You haven't heard what I want to say yet!"

The five of them turned back in unison: "We don't want to listen!"

As soon as their words fell, they were gone in an instant.

Ji You: "..."

Ji You touched her chin and muttered, "It's just asking for your help to clean the rabbit shed together. Was there a need to run that fast?"

Nearby, Lin Lele, who was also tasked with cleaning the rabbit shed, just crossed her arms, watching the scene with a stern face and uttered not a word.

Seeing Lin Lele's cold demeanor, clearly unwilling to chat more with her, Ji You naturally didn't want to warm up to someone who gave her the cold shoulder, so she sighed deeply and headed toward the rabbit shed.

The rabbit shed was near the stable, about a 20-minute walk, but if Ji You ran at full speed, she could reach it in just a few minutes, and she really didn't want to waste time, so she ran straight there.

Lin Lele, lagging behind, walked slowly.

Rabbit shed?

Isn't it just a place to raise rabbits?

Cute, gentle, adorable rabbits were surely better than those wild, runaway horses, right?

As Ji You arrived at the rabbit shed, she actually held great expectations, but as soon as she stepped inside, a stench hit her face, causing Ji You to retreat repeatedly...

Next to her, the electronic voice of the rabbit shed management robot calmly urged, "Ji You, please start cleaning immediately."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You pinched her nose and asked, "Is this the rabbit shed? Are you sure? Why does it smell so awful?"

Compared to this overpowering stench, the previous stable smelled practically mild.

The robot didn't respond to her question but pointed at some of the rabbits and started explaining precautions, "Here, here, and here, when you clean, remember not to disturb them. These rabbits are about to give birth. If something goes wrong, Principal Hong will be very angry."

Ji You's face darkened.

The robot continued, "Here, here, and here, these are newly born baby rabbits. They are very fragile and mustn't be disturbed, or it will affect their development. If they don't grow well, Principal Hong will get very angry."

Ji You pursed her lips.

The robot took a few steps forward, pointed at a bunch of big, round, and plump gray rabbits, and said, "These are all male rabbits."

Ji You thought to herself, Male rabbits, surely they don't need special attention, right?

The next second.

The robot rigidly said, "These are breeding rabbits, the entire prosperity of the rabbit shed relies on them diligently sowing their seeds. Therefore, you must not disturb or hurt them. Otherwise, Principal Hong will show you what true terror means."

Ji You with a stiff smile, "So—you're telling me, which rabbits here can I mess with?"

The robot shook its head: "None of them at all."

Ji You: "..."

The robot stepped forward a few meters, raised its hand towards a cluster of white rabbits, and said, "This breed was recently introduced from the Agricultural College next door, they are currently adapting to their new home and are particularly wary of strangers, so you should not disturb them easily."

Ji You, tugging at the corner of her mouth, no longer wanted to listen to the robot's incessant chatter.

Yet, the robot tirelessly continued to educate Ji You on various precautions, overwhelming her to the point where, amidst her inner turmoil, she couldn't help but wonder: "Was I really supposed to clean the rabbit shed today? Or was I here to learn rabbit breeding techniques?"

After a while.

Only then did the robot finish its introduction, "Student Ji You, start cleaning."

Ji You grabbed a broom, at a loss of where to begin.

Here—

Were all big shots!

All were big shots who couldn't be messed with or avoided.

Next to her, Lin Lele, who had stepped into the rabbit shed a few steps after Ji You, instantly frowned and pinched her nose, "What kind of hellish place is this?"

Ji You: "A place where big shots live."

Lin Lele: "..."

The robot's emotionless electronic voice said, "You have 30 seconds left to prepare, beyond that, for each second delayed, an additional day will be added to your cleaning time."

Ji You: "... So harsh!"

Not daring to delay, Ji You grabbed the broom, put her mask and gloves back on, and first chose the compartment where the baby rabbits were to start cleaning.

She reasoned that the rabbit mothers carrying babies were certainly not to be messed with.

Those breeding rabbits, each like an important figure, related to the strength of the rabbit group, were also temporarily untouchable.

As for those newly introduced white rabbits, all looking gentle and meek, but who knew if there was any bomb hidden among them?

So—

Ji You decided to practice with the baby rabbits first.

Then, she carefully stepped into the rabbit shed, but as soon as her foot touched the ground, the little rabbits scurried around in panic like a disturbed nest...

The robot: "Alert! Alert! Alert! The baby rabbits are severely frightened, please stop your dangerous actions, Student Ji You."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You was suffocating.

Ji You withdrew into herself.

Ji You became rigid.

...

But the robot clearly didn't want Ji You to idle, timely issuing a warning: "Please take immediate remedial action, otherwise your punishment duration will be extended—"

Ji You: "..."