

Scavengers 671

Chapter 671: Deeply Considerate

Chu Jiaojiao, Sheng Qingyan, Yue Qiguang, and Yue Qiyuan, all turned their heads together, staring intently at Shen Changqing, making his whole face turn red, Shen Changqing opened his mouth...

Yue Qiguang was the first to speak: "Shen Changqing, I underestimated you in the past! Turns out among all of us, you are the least honest one!"

Yue Qiyuan cursed: "If he was really honest, even Star Beasts would understand human speech!"

Sheng Qingyan pouted and scolded: "Aqing oh, I'm really disappointed in you."

Chu Jiaojiao just snorted at Shen Changqing with her nostrils.

Shen Changqing: "..."

Shen Changqing felt even more awkward.

He...

What he said and did, truly came from his heart.

Cough cough

He really didn't have any other hidden motives.

As for Ji You wanting to give him special treatment, that was entirely Ji You's decision, he... he isn't a worm in Ji You's stomach, unable to influence her decisions.

Wronged!

After a bout of jesting and joking, the topic was dropped.

Ji You glanced sideways at the rich heirs in front of her, grumbling in her heart: each one of them, such penny pinchers.

Cough cough!

Then, Ji You said: "I know you're all curious about how I got the job at the Green Glaze Master Shop, we're all familiar now, I can't just deliberately keep it from you."

Everyone was genuinely curious, urging Ji You not to dawdle and to hurry up and explain.

Ji You pursed her lips, smiled with a hint of mystery, and said: "Do you know what I relied on? I relied on this—"

Saying so, she raised her hand, pointing to her face.

Everyone: "???"

Yue Qiguang: "What?"

Yue Qiyuan: "Thick skin?"

Chu Jiaojiao: "Pretty face?"

Sheng Qingyan: "Thick skin, huh?"

Shen Changqing pursed his lips, although agreeing with what the others said, he hesitated for a few seconds, then said: "Is it the brain?"

Ji You glanced at them dismissively and scolded: "Don't think just because you're not being subtle, I don't know you're mocking my thick face. What's wrong with having thick skin? Did I eat your rice or something?"

Everyone: "..."

"*Cough cough* ...," Ji You straightened up, her tone becoming serious: "What I relied on is neither thick skin nor the brain, but my perseverance!"

Everyone: "..."

Bullshit!

Clearly, nobody believed it.

Ji You, poker-faced, said: "Do you know how many recommendation letters I sent to the Master? Up to now, I send 10 every day, each filled with sincere, heartfelt, and emotional words... Expressing my admiration for the Master, and my desire to work in his shop... until I had sent 99 letters, on the account of my active attitude, I finally touched the Master."

Everyone: "..."

Yue Qiyuan, frowning, "Are you sure this isn't harassment?"

Ji You: "*Cough* ... Nonsense, what are you talking about?"

Sheng Qingyan, rubbing his eyes, said: "Poor deadbeat, show me what you sent."

Ji You didn't hide anything and spread out the letters for everyone to see.

Upon seeing this, everyone was speechless. Ji You really sent out 99 self-recommendation letters, each one different, and the sycophantic words in each letter were just eye-watering.

Chu Jiaojiao, Yue Qiyuan, Yue Qiguang, and Shen Changqing all had the same doubt in their minds: [Could it be that the Green Glaze Master likes to hear flattery?]

Sheng Qingyan also had a doubt in her mind: [Strange, I have also flattered the Master a lot, why did the Master block me then?]

Ji You gathered the letters, closed the Light Computer, and said with a stern face, "The main reason I could become a sales clerk is due to my perseverance. Secondly, it is because the Master has good discernment, able to pick me out from the vast crowd. Thirdly, my own luck..."

Cough cough...

When Ji You put away the self-recommendation letters and said these words, she actually felt very awkward and somewhat ashamed. To make her deception believable and convince everyone that there was no trickery in her becoming a sales clerk, she had to do many shameful things...

Just the fact of blowing her own trumpet, she felt her face couldn't quite take it.

Fortunately, it was finally over.

It seemed like these friends wouldn't have any suspicions now.

Thinking of this, Ji You sighed heavily in her heart: How easy is it for her to plan benefits for these pseudo-friends?

Easy?

Not easy at all.

She has been truly deeply involved with these plastic friends, alright?

Such profound emotions, such painstaking intentions, truly moving heaven and earth.

Unfortunately~

The friends don't know.

Listening to Ji You praising herself again, Yue Qiyuan, Yue Qiguang, Sheng Qingyan, and others all twitched their mouths, showing a look of unbearable annoyance.

Looking at these unknowing plastic friends before her, Ji You couldn't help but cover her face and sigh heavily, "Fools~ you won't understand my painstaking efforts. Ah! In fact—thinking about everything I've silently done for you, if you aren't moved, I am moved enough to cry, okay?"

Saying that, she even pretended to cry a few times.

Everyone: "..."

[What have you done?

Apart from deceiving and freeloading, what else have you done?]

Forget it.

Everyone is nice here, no need to take her seriously.

...

At this moment, Ji You had her reasons for landing herself a position as a sales clerk.

As the final exams were approaching, and it was certain that they would involve Lanyue Star, how difficult this would be was unknown. Whether it would be dangerous was also unknown...

Of course, Ji You believed the risks would not be significant, as it was after all just a end-term exam for first-year students. The school would definitely ensure the students' safety and not let their lives be endangered.

However, Shen Changqing, Yue Qiyuan, and others had already guessed that the Mechas used in this exam would not be performance-limited versions, but combat ones. This could potentially involve encounters with the Star Beasts, and perhaps even lead to the frontline...

This brought certain risks.

Additionally, with the Beast Tide approaching, these students nestled in the ivory tower were not yet ready to face the bloody battles, but Ji You, who had grown up on a garbage planet, knew all too well what it was like to face day-to-day dangers.

Ji You knew better than anyone that she needed to quickly improve her abilities to ensure enough self-protection.

Besides herself, if possible, Ji You would certainly not be stingy with her friends and family; she would provide help to those around her as much as her capabilities allowed.

After the online contest, the Soul Devices made by Ji You herself, after being used by Shen Changqing, Chu Jiaojiao, and Sheng Qingyan, proved to be very effective. Now, crafting low-level Soul Devices wasn't difficult for her. She just needed to control her spiritual power well and not overconsume it to consistently produce a batch of Soul Devices, which Ji You wanted to provide to her classmates and friends, but she lacked a solid excuse.

The position of a sales clerk at the Green Glaze Master Shop provided a perfect excuse.

Through this convenience, her classmates and friends could all benefit without exposing Ji You.

Chapter 672: Poor Soul~

After dinner, the group hurried towards the horse stables and rabbit shed.

When they arrived, all the horses in the stables were still wandering about in the ranch; Ji You, Chu Jiaojiao, Shen Changqing, Yue Qiguang, Yue Qiyuan, and Sheng Qingyan each had to split up and lead the horses back to their stalls, tie them up, before they could start cleaning.

The horses raised on the ranch were full of wildness and didn't cooperate at all, and every day the students had to expend half a day's effort to get all the horses back. Later on, after suffering many setbacks, the students found a method. As the saying goes, "capture the leader to capture the gang," and once they subdued the lead horse, the others fell in line. This improved their efficiency.

Nevertheless, it still took them about one hour to finish cleaning the stable.

Afterward,

the group rushed to the rabbit shed in a hurry.

Now that Ji You had five free helpers, cleaning the rabbit shed was much faster.

When they arrived at the rabbit shed, they unexpectedly ran into Lin Lele, who was supposed to be responsible for another area of the rabbit shed. Ji You was a bit puzzled: Why had Lin Lele come to her side? It wasn't usually easy to get her to come over voluntarily.

Could it be—were there other people in the rabbit shed?

Here, seeing Ji You and her group, Lin Lele's face showed a trace of displeasure, and she didn't even greet them. With a huff, she turned her head and left.

Yue Qiguang grabbed his hair, annoyed: "Just seeing her face makes me feel physically sick."

Yue Qiyuan clenched his fist: "Itching for a fight."

Chu Jiaojiao glanced sideways at the two and scolded: "Cowards! You don't even dare to fight back when bullied by a girl."

Yue Qiguang, Yue Qiyuan: "..."

Yue Qiguang exploded: "Anyone can talk big. You haven't had to deal with such a complicated and troublesome relative. If I really give her a beating, her grandma, her mom would cry at our house 'til the end of time..."

Sheng Qingyan clicked his tongue twice, and chuckled: "Poor thing..."

"Cough cough..." Ji You cleared her throat to interrupt them and said, "Stop talking such nonsense. You big and rough men gossiping behind a girl's back, that's not nice. Hurry up and get the work done."

"Cough cough..." Chu Jiaojiao coughed softly, protesting: "Ji You, I'm not a rough man, I'm a girl."

This statement made the atmosphere on the scene slightly odd.

Then—

Ji You, Yue Qiguang, Yue Qiyuan, Sheng Qingyan, Shen Changqing all opened their mouths in unison: "You're not."

Chu Jiaojiao: "..."

Yue Qiguang casually added insult to injury: "You're not even a person."

Chu Jiaojiao clenched her fists tighter, her tone carrying a hint of menace: "Yue Qiguang, say that one more time!"

Yue Qiguang put on his mask, changed into a cleaner's uniform, and immediately ran a few meters away: "Dad's not bullshitting with you."

Chu Jiaojiao snorted and cursed: "You're just scared to fight me!"

Ji You glared at them and scolded: "Are you going to clean or not? Time is money, time is life! Time isn't for you to waste like this."

Chu Jiaojiao immediately came closer, grinning: "Ji You is right, I'll go clean right now. Little bunnies... your Sister Jiao Jiao is coming..." Saying this, she hopped away like a little girl.

Ji You raised her hand to her forehead: This Jiaojiao, you say she's a girl, but she isn't.

If you say she isn't, sometimes she truly is.

In any case—

Upon verification, she can only be classified as—an unidentified species!

Ji You, dressed neatly, was also ready to start cleaning. She chose an area where the rabbits were a bit more obedient. As she was taking a detour there, preparing to squat down, out of the corner of her eye, she suddenly caught sight of a curled-up figure.

Ji You jumped in fright: "Holy shit! Dude, are you a person or a ghost?"

The person curled up in the corner, clearly also startled by Ji You's alarm, lifted his head, exposing his entire face

—Beautiful and pale.

It was Liu Fufeng.

He squatted in the corner, holding two pure white rabbits in his arms, gently stroking the rabbits' fur with slender fingers, very softly, very tenderly...

Ji You was momentarily speechless, then couldn't help but ask, "Student Liu Fufeng, what are you doing squatting here?"

A clear annoyance flashed through Liu Fufeng's dark eyes. He gently patted the rabbit in his arms and muttered, "Student Ji You, you're speaking too loudly, you scared the little rabbit."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You felt a bit embarrassed for being criticized for her loud voice, and noticing the two trembling little rabbits in Liu Fufeng's arms, she realized the rabbits were very small, probably just born today. Which rabbit had given birth to them? She leaned in closer and exclaimed with surprise, "So it was number 888 that gave birth."

Each rabbit here had its own number for identification. Having managed this section for some time, Ji You was of course somewhat familiar with the rabbits. As soon as a little rabbit is born, the rabbit shed's automated management system would assign it a number straight away, so there was no chance of a mistake. But after a moment of thought, Ji You couldn't suppress her curiosity and said, "I remember that number 888 is a grey rabbit."

"The male rabbit used for breeding is also a grey rabbit."

"How did it end up giving birth to two white rabbits? Isn't this like a giant green hat scenario?" Ji You started to grumble.

Liu Fufeng stopped petting the rabbits and suddenly started coughing, "Cough cough..."

The coughing became more and more severe.

Ji You was startled, and seeing the two little rabbits were about to fall, she quickly took them from his hands. After carefully placing the rabbits to one side, she then went to support Liu Fufeng.

With one hand on the wall, Liu Fufeng refused Ji You's support.

Seeing this, Ji You didn't insist and asked, "What's wrong? Do you have some kind of respiratory problem? If so, you shouldn't come to the rabbit shed, because there's rabbit fur everywhere here, and the rabbits are quite lively."

Liu Fufeng shook his head, took about 30 seconds to ease his breathing, and then opened his mouth to say, "It's not that."

Two words, both spoken lightly and weakly, sounding breathless...

Hmm?

Ji You frowned, "Are you sick?"

Liu Fufeng shook his head again, but his pale complexion couldn't hide anything.

Ji You said, "Let me call an ambulance from the school for you."

At this moment, others began to gather around. Seeing Liu Fufeng's frail appearance, as if a gust of wind could knock him down, and noting his obviously labored breathing, Chu Jiaojiao and the others didn't get too close, giving him enough space to breathe.

Liu Fufeng then took a good while longer to catch his breath before shaking his head again and saying, "Thank you, but there's no need. I have medicine in my car."

After that, he let go of the wall and prepared to leave.

Ji You, Chu Jiaojiao, Shen Changqing, and others all furrowed their brows—

Liu Fufeng had just taken two steps when he turned to Ji You and said, "Student Ji You, those two rabbits are innately weak. You need to be careful with them."

Ji You said, "Hurry and take your medicine. Don't worry, I'll take good care of them." These newly born rabbits would contribute to Teacher Mu Jianling and others' commissions; she definitely couldn't be careless. If anything happened, Teacher Mu and his colleagues would surely find an excuse to deduct her money.

Upon hearing this, Liu Fufeng finally started walking away slowly.

One step.

Two steps.

Three steps.

...

Liu Fufeng left the rabbit shed, and Ji You and the others watched him, making sure he was truly alright before they turned back around.

Chu Jiaojiao furrowed her brows and commented, "Student Liu Fufeng's health is so poor; no wonder he didn't attend the assessment today."

Shen Changqing pondered for a moment and said, "The school should have already exempted him from all assessments; they will directly issue him a diploma at the end."

Yue Qiguang tightened his brows and said, "Dad would not be jealous at all; it's better to have a healthy body. Otherwise, being so fragile and sickly all the time, I couldn't stand it."

The others thoroughly agreed. Although being able to obtain a diploma without the hardship of studying or training was somewhat enviable, putting oneself in Liu Fufeng's shoes and actually having such frail health — no longer being able to hop around, to fight wholeheartedly on the battlefield...

That life—

Would be tough!

For a time, everyone felt an immense sympathy for Liu Fufeng.

Poor guy~

Chapter 673: Chasing Sun

Having finished cleaning the rabbit shed, Ji You and Chu Jiaojiao didn't want to stay there even a second longer and immediately took off.

Ji You returned to the dormitory and immediately contacted Sister Lingzhi.

However——

No one answered Xie Lingzhi's contact number, Ji You frowned and then, she also called Xie Chuanqiong and Lea, but neither of their contact numbers were reachable at the moment.

Just as Ji You was getting worried, Xie Lingzhi called her back.

Xie Lingzhi's face was still looking grumpy, she frowned and said, "I'm preparing for the final exams, don't call me these days if it's not important."

Ji You had long been immune to Sister Lingzhi's grumpy face and temper, she chuckled and said, "Sister Lingzhi, I have some good news for you. Look at the message——" Saying this, Ji You didn't keep her in suspense, and directly forwarded the employment letter from Green Glaze Master to Xie Lingzhi.

Xie Lingzhi looked down, at first she wasn't particularly interested in what Ji You said, but as soon as her sight touched the message page, she suddenly raised her head: "Is it real?"

Ji You raised the corner of her mouth: "Of course!"

Xie Lingzhi's lips curved into a smile, "Not bad. This shop, as well as the Green Glaze Master, have been very popular in the Alliance East District recently. The Soul Devices in her shop are very effective in enhancing spiritual power, and the prices are also reasonable. A senior sister from our department was lucky enough to get one last time; her spiritual power smoothly broke through to B-grade. For you to be hired as a sales clerk in the Green Glaze Master Shop is really an unexpected joy."

Ji You's eyes were sparkling, she quietly listened.

Xie Lingzhi seemed to think of something, then frowned and said, "But you being hired as a sales clerk shouldn't be widely publicized. Green Glaze Master has been in the limelight recently, but all her information is very secretive. Many people in the Alliance want to find her... If they can't find her personally, I estimate that some will try to dig information from other places—like her shop's sales clerk... To avoid unnecessary trouble, you should continue to protect yourself and stay low-key for now."

Ji You listened and frowned.

"As far as I know, the other sales clerk from Qingyou Shop, that internet celebrity Ah Da, also keeps his real identity very hidden. I suspect he doesn't expose his real identity in order to avoid trouble," Xie Lingzhi asked, "By the way, about being a sales clerk, will the Green Glaze Master agree to you wearing a vest?"

Ji You was startled, "This, I will consult with Green Glaze Master, I guess it's possible."

Since there would be trouble, of course, she has to wear a vest.

Xie Lingzhi nodded, "That's good."

Seeing Sister Lingzhi looking like a little old lady, worrying about this and that for her, Ji You's heart warmed. She pursed her lips and gently smiled, saying: "Sister Lingzhi, if there are cheap Soul Devices for sale in Green Glaze Master's shop, I'll try to pull some strings and buy one for you."

With this statement, Ji You originally thought Sister Lingzhi would be very happy, however——

A flicker of embarrassment quickly passed across Xie Lingzhi's face; she pursed her lips and said, "Cough cough... Soul Devices are expensive anyway, even the cheaper ones aren't all that cheap, I don't need one at the moment and haven't thought about buying."

Ji You instantly understood.

Sister Lingzhi's words, the simple translation was just two words 'no money' right?

Cough cough...

How could Ji You forget that?

Ji You quickly said, "Buying Soul Devices is not urgent, I'm now a sales clerk for Soul Artifact Master, and the master said that we would get benefits during the holidays, although what the benefits are is still unknown, but being close to the water tower gets the moon first. I will try to build a good relationship with the master, and if there are any real advantages, I'll definitely seek benefits for myself, Sister Lingzhi, Brother Qiong, and Sister Liya."

Xie Lingzhi immediately put on a serious face and said sternly, "Getting close to the Soul Artifact Master is such a rare opportunity. We will find our own way to advance; we don't need you, a waste, a weak chicken, to worry about us. Anyway, don't have any crooked ideas. What if you displease the master? You should just focus on doing your job for the master, stop thinking about messy things."

Ji You pursed her lips.

Seeing Ji You's expression, Xie Lingzhi obviously didn't take her words seriously, she immediately scowled and said, "Be good! Otherwise, I'll beat you to death!"

Ji You: "..."

Ji You thought: Can you beat me?

Then, she deliberately took a glance at Xie Lingzhi's figure—

Cough cough...

175cm, a tall girl with long legs, Sister Lingzhi indeed looked sturdier than herself.

But!!!

Ji You certainly didn't think she'd lose.

Xie Lingzhi, feeling Ji You's gaze, couldn't help but roll her eyes, "What are you looking at? Just because I lost last time doesn't mean I will lose now!"

Ji You chuckled and said, "Alright, alright... you're the toughest! Don't worry, if we really fight, I'll definitely let you win."

Xie Lingzhi: "..."

Xie Lingzhi took a breath: "Anything else? If not, I'm hanging up!"

Just as Ji You was about to say there was nothing else—

Click—

On the other end of the holographic video, Xie Lingzhi had already disconnected the communication.

Ji You: "..."

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The next day.

The 131st Combat Department continued with the basic mecha driving license assessment. Mu Jianling gave the students a great deal of autonomy this time, not assessing them in batches according to student ID, but leaving them more time to familiarize themselves with the mechas, until a student could pass on their own, then applying for a retest from the assessment system.

As a result, almost no student participated in the assessment all morning; everyone was training with the new mechs with all their might.

Ji You had passed the assessment, no need for a retest, but she also focused and kept trying to pilot the new mech 'Chasing Sun' in a separate training room.

Once, failure.

Twice, failure.

Thrice, failure.

...

Uncountable failures later, Ji You fell down, got up, fell down, got up... over and over again in a loop. Her forehead was swollen from bumps, her knees were scraped, and her arms were grazed and bleeding...

Yet, each time, as soon as Ji You boarded the mech and connected to the Spiritual Connector, the heavy burden from 'Chasing Sun' would oppress her so much that she couldn't catch her breath.

Difficult...

So difficult...

Difficult to the point of feeling hopeless.

Thud—

'Chasing Sun' kneeled on its knees, fell from midair to the ground, creating a huge noise, and Ji You was catapulted from the pilot seat, hitting her forehead against the cockpit door.

Blood—

Ran down directly from her forehead.

Ji You raised her hand to wipe off the blood, her eyebrows furrowed tightly: "This won't do. My physical strength simply can't bear the weight of Chasing Sun." It was only then that Ji You understood why those who could pilot Chasing Sun, like Xuzhou, Zhang Ye... all had large and muscular physiques, because the physical strength required by Chasing Sun was really high...

Ji You, when piloting the antique mech yesterday, also couldn't initially handle its weight, but after some time getting used to it, she was able to bear it.

But what about Chasing Sun?

The burden of Chasing Sun was at least 20 times that of the antique mech!

And that was Ji You's conservative estimate.

Ji You, clenching her teeth, thought to try one more time when, out of the corner of her eye, she caught sight of Xuzhou not far away. Xuzhou was piloting Chasing Sun, completing several difficult flip maneuvers in midair...

rotation.

rotations.

rotations.

...

Chasing Sun flipped a total of 9 times before slowly gliding to the ground—

Ji You: "..."

Ji You ruffled her hair, irritated: "Damn it! Comparing yourself to others will only make you angry!"

Her competitive spirit ignited, Ji You refused to accept defeat. She climbed back onto the mech, reconnected the Spiritual Connector, and in a flash, the limbs and senses of Chasing Sun became one with Ji You; it was at this moment that Ji You felt a sweet and metallic taste surge up her throat...~

Chapter 674: Like a Chick in the Hand

At the moment when a sweet metallic taste rushed to her throat, Ji You's heart sank, sensing an impending disaster. She immediately activated the emergency device, but it took a few seconds to respond. Ji You thought there was enough time, but the next second as she spit out a mouthful of blood, her body convulsed, feeling as if all her organs were about to explode under the Mecha's weight!

It's over!

Ji You gritted her teeth, attempting to forcibly sever the connection with the Mecha.

However—

It was a few seconds too late.

Unable to withstand the physical strain and unable to control the Mecha, Ji You was fiercely thrown against the cabin wall.

Clang~

Clang~

Clang~

...

Her frail body, like a thrown sandbag, repeatedly smashed into the cockpit—

Ji You was in excruciating pain, and her vision began to darken...

[I'm done for!]

Just as Ji You felt utterly helpless and doomed, suddenly—

A swift figure leapt diagonally, holding a massive sword, striking extremely fast, and smashed fiercely into the cockpit window of the 'Chasing Sun' she was piloting.

Could this be shattered?

This was an alloy transparent window, sturdy and durable, bulletproof and designed to resist Star Beasts. Even a level 5 Star Beast might not break through it~

Ji You thought she was seeing things, but the scene before her was real!

Crack~

With a crisp sound from the alloy window, this agile figure lifted his foot and kicked through the cracked window and leaped inside!

Mu Jianling, with a stern face, cursed:

"Idiot!"

"Transfer the authority!"

Hearing the vigorous scolding, Ji You's panicked heart instantly calmed down; she bit her teeth and stubbornly transferred the piloting authority of the Mecha to Teacher Mu.

After Mu Jianling took control of the Mecha, the first thing he did was to stop all commands of the Mecha.

The battered Ji You finally slumped limp inside the cockpit.

The emergency kit swiftly moved forward, repairing Ji You's physical injuries.

second.

seconds.

seconds.

...

About 30 seconds later, Ji You's injuries finally stabilized, and she could breathe slightly and utter a few words:

"Thank..."

"Thank..."

"Elder..."

Mu Jianling gave her a stern look and harshly said: "Shut your mouth!"

Ji You: "..."

Ji You dared not speak anymore.

Mu Jianling's face remained stern, his tone filled with deep disdain and helplessness, "It's okay to fight hard, but being so foolish as to not be able to save yourself is utterly stupid!"

Ji You silently listened.

Mu Jianling continued to curse incessantly.

minutes later.

The emergency kit managed to stabilize Ji You's injuries, but the most severe damage was actually to her internal organs—the emergency kit had only given a rough repair, and organs still needed thorough examination and repair with specialized treatment instruments.

But whether it was internal injuries or external injuries, with the current medical technology of the Alliance, treatment was very easy.

The most worrisome thing was the damage to spiritual power...

Mu Jianling frowned and asked: "How's your spiritual power?"

Ji You, now able to speak completely, felt and said, "It's... it's okay."

In reality, the Spirit Space had also been chaotic just now. The reason?

She was frightened.

Piloting Chasing Sun was not a strain on Ji You's spiritual power, but her Physical Strength couldn't keep up. Physical Strength, simply put, refers to the body, the body is the foundation, it's the groundwork; as great as spiritual power and supernatural powers are, they still rely on this physical layer of support—

Ji You just now felt like her whole body was about to explode.

Six Spiritual Threads at this moment were all standing upright, fiercely patting their chests, looking all jittery:

Boss: [Master! Can we not do this next time? Boss almost got scared to death.]

Second: [Scared... scared...]

Third: [Third is also very scared...]

Fourth: [Yingyingying... Fourth was scared to death, Fourth is not afraid of death, but afraid of never seeing Master again.]

Cough cough...

Hearing Fourth's words, although Ji You knew this guy loved to flatter and seize any opportunity to do so, this plight made her feel unusually comforted.

Next.

Old Five: [Master, I'm not scared, and you shouldn't be either. Physical weakness is just temporary, later I'll work hard with Master to become stronger!]

Wow~

Ji You, clutching her heart, suddenly forgot all about the flattering Fourth, feeling extremely relieved and happy.

Old Five this honest thread, doing honest things, telling the honest truth, how could one not like him?

Behind Old Five, Old Sixth also wagging its tail, squeezed forward, eagerly saying: [Master... scared, but we all shouldn't be scared... Old Sixth will also try hard...]

Cough...

Following the trend, Old Sixth's words also brought a fair bit of reassurance.

Overall, Ji You's Spiritual World wasn't harmed, it was just her body that suffered a lot.

Mu Jianling gave a quick check and confirmed that Ji You's spiritual power was temporarily unharmed, then, she put the Great Sword back into the Space Button, slightly bent her knees, lowered her waist, and extended her hands towards Ji You—

What is this?

To carry her down from the Mecha?

Ji You was startled, quickly clutching her chest: "Teacher!!! What are you doing?"

Ji You's reaction was so exaggerated, it startled Mu Jianling, who dropped her gaze and upon meeting Ji You's eyes instantly understood why Ji You reacted so strongly. Mu Jianling gave her a sidelong glance, her outstretched arms closing back, feeling that although Ji You has a weak constitution, there was no need to be so cautious.

Naughty kid~

Getting roughed up a bit more will just become habit.

So, Mu Jianling annoyingly cursed: "In your dreams!"

Having said that, she simply reached out a hand and picked Ji You right up.

Ji You: "..."

This!

This isn't wrong guessing. Teacher Mu Jianling really was about to carry her down, and changed to picking up with one hand because of what she said.

This!

This position, like picking up a little chick, really—

Ji You's old face instantly flushed, mostly from embarrassment. She forced herself to endure the shame and protested: "Tea... Teacher... I'm grown up now, please give me some face."

This entire Combat Department, there are nearly 1000 people, 1000 pairs of eyes watching, no face left for myself, eh?

Mu Jianling glanced at Ji You, ignoring her.

Then, Mu Jianling jumped out of the Mecha.

No kidding!

She, holding Ji You in one arm, directly jumped out from the broken cockpit window.

Keep in mind, the height of Chasing Sun's body is 20 meters!

Jumping straight down!

Listening to the air resistance, Ji You was scared half to death—

Mu Jianling's jump was resolute, imposing, but her landing was extremely light, almost making no sound upon landing, this skill, Ji You watched utterly dumbfounded!!!

So...

So powerful!

The physical strength of one person, to be this formidable, how terrifying?

The moment Mu Jianling landed, she directly let go, throwing Ji You onto the ground, and while Ji You didn't even have time to cry out in pain, she quickly scrambled up to Mu Jianling's side, showing a sycophantic smile: "Teacher... can I train to be as powerful as you?"

Mu Jianling gave her a sidelong glance, the contempt was thick.

Ji You chuckled and said: "I'm not asking for much, just to be able to hold you and jump down 20 meters without dying would be enough."

Mu Jianling: "..."

Mu Jianling lifted her hand and heavily knocked on her forehead!

Chapter 675: Defying Fate

Sss~

A collective gasp of astonishment filled the surroundings.

True warriors, indeed, fear not courting death.

The spectating students were just sighing in their minds when they saw Ji You, with number 4444, clutching her head and chuckling foolishly, continuing to invite trouble by saying, "Really, really, I don't ask for much, just to follow your lead."

Mu Jianling gave her a sidelong glance.

Ji You looked at her with puppy eyes...

Mu Jianling raised her hand and pointed towards the restroom, saying, "Go wash your face."

Ji You: "???"

Mu Jianling spoke coolly, "Take a look in the mirror and see what you look like."

Ji You: "..."

However, since Teacher Mu didn't hit anyone this time, Ji You suddenly felt emboldened and couldn't help asking, "Teacher, why can't I handle Chasing Sun's load even though my physical explosive strength has already reached Jiaojiao's initial test level?"

It's truly frustrating, like having a fish bone stuck in one's throat!

Initially, during the physical fitness test, Ji You could only produce fluctuating strength within the range of 200-10. After nearly a term of training, her Physical Strength had improved to C-class, and her output power had reached 2999! She was just shy of breaking 3000, and for someone with C-class Physical Strength, this explosive power was already terrifying.

Moreover, that was when Ji You's Physical Strength had just been upgraded. Now, the force she could exert had steadily broken through the 3000 threshold.

But!!!

Why?

Why couldn't she withstand Chasing Sun's load?

It was baffling.

Ji You stared at Teacher Mu, hoping to get an answer.

Mu Jianling did not answer immediately upon hearing this; instead, she gestured for an assistant robot to come over, which promptly arrived and said, "Elder Mu, what would you like me to do?"

Mu Jianling ordered, "Fetch a stretcher, the most basic type without any covers, and carry this idiot to Dr. Luo's medical room."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You couldn't help asking, "Teacher... why not just call an ambulance for me?" Nowadays, ambulances were all about high-tech, not to mention the level of emergency care, but just the comfort alone, lying inside one felt spacious and comfy...

As for the stretcher, how should she put it?

It seemed quite childish.

Mu Jianling eyed her coldly and said, "Your face is too big, it needs more exposure, to let everyone passing by have a good look." She then continued to instruct the robot, "If anyone asks what happened, spread the word about this idiot's foolish act."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You had a thick face; being gawked at was fine, she wasn't afraid of losing face. What Ji You cared more about was the question she asked earlier, "Teacher, you haven't answered my question yet?"

Mu Jianling didn't bother with her and directly told the robot, "Take her away."

Ji You: "..."

The two robots carrying the stretcher immediately strapped Ji You onto it, and she struggled, shouting, "Ah, ah, ah!!! Teacher... you haven't answered me yet! I can't die in peace, ah, ah, ah!!!"

Mu Jianling, annoyed by the racket, raised her hand to her forehead, "Don't ask me such stupid questions, ask the robot instead."

Ji You immediately turned her head towards the two robots beside the stretcher.

The robots in this Mechanical Driving examination room were all examiners responsible for Mecha examinations and also served as Mechanical Driving teaching assistants, so they naturally knew the answer to this question.

One of the robots explained, "Student Ji You, this is simple. According to the records, your current maximum strength output is 3135, but this is your maximum explosive strength, not your balance strength. A person's maximum explosive strength cannot be sustained; only balance strength can be maintained consistently. And your balance strength, limited by your frail Physical Strength, is currently only around 1000, whereas the minimum requirement for a Chasing Sun Driver's Physical Strength is a balance strength of 2000. Therefore, you cannot withstand Chasing Sun's load."

Ji You: "..."

All Ji You wanted to do was cry a river for herself.

Next, she asked, "Then... can I reach the level of piloting Chasing Sun through short-term training?" Otherwise, wouldn't the final exams be disastrous?

Could it be that I can only pilot an antique mech?

The Little Robot said, "Theoretically, it shouldn't be possible, but you can give it a try. Your spiritual power has met the requirements for piloting; currently, it is your Physical Strength that is limiting you. As long as you train continuously over this half-month, and complement it with medicinal herbs for Body Building, perhaps it might be possible?"

Ji You felt somewhat dejected upon hearing the first part, but the latter part immediately ignited her hope.

...

A stretcher carrying Ji You emerged from the examination room in broad daylight, crossing through the various teaching districts of Lanyue Star Military Academy, and during which she received countless salutes of 'attention.' Ji You stubbornly kept her eyes shut, feigning death all the way to the infirmary.

Then, she endured a round of mockery from Dr. Luo.

Finally—

Ji You's injuries were treated. She pinched her arms, pinched her legs, jumped and hopped around... and couldn't help but sigh in her heart, "Being lively and bustling is great!"

Then, with a pained expression, she settled Dr. Luo's treatment fee.

The whole treatment took approximately one and a half hours. The Mechanical Driver's License assessment was still ongoing, other students' training also continued, and of course, Ji You didn't dare to delay. She immediately spent credit points to take a Floating Car back to the examination room.

When Ji You walked in, not a single person paid attention to her. The students were either in the middle of assessments or immersed in training. Even Teacher Mu Jianling, upon seeing Ji You enter the room, did not acknowledge her but continued closely monitoring the students inside the examination room.

In the entire room, only Liu Fufeng, who was quietly sitting in a corner and not participating in the assessments, glanced at Ji You.

Ji You nodded at him as a way of greeting.

Afterward, she didn't disturb her classmates nor Teacher Mu, silently returning to her spot, ready to pilot Chasing Sun again.

That's right.

She didn't believe in superstitions, nor did she believe in fate.

Since Chasing Sun's weight didn't kill her the first time, it wouldn't happen a second time.

This time, Ji You would not make the foolish mistake of injuring herself; she would master the control!

With gritted teeth and feeling the pain in her wallet, Ji You paid for the repairs of Chasing Sun. She then brought it out again and promptly logged onto the mech, connecting to the Connection Device.

Instantly, a powerful pressure bore down on her again.

Ji You clenched her teeth and didn't overreach. Just like when she trained with the antique mech, she started trying bit by bit with parts of Chasing Sun.

Half a finger.

A whole finger.

Two fingers.

...

Whenever she felt that her body was reaching its limit, she would immediately disconnect from the mech.

Thus—

She fell over and over again, crashing into the cockpit...

After half a day, Ji You once again managed to make herself a bruised and noble sight—pitiable and appalling.

Not far away.

Liu Fufeng's quiet figure sat peacefully to one side, head bowed, his long hands continuously folding and unfolding something in his hands, dismantling it, then folding, folding then dismantling...

Different from the other students training intensively, his surroundings were very quiet, shrouded in an eerily serene atmosphere, out of place with the rest of the examination room, as if he were in an entirely different dimension.

Occasionally, Liu Fufeng would raise his head to look at the small figure who had crashed and broken her mouth, knocked her head, vomited blood, then wiped it off and continued to train tirelessly...

Lively and bustling...

That's good.

Liu Fufeng's gaze blanked out...

Chapter 676: The Eagle Spreads Its Wings

Examination room.

Fervent training on one hand while preparing for the assessment on the other.

No one was idle.

...

In a quiet corner.

Liu Fufeng looked up, observing these students giving their all, especially the little dwarf named Ji You. It was impossible to count how many times she had fallen, how many times she had bled, but she still kept bouncing back, continuing to challenge...

Liu Fufeng stared for quite a while before retracting his gaze and lowering his head. On his desk, dozens of crumpled pieces of paper were scattered about, having been folded and unfolded repeatedly. Liu Fufeng stretched out his hand and started gathering the scraps to put them into the Space Button. Yet, moments later, he changed his mind.

Instead of storing them away, he laid the pieces back onto the desk. Liu Fufeng lifted his head, looking forward—

There, numerous fledgling eagles were attempting to fly.

They fell.

And continued.

Fell.

And continued.

...

Liu Fufeng's eyes, fixed on the training students, didn't notice his fingers swiftly flipping, and before he knew it, the pieces of paper on the desk had transformed into a pair of soaring eagles...

Until—

He reached out and couldn't feel a piece of paper anymore. Only then did Liu Fufeng startle and look down, only to see a fierce eagle, held by his pale fingertips. It had broad, strong wings, a sharp beak, and a pair of ferocious talons...

It was powerful.

It was undoubtedly the dominator of the skies.

It possessed an enviable freedom.

...

As he stared at the origami eagle in his hand, a complex expression crept over Liu Fufeng's handsome face, filled with bewilderment.

When did he fold it?

Liu Fufeng pursed his lips.

A stagnant atmosphere filled the air around him, slowly spreading outwards, but only around him. This small world's change was separated from the other students by a space barrier, unable to affect them in the slightest.

Moments later, Liu Fufeng dismantled the lifelike eagle.

After.

He tore the now disorderly papers into pieces and threw them into the recycling bin.

...

After two days of training, by the afternoon, one-third of the students had passed the assessment. Many who failed gained valuable experience. With only one day left until the end of the Basic Mecha Driver's License assessment, time was pressing; therefore, the atmosphere among the students of the 131st class remained as tense as ever.

Yue Qiguang, who didn't make it on the first day, finally passed on the second, but his performance was only good enough to be at the bottom of the top ten, and there was a high chance that he would be surpassed by subsequent students.

Currently, the students ranked in the top ten included Ji You, Shen Changqing, Chu Jiaojiao, Yue Qiyuan...

At the top, it was still Ji You.

Ji You estimated that, at this pace, she likely wouldn't drop out of the top ten by the end of the assessment the next day. Hence, this would save her from the re-exam fee and repair cost. Even a mosquito is meat, after all, and both fees weren't cheap; needless to say, not having to spend this money was the best outcome.

However, each student's assessment score was recorded only once. Ji You had already taken hers and there was no chance to make amendments. Since she couldn't change her results, she didn't bother with them and instead focused on synchronizing with Chasing Sun.

Chasing Sun, this little fairy, was incredibly difficult to deal with. Ji You struggled the entire afternoon and only managed to get a handle on one finger.

The results were minimal, but Ji You paid for it with injuries and a significant amount of credit points.

That's right.

Credit points.

The mechs used for the assessment are temporarily allocated to the students by the school, and the ownership does not belong to the students. Moreover, if the mech suffers any damage during use and needs to be repaired, all the repair costs are to be paid by the students themselves.

Ji You spent close to 5000 credit points on repair costs the entire afternoon.

Truly~

It hurt so much, she felt like dying.

But, painful as it was, Ji You still steeled her heart and continued to sync up with Chasing Sun.

...

When time was up, Mu Jianling announced the end of class.

Ji You immediately ran off.

After eating in a hurry and cleaning up the horse stable and the rabbit shed, Ji You didn't rush to the dormitory but headed towards the direction of the medical room instead.

Inside the medical room, Dr. Luo was dressed in a white lab coat, intently staring at the Light Computer, engrossed in something, and she wasn't using the holographic mode but the flat-screen mode. Ji You couldn't help but sneak a peek and noticed that the screen was playing a battle video of Admiral Bai Ji.

Dr. Luo was very focused, even her eyes were shining.

This light—

Ji You felt it looked oddly familiar. Wasn't this just like a fangirl looking at her idol?

So, Dr. Luo's idol was actually Admiral Bai Ji?

She felt like she had uncovered some big secret.

Ji You kept muttering in her heart, knowing full well the consequences of disturbing a fangirl from licking her idol, so she didn't dare to speak up right away. However, after waiting for a little while, Dr. Luo still didn't notice someone had come in.

"Cough cough..." Unable to bear it, Ji You could only clear her throat twice as a reminder.

Dr. Luo didn't even lift her head, pointed to a device beside her, and said, "Go in yourself, don't bother me."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You couldn't help but ask, "Dr. Luo, do you know why I'm here?"

Dr. Luo murmured to herself: "Handsome!"

"That move is cool!"

"Good timing for a counter-attack."

...

While mumbling, Dr. Luo finally looked up, gave Ji You a glance, and scolded: "What else could it be for? You just want to come here to get some Body Refining Medicine, right?" This girl can't pilot a real mech, she had just come in the morning to fix her body, complaining in her ear for half an hour, Dr. Luo was

fed up with it. At this moment, what other reason could Ji You possibly have to be here if not to enhance her Physical Strength?

Heh~

That was indeed the case!

Ji You grinned, hee-hee laughing, and said: "Dr. Luo, you really are clairvoyant."

At that moment—

In the screen, Admiral Bai Ji's battle with the interstellar pirate leader had ended, and Dr. Luo turned off the screen, grumpily scolding: "Stop blabbering, why aren't you in the detection pod yet?"

Ji You muttered: "Normally so gentle, and suddenly it's like you're a different person." Indeed, one should never disturb a fangirl.

Then.

Ji You obediently got into the pod.

About 10 minutes later, the indicator light stopped, and the new data for Ji You's body was out.

Dr. Luo glanced at the data and said: "Your use of Medicine Bath for Body Building these days has been quite effective; the improvement is very clear." After nearly collapsing due to spiritual power one time, Ji You followed Dr. Luo's advice and used Medicine Baths for more than a month continuously until her Physical Strength stabilized before stopping.

Hearing this, Ji You leaned over with a smirk: "Then... do you see, with my measly Physical Strength, is there a special medicine that could let me pilot the mech smoothly within half a month?" Otherwise, would she really have to go into the final exams piloting an antique mech?

The thought of running half a distance and having to change the energy core or breaking down halfway through made her shiver uncontrollably...

Dr. Luo's temper came and went quickly, and at this moment, she had turned back into the gentle, kind, and understanding Dr. Luo with a slight smile at the corners of her lips, softly laughing: "Of course, there is."

Chapter 677: Affection

Ji You's eyes brightened upon hearing this, but her expression soon turned bitter: "Dr. Luo, we're old acquaintances, you know exactly how much money I have in my pocket, so please, go easy on me when you charge."

Dr. Luo was slightly speechless upon hearing this and glanced at Ji You before responding: "There's only one way, which is to spend the money. If you're not willing, just forget it."

Having said that.

Dr. Luo turned away, not bothering with Ji You any longer, ready to continue working.

She still had a bunch of experimental data to sort through. She didn't have the time to haggle with this little fellow, Ji You.

second.

seconds.

seconds.

...

Realizing that Dr. Luo really had no intention to deal with her, Ji You grew anxious and quickly asked: "How much?"

Dr. Luo said: "500,000 credit points per pack."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You was on the verge of turning around and leaving.

But!!!

She still forcefully held herself back and asked softly: "Then... for someone like me, would one pack be enough?"

Dr. Luo chuckled: "Nope, you need at least ten packs."

Ji You: "..."

With a heavy heart, Ji You clenched her teeth and declared: "I'll buy it!"

Dr. Luo was taken aback and asked: "Can you afford it?"

Ji You immediately put on a sheepish smile and coozied up, asking in a fawning manner: "Can I... can I buy on credit?"

Dr. Luo gave her a glance and said: "Your servitude contract isn't even worth anything, let alone an IOU."
Dr. Luo had a whole stack of those contracts in her hand.

Ji You: "Cough cough..."

Awkward.

In reality, Ji You did have money, which was earned from making Soul Devices. The only issue—she couldn't openly and legitimately use it, which was precisely the cause of her embarrassment.

Ji You had considered confessing to her several mentors about her ability to make Soul Devices, but it involved Xiao You, and she would not dare gamble with Xiao You's safety.

Therefore, she could only keep it a secret.

Her secret savings were known crystal clear to Teacher Mu Jianling, Principal Hong, and even Dr. Luo. Born on a garbage planet and carrying a student loan, how could she suddenly possess property worth millions of credit points?

If her mentors knew, they'd surely suspect the source of the money. Worse, they might even think that Ji You resorted to illegal activities for the sake of money... That's why Ji You's expenses at the school were mostly paid with Alliance University points, seldom with credit points.

...

500,000 credit points a pack.

Ten packs amount to 5 million.

Ji You had the money, but it couldn't be openly used.

It seemed that she needed to find other honest ways to make money, ones that could be openly displayed.

This was urgent.

For a moment, Ji You wore a pained expression and looked hopefully at Dr. Luo: "Dr. Luo, I will take out all my points, along with all the credit points I have on me. I reckon I can pay off one-fifth, and for the rest, perhaps you could give me some time to figure out a solution."

Hmm?

Upon hearing this, Dr. Luo couldn't help but raise her head and take another look at Ji You: "You're that eager to become stronger?"

To the point of being willing to pour out all your wealth.

Such courage was indeed commendable.

Ji You nodded vigorously: "I must become stronger."

Not want to, but must.

Dr. Luo seemed to remember something and let out a soft sigh, saying: "Your temperament actually reminds me of a student that Elder Mu once taught, no wonder Elder Mu is so fond of you."

Ji You: "!!!"

Elder Mu fond of her?

Impossible, right?

Elder Mu didn't even have enough time to disdain her, how could she like her?

Ji You, upon hearing these words, thought she was listening to some tall tale. She couldn't help asking: "Which student of Elder Mu's are you talking about? From which year? Do I know them?"

"Cough cough..." Dr. Luo cleared her throat and straightened her face, saying: "Enough! Before you came, Teacher Mu spoke to me. She's covering the cost of the Body Refining Medicine you need."

Ji You: "!!!"

Ji You stared wide-eyed: "I..."

What have I done to deserve this?

Ji You felt so moved that she was nearly brought to tears. How on earth was she supposed to repay such kindness?

Dr. Luo pulled out a piece of paper and said, "Sign here."

Ji You: "???"

Dr. Luo said, "A contract of indenture."

Ji You: "???"

Dr. Luo glanced at her and said, "Although it's not worth much, you still need to sign it. — These are Teacher Mu's exact words."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You said, "I'll sign!"

After saying this, Ji You grabbed the pen and swiftly signed her full name.

Dr. Luo collected the new contract of indenture and smiled, "Your recent body data has changed a bit. I need to adjust the Body Refining Medicine suited for you slightly; wait for a few minutes."

Ji You obediently sat down.

A few minutes later.

Dr. Luo handed a dose of Body Refining Medicine to Ji You, reminding her, "Use it strictly according to the method I gave you, and also, come in every day for body data measurements."

Ji You: "Okay."

Dr. Luo: "Alright, you can go back now."

Ji You solemnly said, "Dr. Luo, thank you."

Dr. Luo looked at her and seemed to remember something. In a gentle voice, he said, "Don't thank me. Just work hard, and don't let Teacher Mu's efforts go in vain."

Ji You vigorously nodded.

After leaving the medical room, Ji You changed her direction toward Teacher Mu Jianling's residential area.

When she reached the door...

Ji You hesitated slightly but still lifted her hand and knocked.

Silence.

second later.

The door opened.

Mu Jianling stood at the door with a scowl and cursed, "Why did you run over here?"

Seeing Teacher Mu's sulking face, Ji You actually felt a strange sense of warmth. Without any giggles and laughs, she seriously bowed to Teacher Mu and said, "Teacher Mu, thank you... I...I will definitely work hard to improve my strength."

Mu Jianling raised his hand: "Enough, I know, now scram."

Ji You: "..."

After Mu Jianling finished speaking, he was about to step back into the room, when from the corner of her eye, Ji You caught a glimpse of the hologram screen in Teacher Mu's living room, playing the Alliance's latest melodramatic drama. It was still starring Alliance Flower Ye Lu. However, it wasn't the usual mistress vs. wife grand chaos, but rather — Cinderella's Counterattack.

Was the title something like "Ugly Girl's Spring"?

Cough cough...

Teacher Mu, as expected, loves to watch melodramatic series.

Cough cough...

To quote Yue Qiguang, it's typical of an old lady past her prime to still be full of girlish feelings, always indulging in boring stuff like love and romance.

Cough cough...

Her thoughts drifted for a moment, and Ji You quickly sensed the danger. She shivered all over, then promptly grinned at Teacher Mu Jianling, who was giving her a dangerous look. "Teacher...I'm leaving, right now."

Mu Jianling casually uttered an "Oh," his eyes frequently darting back to the large screen in the room, obviously very impatient with Ji You's disturbance.

Ji You didn't dare delay any longer and immediately transferred all of her points and the little over 400,000 credit points she had to Teacher Mu.

Mu Jianling was taken aback and looked at her sideways: "Hm?"

Ji You squinted her eyes and smiled: "Teacher... although I can't pay back the 500 million in debt at the moment, I will definitely work hard to repay it."

These were her determinations.

"Aren't you going to keep some for food?" Mu Jianling's expression was unchanging and cold, but his question revealed a trace of concern.

Ji You chuckled and said sneakily, "I found a part-time job on Star Network, I should be able to earn some money. As for food, Jiaojiao, Shen Changqing, and Yue Qiyuan have agreed to cover me for a few months. Transportation is taken care of by Sheng Qingyan, my free chauffeur, so you don't have to worry about my expenses at school, Teacher."

Hearing this, Mu Jianling immediately lifted his foot and kicked Ji You's butt, saying, "Then get lost quickly."

Ji You, clutching her butt, quickly scampered off.

Click~

The door shut.

Indistinctly, Ji You could hear the sound of the TV drama coming from inside the room again.

Cough cough...

Being obsessed with dramas, Teacher Mu was really a headache.

Chapter 678: Cruelty

Back in her dorm, Ji You began to use the Body Refining Medicine.

The medicine still involved soaking in a Medicine Bath.

During the usage, it was extremely excruciating, akin to the pain of scraping bones and pulling tendons, but its effects were very clear. After the pain, it felt as if reborn, the whole person especially invigorated.

Ji You then continued to perform Body Building Exercises for a long time before getting ready to sleep.

The next day.

In the morning of the third day of the assessment, half of the students in the 131st Combat Department had passed. The remaining half, almost no students idle in the examination room, were all intensively training.

Ji You's results were also gratifying; she could now control one hand of the Chasing Sun Mecha.

In the afternoon.

90% of the students passed the assessment. Only a dozen students were unable to bond with the Mecha, leading to failure.

These dozen students had very bitter expressions, watching as the time approached its end and yet they hadn't passed, their eyes becoming red with urgency.

However—

Failure is failure.

They must face reality.

Mu Jianling looked up, gazing at these few failed students, and said, "After class, go back and rest for a few days."

The dozen students opened their mouths, "Tea... Teacher."

Mu Jianling let out an almost imperceptible sigh and still raised her hand, interrupting them, "The end-of-term exam is cancelled for you. Continue training at the academy. If the training results are not satisfactory, consider applying for a transfer to another department." The talents of these dozen students were, in fact, very poor, and they were altogether unsuitable for the Combat Department.

But that's the nature of humans; for the sake of dreams, they know they're unsuitably matched, yet they still go all out, striving to the point of a bloodied head, at all costs.

Upon hearing Mu Jianling's words, the dozen students pursed their lips, their faces flashing stubborn defiance, and also—a trace of despair:

Is it...

Really unsuitable?

Really, should I leave the Combat Department?

Truly... Truly give up on becoming a Mechanical Warrior?

Among them, there was a black-haired girl about 170 centimeters tall, who bit her lip hard but still shed tears. However, after those tears streaked across her cheeks, her tongue reached out, licking them into her mouth.

Salty.

And slightly bitter...

Tears welled in the girl's eyes, flowing continuously, but she licked them into her mouth, one bit at a time, never letting them fall.

Ji You watched this scene, her heart also feeling heavy.

This girl was rather shy and didn't like to interact with other students. She would always silently immerse herself in training alone. Her Physical Strength was very poor, only a D grade, and her spiritual power wasn't high either, merely a C grade. Such talents were actually more suitable for the Material Department, Mechanical Engineering, or other departments...

Entering the Combat Department, she truly had no advantages.

The Combat Department requires high spiritual power, high Physical Strength...

Moreover, the department's training is incredibly tight, the intensity extremely high, unsustainable in the long run. Yet, this girl persisted through every grueling training session, clenching her teeth. Even if her performance was always lagging...

Her name was Liu Beibei, a rather cute name.

A height of 170 centimeters didn't stand out among others who were 180, 190, 200... bigger in size. Liu Beibei was also the second shortest student in the entire Combat Department.

The shortest was Ji You.

...

Liu Beibei and the other dozen students who failed the assessment listened to Mu Jianling's words, none voicing a single sound.

Mu Jianling said, "Okay, all of you go back."

It was not that Mu Jianling was cruel or unkind.

Unsuitable simply means unsuitable.

A Mechanical Warrior who can't even control a Mecha is just food for the enemy. Instead of that, why not learn something else, perhaps saving their own lives?

To go to battle, to the front lines, there's today, but no guarantee of tomorrow...

The cold suggestion to switch departments for a dozen students was also a kind of indirect protection.

After the evaluation, Ji You successfully obtained a spot in the top ten, solidly ranking first, and as a result, was exempted from the retake and repair fees.

But Ji You did not feel as excited as anticipated.

Ji You followed behind the other students, silently walking out of the examination room.

Like Ji You, the other students didn't seem very high-spirited either. Logically, after the evaluation ended and the alarm was lifted, it should have been a time for students to relax, yet, every student had a trace of heaviness on their faces.

These students, who had just entered their freshman year of college, experienced for the first time what weight and helplessness meant, and also learned what cruelty was...

These dozen plus students had never slacked off in their regular training; on the contrary, they all worked very hard, some even more so than those with exceptional talents, but!!! Sometimes, just working hard isn't enough to succeed.

...

The students, heads bowed, one by one left the examination room.

After eating and cleaning the stables and rabbit shed with Chu Jiaojiao, Shen Changqing, and Sheng Qingyan, Ji You then parted ways with several friends and hurried to Dr. Luo's medical office.

As Ji You reached the entrance of the medical room, about to step in, suddenly hesitated; inside, besides Dr. Luo, there was another somewhat familiar figure.

It was—

It was Liu Beibei.

Faintly, Ji You heard Liu Beibei say, "Dr. Luo, I want to give it a try, please let me try."

Dr. Luo sighed softly and said, "Based on your physical constitution, I really don't recommend that you spend a large sum of money on body building."

Liu Beibei stood there stubbornly, unmoving.

Dr. Luo sighed and said, "Alright then."

A tear glistened in Liu Beibei's eyes, "Thank you..."

Dr. Luo said, "The school has just stockpiled a large batch of Body Refining Medicine, which they're offering to students at a discount. Do you have 100,000 credit points now? If not, you can make installment payments."

The school kept a record of each student's files, which included all their information. A brief look through Liu Beibei's file gave Dr. Luo a clear understanding of her family situation.

Upon hearing this, tears burst from Liu Beibei's eyes, she covered her mouth, choking up, "I'm... 10,000 short, can I repay it next semester?"

Dr. Luo nodded, "Yes."

Joy sparkled through the teary glint in Liu Beibei's eyes, "Dr. Luo, thank you..."

Dr. Luo gave soft instructions, "Take the medicine directly home, make sure to use it exactly as I've instructed, and also, come here daily for a check-up on time."

Liu Beibei: "Okay."

Then, Dr. Luo gave several meticulous and detailed instructions, only letting her leave when he was sure that Liu Beibei understood and had learned them.

All this while, Ji You stood outside, not disturbing them.

Liu Beibei stepped out of the medical room, holding the medicine, as Ji You pretended to be just about to step in—

Liu Beibei paused, lowering her head and said softly, "Ji You, classmate..."

Ji You pursed her lips, softly saying, "Liu Beibei, classmate, you're visiting the medical room?"

Liu Beibei whispered back, "Yeah."

Shy and not adept at conversation, after saying one sentence, she quickly left, clutching the medicine.

Ji You entered the medical room.

Dr. Luo glanced at her and said, "What are you skulking around at the door for? Go to the testing room for your check-up."

Ji You: "..."

Ji You mumbled, "Dr. Luo, you were so gentle and kind to Liu Beibei, why are you so rough with me?"

Dr. Luo laughed, "She's a delicate girl; of course, I need to be gentler."

Ji You: "I am too."

Dr. Luo gave Ji You a look without saying anything, as if letting Ji You figure it out for herself.

Ji You: "..."

Chapter 679: The Gap

Medical Room.

Ji You approached Dr. Luo shamelessly, pointing to her own face and said, "Dr. Luo... take another look, my face is really cute."

Dr. Luo: "..."

Dr. Luo was speechless for a few seconds, then suddenly reached out, took a surgical knife from beside him, squinted his eyes slightly, and with a very gentle smile, said, "Cute is cute, but I think it's a tad thick, how about I thin it out a bit for you?"

Ji You: "..."

Ji You was startled and immediately backed away several meters, patting her chest and touching her cheeks, she said with a giggly smile, "That... I think the thickness of my skin is just right now, no need to trim, no need to trim."

Dr. Luo said seriously, "Pain-free, safe and effective quickly, are you really not considering it?"

Ji You shook her head like a rattle-drum.

Dr. Luo squinted his eyes: "What a pity..."

Hearing this sentence from Dr. Luo, which truly seemed to convey endless regret, Ji You suddenly felt a chill around her, shivered to shake off the goosebumps, and obediently squeezed into the diagnostic pod.

About 10 minutes later, Ji You came out of the diagnostic pod.

By now, Dr. Luo had acquired all the data concerning Ji You's physical condition. Seeing Ji You come out, Dr. Luo's lips curled into a slight smile and said, "The data looks pretty good."

Ji You leaned in, asking eagerly, "Is the effect pretty noticeable?"

Dr. Luo said, "It's not much different from what I expected."

Hearing this, Ji You also smiled with her lips pursed happily, "That's great news. Dr. Luo, where's my medicine for today?"

Dr. Luo said, "Still adjusting, wait 3 minutes."

After saying that, Dr. Luo buried his head in work, writing and drawing on the Light Computer.

Ji You didn't interrupt him, so she just sat obediently to the side.

minutes later.

The medicine for the day was ready, and without looking up, Dr. Luo casually pointed and said, "Go and get it yourself."

Ji You stood up, "Okay."

The dosage of today's medicine was slightly more than yesterday's. Holding it in her hand, Ji You estimated it to be around 5 pounds. Inside were medicines for oral consumption as well as for the Medicine Bath; the instructions listed were detailed for each application.

Seeing Ji You taking the medicine, Dr. Luo looked up, a little worried, and said, "Today's dosage is a bit large, any abnormalities during use, you must tell me immediately, understand?"

Ji You replied confidently, "Understood!"

Dr. Luo nodded: "Okay, you can go back now."

As Ji You turned around, she suddenly caught sight of a few words 'Liu Beibei...' on Dr. Luo's Light Computer. Startled, she couldn't help being nosy, and asked, "Dr. Luo, is there really no way to change Liu Beibei's condition?"

At that time, Dr. Luo was thinking about how to improve Liu Beibei's Physical Strength based on her body data. He had designed several plans but felt they weren't up to expectations and was frowning when Ji You asked this question. Dr. Luo let out a slight sigh and said, "It's a bit difficult."

Thinking of that hard-working girl who might not become a Mechanical Warrior no matter how much she tried, Ji You furrowed her brows and asked, "But... even though my talent is worse than hers, my Physical Strength can keep improving, why can't she do the same?"

Dr. Luo stopped his work, looked at Ji You and said, "You're different from her, you are an anomaly, she is just a normal person."

Ji You: "..."

Thickening her skin, Ji You said, "I'll just take that as a compliment from you."

Really now—

Compliments should be sincere, not half-hearted.

Ah!

Dr. Luo glanced at Ji You and was truly amazed at her thick skin. But the girl's carefree attitude was a good thing—in her case, it meant she was open-minded and not prone to getting fixated on minutiae.

Ji You, unable to wait, hurriedly urged, "Dr. Luo, you mentioned her condition differs from mine. What exactly are the differences?"

Dr. Luo explained, "Her spiritual power and physical strength are quite low, with a D in physical strength and a C in spiritual power. With such conditions, she fundamentally cannot withstand the burden that piloting a mecha entails."

Ji You could empathize deeply and quickly asked, "Then... can't it be improved through training and external aids?"

Dr. Luo glanced at her and gestured for her to be patient, then slowly continued, "As I said, your situation is different from hers. The biggest difference is—your spiritual power is mutated! Even though it's in a semi-crippled state, with only 6 strands of Spiritual Silk, the endurance of your Spiritual Silk is quite strong. With your spiritual strength, you can pilot any mecha in the Alliance!"

Huh?

Ji You looked up in shock, "Am I really that incredible?"

Why hadn't Dr. Luo mentioned this before?

Dr. Luo looked at her and chuckled, "In theory."

Ji You: "..."

Ahem...

Isn't 'in theory' just another way of talking nonsense?

Seeing Ji You's downcast expression, Dr. Luo smiled and said, "Although it's theoretical and untested, I have conducted various simulations and believe that you should be able to handle it. However—"

Ji You's eyes sparkled with excitement, but they dimmed as soon as she saw Dr. Luo's tone change, feeling anxious.

Indeed—

Dr. Luo continued, "However, you should stop thinking about it. With only 6 strands of Spiritual Silk, even if your spirit could withstand the interstellar's most advanced tech-crafted mecha, you still couldn't operate it. Too few strands—it's not enough, you understand?"

Ji You: "..."

Ji You's face turned pale, "Then why did you tell me about it?"

Wasn't this just giving her hope only to plunge her back into despair?

Dr. Luo smiled, "I'm trying to give you some self-awareness."

Ji You: "..."

Dr. Luo waved his hand and went on, "Enough, let's not talk about that anymore. The reason I said you and Liu Beibei are different is that your spiritual power can withstand various levels of strain. But Liu Beibei can't."

Ji You didn't rush to ask more and listened patiently instead.

Dr. Luo said, "Spiritual power and physical strength interact with each other and are not isolated. They are like steel and concrete in relation, indispensable to each other. Reinforced by concrete, steel can be used to construct buildings hundreds of meters tall... You were able to use a multitude of Medicine Baths and continuously train and strengthen your physical strength from an E to a C level because your spiritual power is like a 'steel' scaffold, inherently strong and thus supporting your ever-increasing physical strength!"

At this point, Dr. Luo paused slightly, his tone tinged with a hint of sigh, "Liu Beibei's spiritual power is at a C level, very weak, so her spiritual scaffold is fragile, more like a handful of wooden beams. The sturdiness of wood certainly can't compare to steel."

"Therefore, even if she uses a substantial amount of Body Refining Medicine to enhance her physical strength, it's futile. Instead, the Body Refining Medicine might cause all sorts of side effects."

"The only way is to persevere with the patience of grinding water, expending decades or even centuries of continuous, relentless effort. Only then can the physical strength and spiritual power slowly improve."

However—

Even after spending centuries trying to improve, the advancement wouldn't be significant—she could at most reach around a B level.

Chapter 680: No Hope

Dr. Luo left out that last sentence.

But Ji You somewhat understood without it needing to be mentioned.

The situation with classmate Liu Beibei was such that she must enhance both her spiritual power and physical strength together to achieve the goal of piloting a Mecha. However—easy to say, but how hard is it to achieve?

Physical strength could still be improved. It could be gradually increased through exercise and using body refining medicine.

But what about spiritual power?

Spiritual power is not something that can be enhanced just by wanting to enhance it.

Chu Jiaojiao, Sheng Qingyan, Shen Changqing, Yue Qiguang, Yue Qiyuan... All of them were born privileged, didn't they have access to items that could enhance their spiritual power? It's not that they didn't.

But for them to enhance their spiritual power, it still was not easy.

Sheng Qingyan, for example, even stooped so low as to send sexy photos to tempt the Green Glaze Master...

Cough cough...

Better not mention that dark history.

Spicy eye!

Ji You still refuses to recall it.

It's fine for weirdos like Sheng Qingyan, who managed a small job as a salesperson in the Green Glaze Master Shop, but Shen Changqing, Chu Jiaojiao, Yue Qiguang, and a few other stingy goods, they could even painfully afford a few months of braised pork rib rice...

What does this indicate?

It indicates that they all greatly needed the support of a soul artifact maker like Green Glaze Master to be able to enhance their spiritual power.

It's not just any Soul Device that can be useful to everyone; there's also the matter of compatibility, and...

In short, the enhancement of spiritual power is a very complex matter.

...

After a moment of silence, Ji You said, "So, does that mean student Liu Beibei can only give up on becoming a mechanical warrior?"

Dr. Luo did not utter a word, merely nodded his head, which sufficed as an answer.

Ji You then fell silent.

Liu Beibei...

Ji You wasn't really familiar with her, but—

Ji You understood very well: she was a very stubborn girl, somewhat similar to herself, who wouldn't turn back until hitting a wall, probably she would only wake up after facing utter despair.

It's unknown what made her so determined to pursue the path of becoming a mechanical warrior.

...

Feeling slightly distressed, Ji You thought for a moment and couldn't help asking, "Dr. Luo, then—if her spiritual power was increased, say to Grade B, and then enhanced her physical strength, would she be able to achieve the goal of piloting a Mecha?"

Isn't this question pointless?

Dr. Luo glanced at Ji You and said, "Of course, she could."

Ji You said, "Then..."

Dr. Luo raised his hand, interrupting Ji You, and said irritably, "Do you think spiritual power can just be easily increased? Without a compatible Soul Device, without a large amount of Heavenly Materials and Earthly Treasures to enhance spiritual power, do you think it can be done?"

Throwing out the question, Dr. Luo didn't even pause before saying, "Or do you think Liu Beibei's family conditions would allow her to earn so much money in such a short time to fund her enhancement?"

Ji You bit her lips upon hearing this.

Dr. Luo let out a long sigh, her tone carrying a hint of self-blame and annoyance, "The school's resources are limited, and as the Beast Tide approaches, it is not possible to treat all students equally. We can only select and train a group of students, letting these outstanding students shoulder the responsibility when the Beast Tide arrives. For cases like Liu Beibei, the school can only offer limited help and cannot fully cultivate them."

After saying this, Dr. Luo seemed reluctant to continue speaking.

Having worked at Lanyue Star Military Academy for decades, Dr. Luo also taught students various medical and nursing knowledge. During this time, she had seen too many students like Liu Beibei...

She was powerless and could only watch as the students made compromises and faced reality...

After a brief silence, Dr. Luo gestured with her hand and urged, "Student Ji You, please go back, you've already delayed me by 20 minutes."

The disdain in her eyes was obvious.

Ji You: "..."

Ji You quickly said, "Dr. Luo, I won't disturb you any longer."

Then, she turned around. As she was leaving, she saw Dr. Luo picking up her pen again and continuously writing and drawing. Ji You did not know the specifics of what was being written, but she knew that despite Dr. Luo's words that the school couldn't heavily invest in students like Liu Beibei, who could not become Mechanical Warriors, she still tried her best to find ways to help Liu Beibei...

Suddenly, Ji You felt admiration for Dr. Luo, for Teacher Mu, Principal Hong, and all the faculty members of Lanyue Star, and she developed a deep affection and sense of belonging towards the school.

This—

Was truly a place for teaching and nurturing.

...

After the Mecha assessment ended, the students of the Combat Department began their intense Mecha training. This time, the Mechas used by all students were no longer the castrated version, but real Mechas.

Since the weapons configured on the Mechas had large destructive powers, the whole training room was divided into individual compartments from a wide-open area, with each student training in their own compartment. The materials used for each compartment were of military-grade Protective Shield materials to prevent any accidental misfires that could cause unnecessary casualties...

This was a very costly setup. Although Lanyue Star was one of the Top Ten Military Schools of the Alliance, it was a recent addition, and most of the Alliance's financial resources were still directed towards schools like the Alliance First Military Academy...

That is to say, Lanyue Star Military Academy was financially strained, hence the penny-pinching, and only allowed students to use real Mechas and equipment for training as the term exams approached.

Cough cough...

Let's not dig into that for now.

Today, Ji You was still competing with the little fairy Chasing Sun. The Body Refining Medicine she had taken in the past two days had a very evident effect on Ji You. Even though she still couldn't handle Chasing Sun completely, Ji You could now fully control one of Chasing Sun's arms.

The progress was minimal, but as long as there was progress, Ji You felt very happy.

As the term exams approached, about half a month left, Teacher Mu Jianling only let the students train, still not announcing what the specific assessment projects were or where they were set. Knowing it was futile to ask, the students silently focused on their training.

The whole training room was bustling with activity.

Mu Jianling sat to the side, engrossed in watching the Alliance Flower Ye Lu starring in "Ugly Girl's Spring." At exciting moments, she even burst into gleeful laughter, causing nearby students to feel a chill down their spine...

Mu Jianling was seated quietly in the corner, not far away, Liu Fufeng sat with his head down, occasionally writing and drawing, and at other times, folding some paperwork...

These two, compared to the entire training room's atmosphere, were completely in different worlds.

This scene, seen several times, made the students gradually calm down.

After taking a fall and getting injured, Ji You dismounted from the Mecha, rested for a few minutes, and prepared to re-enter the Mecha. By chance, she glimpsed a small figure not far away, it was—

That girl named Liu Beibei, failing again and again, stubbornly trying, her face pale, her hand swollen, her mouth bleeding, but...

hopeless.

She was hugging her arms, curled up in a corner, secretly crying...