

War God 551

Chapter 551: Zong Lingyu's Excellent Li Qiran!

"Uh..."

With a single slash, Liu Long was slain, leaving even Zhou Dalong, who had been about to speak, completely stunned.

This Mr. Lin has such an intense killing aura.

"Mr.... Mr. Lin, why did you just kill him?" Zhou Dalong asked urgently. "This Liu Long is..."

"Is what?" Xiang Yunlong suddenly declared, "I now announce that Jin Kui and Liu Long disobeyed orders. They were rashly seeking personal glory by attempting to rescue the hostages on their own, and were killed by the kidnappers!"

Hearing Xiang Yunlong's words, Zhou Dalong's expression changed.

Xiang Yunlong asked indifferently, "Any objections?"

"No, none." Zhou Dalong hung his head low.

"Do you have none, or do you not dare?"

Zhou Dalong looked up and shouted, "What the Commander said is the truth! This subordinate has no objections!"

"Very well." Xiang Yunlong nodded in satisfaction, then looked towards Lin Mu and smiled. "Mr. Lin, as you can see..."

From his form of address, it was clear that Xiang Yunlong held Lin Mu in high esteem.

Indeed, who wouldn't value such a talent?

Lin Mu turned his head to look at the Yang Brothers, his face holding a trace of indifference.

"Do you have anything left to say?" Lin Mu asked.

"Master... Master Lin, I..."

Facing Lin Mu's gaze, Yang Wu instantly broke into a cold sweat. Before, unaware of who Lin Mu truly was, he had been utterly disrespectful. But now, knowing that Lin Mu was the infamous Lin Wudi, Yang Wu was scared witless. So when Lin Mu asked if he had anything to say, he... he didn't dare utter a single word.

"Since you have nothing to say, then die."

Lin Mu raised his hand, ready to slay Yang Wu as well.

"Spare me!"

Yang Wu immediately dropped to his knees, pleading, "Master Lin, please, ignorance is no sin! Spare me this once. I swear, from now on, wherever you are, my brother and I will keep our distance."

Yang Wen also struggled to get up, bowing deeply to Lin Mu. "Master Lin, it was my brother and I who were blind and offended you. But please, consider that we came here to save people. Forgive our transgression this one time. In the future, if you have any commands for us, Master Lin, my brother and I will obey without question!"

Lin Mu frowned slightly, a flicker of hesitation in his eyes.

"Mr. Lin, do me a favor and let them off this time," Xiang Yunlong interjected. "If not for my sake, then for Granny Li's. After all, the two masters were only eager to save someone; their intentions were good."

Lin Mu glanced at Granny Li, fell silent for a moment, then nodded.

"I'll spare you this once."

Lin Mu flicked his wrist, unleashing a sword strike.

A kilometer away, Mount Zoujiao was instantly cleaved in two by a wave of Sword Qi.

"If there is a next time, you will end up like this mountain!"

"Scram!"

Hearing Lin Mu's words, the Yang Brothers dared not delay. They kowtowed to Lin Mu three times before helping each other up and departing.

After reaching the foot of the mountain, Yang Wu turned to look back, a bitter smile on his face. "This time, we've lost all face."

"Losing face is nothing. After all, that was Lin Wudi." Yang Wen's face showed no resentment, though there was an inevitable sense of dejection. He said, "Big Brother, there's something I've been wanting to tell you for a long time."

"Hmn, go ahead."

Taking a deep breath, Yang Wen said, "You need to change that fiery temper of yours. Master Lin spared us this time, but what about the next? Even if we don't provoke him again, there is always someone stronger out there in the world. Who knows if the next person we meet is some old monster? It's better to be amicable with others."

If this had happened before, Yang Wu's temperament would have compelled him to argue. As a Grandmaster, he had his pride. Kindness? That was for the weak. But after this experience, Yang Wu thought for a moment before replying seriously, "You're right. This personality of mine truly isn't befitting of a Grandmaster."

"Don't be disheartened, Big Brother. We may not have accomplished any great deeds in all our years as Grandmasters, but the road ahead is long. In the end, performing good deeds is always the right thing to do." Though he had lost an arm and was severely injured, Yang Wen's words showcased his magnanimity as a Grandmaster.

"Haha, you're right." Yang Wu sighed deeply. "Today, after meeting Master Lin, I am truly convinced. From now on, we can no longer act so recklessly."

Just then, a man hurried down from the mountain and saluted the Yang Brothers. "Masters, this is the elixir Commander Xiang requested from Mr. Lin. He said it can help Master Yang Wen recover from his injuries. Also, Master Lin asked me to relay a message: 'A just cause enjoys abundant support.' He hopes you will both reflect on this."

Looking at the porcelain bottle in their hands, the Yang Brothers' expressions shifted. They then turned and bowed deeply in the direction of the mountain.

"Yang Wu thanks Master Lin and Commander Xiang!"

"Yang Wen thanks Master Lin and Commander Xiang!"

Exchanging a glance, the two brothers shared a faint smile, then turned and vanished from sight.

「...」

Years later, a pair of twin brothers appeared in the military ranks of the West Chu Border. One, with a missing arm, favored white clothes. The other, dressed in black, loved to boast. Yet, whenever a great battle erupted, these two middle-aged brothers were always on the front lines, slaying countless foes and striking terror into the hearts of the enemy.

And then one day, when the Holy War began, these brothers—by then high-ranking officers—received an order. At one person's command, they led their army of three thousand elite soldiers to serve as his vanguard!

「...」

At that moment, Lin Mu was sitting in a rustic farmhouse with a unique charm. Stray dogs and cats wandered about. A neat vegetable garden sat beside the house, smoke curling from the kitchen chimney. Lin Mu hadn't experienced such a peaceful and simple life in many years.

Inside the unique country kitchen, an old woman and two young people were bustling about.

Xiang Yunlong and Lin Mu sat in the flower-scented courtyard, the fragrant aroma of tea rising from the table between them. Zhou Dalong and Guan Feifei stood behind them like sentinels.

"Mr. Lin, why did you have me deliver the elixir to the Yang Brothers earlier?" Xiang Yunlong asked after a moment of silence, voicing the question that had been puzzling him.

Lin Mu smiled faintly. "Those two aren't bad people at their core. Sending the elixir in your name was merely to encourage them to make the right decision. Isn't that what you were thinking as well, Elder Xiang?"

Xiang Yunlong was visibly shaken, as if the young man before him had seen straight into his heart. He stood, raised his teacup, and bowed deeply. "I, Xiang Yunlong, offer this tea in place of wine. Thank you, Mr. Lin!"

He had indeed wanted to recruit the Yang Brothers but had been unsure how to broach the subject. The fact that Mr. Lin had perceived his thoughts not only shocked him but also filled his heart with gratitude.

"Rest assured, Mr. Lin. I will have my people keep an eye on the Yang brothers. If they truly intend to join the military, I'll introduce them to the old guard. If they choose another path, I won't interfere, so long as they don't cause any trouble."

Lin Mu nodded slightly, lifted his teacup, and took a sip, his eyebrows raising in surprise. This tea was different from what he usually drank. It began with a slight bitterness that gave way to a rich, lingering aftertaste. It was like... the countless facets of life itself, all contained in a single cup.

"Excellent tea," Lin Mu praised without reservation.

"You're too kind, Mr. Lin. It's just some local tea that Qiran made," Granny Li said as she came out with the dishes. "But if you like it, Mr. Lin, you can take some with you when you leave. Let that girl Luo Li have a taste, too."

Lin Mu nodded. "Alright." He then turned his gaze to the girl standing behind Granny Li, his eyes lighting up slightly.

The girl set down the dishes and bowed deeply to Lin Mu. "My name is Li Qiran. Thank you for saving my life, Mr. Lin." Her demeanor was graceful and her voice was clear, leaving a good impression.

Lin Mu nodded slightly. What a remarkably refined and intelligent young woman, he thought.

Chapter 552: Lin Mu Takes on a Disciple, Bestows the Name Linglong!

After the meal, Li Qiran brought over a variety of home-grown fruits and brewed a pot of tea before leaving, giving Lin Mu and Xiang Yunlong some space. She knew that these two had something to discuss.

"You obviously didn't keep me here just for a meal, so out with it. What's the matter?" Lin Mu mumbled as he grabbed a piece of fruit and took a bite.

Xiang Yunlong gave an awkward smile. "It seems nothing can be hidden from Mr. Lin."

Taking a deep breath, he said, "Then I'll be direct. I'd like to invite you, Mr. Lin, to serve as the General Instructor of the Sichuan-Shu Military Region!"

Lin Mu was slightly taken aback. No wonder Xiang Yunlong had sent Zhou Dalong away after dinner. Was he meant to take Zhou Dalong's place? Looking at the nervous Xiang Yunlong, Lin Mu shook his head slightly.

"Mr. Lin, if you have any conditions, please name them. I will meet them as long as it's within my power!" Xiang Yunlong began to assure him.

"It's not about conditions," Lin Mu said. "It's that I'm already the General Instructor of the Southeast Military Academy, so I can't accept your offer."

"What?" Xiang Yunlong exclaimed, his face full of astonishment. "Mr. Lin, you're saying... you're the General Instructor of the Southeast Military Academy?"

"Right, right." Xiang Yunlong slapped his forehead. "I must be getting senile! I should have thought of this sooner. We'd already received news from the Military Department that the Southeast Military Academy appointed a new General Instructor who was about to take office. I can't believe I didn't realize it was you."

He had heard that the newly appointed General Instructor of the Southeast Military Academy was from Jiangling with the surname Lin, but nothing else was known. It all lined up with Lin Mu.

After seeing Lin Mu's military ID, Xiang Yunlong felt both a sense of regret and relief.

"Since Mr. Lin is also in the military, I'll address you as Instructor Lin from now on," Xiang Yunlong said with a laugh. "Otherwise, it feels a bit awkward for a rough old soldier like me to keep calling you Mr. Lin."

Xiang Yunlong was forthright and had a clear sense of right and wrong. Honestly, Lin Mu had a good impression of him, so he also spoke casually.

"Instructor Lin, to be frank, before I knew your identity, I was planning to report your situation to Commander Xiao," Xiang Yunlong said with a slightly serious expression. "After all, what you did today was simply too shocking. If word of this gets out, it will cause widespread panic."

At that, Xiang Yunlong burst into laughter. "But that doesn't matter now. If that kid Zhou Dalong finds out that you're the new General Instructor of the Southeast Military Academy, I can't imagine how thrilled he'll be."

Lin Mu offered a faint smile but didn't reply.

"It's just a pity the timing is so tight. Instructor Lin, even though your skills are matchless, there are only three months until the grand military competition," Xiang Yunlong sighed. "Otherwise, with you leading them, the Southeast Military Academy would definitely take first place this year."

Lin Mu just smiled faintly. "Three months? That's more than enough. I've already reserved first place."

Reserved first place? Xiang Yunlong's mouth hung open, momentarily at a loss for words.

"Haha, Instructor Lin is certainly confident," Xiang Yunlong laughed awkwardly. "In that case, I wish you swift success in claiming first place."

But inwardly, he sighed. Three months? How is that possible? Zhou Dalong is a razor-sharp blade of the Sichuan-Shu Military Region. The team he leads is like a pack of wolf cubs, always howling as they charge into battle. No matter how powerful Lin Mu is personally, that's just individual strength. How could he possibly train a team in three months to defeat Zhou Dalong's squad?

However, out of politeness, Xiang Yunlong didn't say more. He wasn't bragging—the Sichuan-Shu Military Region was the stuff of legends. Zhou Dalong was a soldier he had trained personally. Wherever Zhou Dalong went, the championship followed.

And why did the Southeast Military Academy change instructors so often? It was because their team was subpar, always finishing last.

Of course, there was one thing Xiang Yunlong didn't mention. Before Lin Mu, the General Instructor of the Southeast Military Academy had been none other than Zhou Dalong. He hadn't stayed long before Xiang Yunlong, through all sorts of pestering and pleading, managed to lure him back. In his own words, Zhou Dalong was his man and had to return to Sichuan-Shu, no matter what.

But even in that short time, the cadets at the Southeast Military Academy had developed a deep respect for Zhou Dalong. If you wanted to train them, you first had to earn their respect. And how do you do that? By being stronger than Zhou Dalong.

Lin Mu's personal strength was greater than Zhou Dalong's, but when it came to leading a team, ten of him would be no match.

Thus, Xiang Yunlong was secretly delighted. Mr. Lin, Mr. Lin, your strength may be comparable to a Sword Immortal's, but leading troops and waging war isn't child's play. A time for tears will come for you.

「...」

"Instructor Lin, regarding that child Li Qiran's identity, I hope you won't ask too many questions. I don't know the answers either," Xiang Yunlong said solemnly before he left. "I'm merely following orders to ensure the safety of the Li Family, especially Li Qiran."

"But don't you worry, Instructor Lin. I've already issued a gag order regarding today's events. No one will speak out of turn. As for the Security Bureau, you don't need to worry about them either. Anything involving Li Qiran is classified as a top national secret. They wouldn't dare trouble you!"

Lin Mu replied nonchalantly, "I'm not worried about the Security Bureau. My concern is the two Grandmasters who appeared. One was a foreigner, and I'm not sure about the other. I feel there's something more hidden here, so you should be careful."

"Thank you for the reminder, Instructor Lin. I've already sent men to investigate," Xiang Yunlong said, a cold glint in his eyes. "They dare stir up trouble on my turf? I'll flay them alive!"

"However, you can be at ease about my side, Instructor Lin. The Security Bureau won't dare to bother you directly. What I'm worried about is someone from Tibet taking action, especially since you've killed their Esoteric Sect Grandmaster, Xing Ge Da Wa." Xiang Yunlong's tone held a note of concern.

Lin Mu laughed freely. "So what if the whole world becomes my enemy? If I can kill one Xing Ge Da Wa, I can kill two!"

"Hahaha, spoken with power!" Xiang Yunlong roared with laughter. "Rest easy, Instructor Lin. My hundreds of thousands of soldiers in Sichuan-Shu are your most solid backing!"

Xiang Yunlong left. He didn't elaborate on Li Qiran's situation, but Lin Mu could guess a few things.

To be classified as a top secret and attract the attention of two Grandmasters... this Li Qiran was no ordinary person.

That night, Lin Mu went directly to Li Qiran and said something that stunned her.

"Are you willing to become my Disciple in Name?"

Hearing this, a flash of disappointment appeared in Li Qiran's eyes, and she bit her lip tightly.

"Of course, a Disciple in Name isn't a true disciple," Lin Mu continued. "If you are unwilling, I can offer you a different opportunity instead. However, from this day forward, you must not associate with Luo Li."

Li Qiran asked, "May I ask, what is your relationship with Luo Li?"

"She is my wife."

The disappointment in Li Qiran's eyes deepened. She touched her forehead to the ground and said, "Qiran is willing!"

"Good," Lin Mu said. "I don't have time to take you with me and instruct you now. However, you can go to the Southern Bai Miao Village in the Southern Sky and find a woman named Li Lingqing. She is your senior sister, and she will know what to do."

He reached out and tapped the center of Li Qiran's brow, sending a ray of divine light into her.

"Your journey to the Southern Sky will be fraught with peril, but with your master's mark, you will be kept safe from harm."

After a moment's thought, Lin Mu added, "Hmm... since you are now my disciple, your dharma name from this day on shall be Linglong!"

Li Qiran remained kneeling. "Linglong thanks Master."

Chapter 553: You Must Call Me Instructor Lin!

In the dense mountain forest, a woman in her early twenties was navigating a difficult path.

The mountain road was tough to travel. The miasma and mosquitoes in the forest meant she would often feel a tightness in her chest and discomfort after walking for only a short time.

But she had not a single complaint. Instead, she constantly cheered herself on, "Li Linglong, you are his disciple now. You must persevere!"

The journey to Southern Sky was long. At her pace, it would take more than a month to reach her destination on foot. However, her master had only given her one month.

So, in that month, Li Qiran had to overcome numerous challenges.

Fortunately, she had never been a pampered girl and had suffered more hardships than most people.

Few knew that she also had another identity. She was a well-known blogger known as the "Oriental Culinary Lifestyle Expert." In the world of food and traditional crafts, she had even been appointed as an ambassador for the promotion of intangible cultural heritage in Sichuan-Shu, among other titles.

However, from the moment her master renamed her, Li Qiran knew that was all in the past.

Her name was Li Linglong now!

It was only when her master had rescued her that Li Linglong realized that deities truly did exist in this world.

Many thoughts had crossed her mind, but a single sentence from her master had cut them all off.

Now, she was an ordinary person walking the path to the Great Way.

But everything she had experienced would become her greatest treasure.

"Luo Li, I'm so envious of you."

Wiping the sweat from her brow, a determined resilience showed on Li Linglong's strikingly ethereal face. "Master, don't worry. I will definitely work hard to catch up to you!"

No. It's impossible for anyone to catch up to Master. But it's enough to follow behind him, just watching his silhouette from a distance.

...

「Three days later, at Suzhou Airport.」

A man with a crew cut was sizing up the airport exit from an SUV parked at the entrance.

The man stood tall and straight, exuding a stern military air. Impatience tinged his angular face.

"Teacher Zhang, how many times have we gone to pick up a Divine Machine Camp Instructor now?"

The Divine Machine Camp Instructor had been replaced several times, and it was always him and Teacher Zhang who did the pickup.

"I wonder how long our new instructor will last," the young man chuckled, a hint of mockery on his face.

"Xiao Du, shut your mouth!" Instructor Zhang said coldly. "This time it's different. Our new instructor was personally appointed by the military region's high command. He's also the chief instructor of the Southeast Military Academy, not just for the Divine Machine Camp. He outranks me in both position and military rank."

Instructor Zhang was forty years old. At an age when many soldiers have lost their edge, he was the opposite.

His formidable aura was even more pronounced, and the scent of iron and blood seemed to have seeped into his very bones.

This was a man who had truly seen battle. More than once.

"Teacher Zhang, with all due respect, I was looking at our new instructor's file. He isn't even thirty and seems to have no military background. If I didn't know he was personally appointed by the military region command, I wouldn't believe it," Xiao Du said, his lips curled in dissatisfaction. "Do you really think a kid in his twenties can keep the wolf cubs of the Divine Machine Camp in line?"

"You think he's just some rich kid with a powerful family, here to gild his resume?"

Far from shutting up, Xiao Du's words were now laden with disdain. His relationship with Instructor Zhang was so good that he never hid his thoughts.

Instructor Zhang sighed. How could I not feel the same way? By seniority, I, Zhang Ze, am already a lieutenant colonel. I've honed my abilities in the army for decades and am skilled in many areas. In terms of capability, I'm the most qualified candidate for the Divine Machine Camp. Connections? People in the army are the ones who most despise those who climb the ranks by relying on their background. Countless people with status and connections couldn't last three days in the Divine Machine Camp before they were told to pack their bags and get out. Furthermore, this Instructor Lin is only in his twenties. Most people that age are probably just graduating from college and entering the workforce, right? Could someone like that lead the Divine Machine Camp? The Divine Machine Camp is the most

powerful spearhead unit in the entire Southeast Military Region, carrying out the most top-secret missions.

Even he wasn't fully convinced, but it was an order from his superiors. What could he do?

"Teacher Zhang, I mean, we're talking about a young man who's never even seen a battlefield. He'd probably scream at the sight of blood. When he gets to the Divine Machine Camp, won't he just piss his pants in fear?"

Xiao Du continued with deep concern, "It doesn't matter to us; a soldier's duty is to obey orders. But those guys in the Divine Machine Camp are a tough crowd. If he really embarrasses himself, we'll become laughingstocks too."

Xiao Du was right. After Zhou Dalong left, the higher-ups appointed a new instructor. But as soon as he entered the Divine Machine Camp, he was so scared that he burst into tears, crying for his mommy. He became the biggest joke in the entire military region, and people still mock him to this day.

During that time, Zhang Ze was too ashamed to even walk with his head held high. So embarrassing!

Still, Zhang Ze said, "Xiao Du, this guy is different from that last wastrel who came to gild his resume. I've heard he's a martial arts expert, and a powerful one at that."

"A martial arts expert?" Xiao Du scoffed. "In his twenties? You believe that?"

"Alright, even if he is a martial arts expert, how good can he be? You know that any one of those beasts from the Divine Machine Camp could single-handedly thrash a whole crowd of so-called martial arts experts."

Xiao Du sighed. "Take my senior brother, for example. He was born into a martial arts family and started training at six. He later joined the army for more experience, but even he doesn't dare call himself a martial arts expert."

"So how amazing can this kid be?" Xiao Du looked at the photo in his hand and sighed listlessly.

Zhang Ze was silent for a moment before saying, "Xiao Du, there's something you might not know. Our commanding officer has withdrawn us from this year's army competition."

"What?" Xiao Du was stunned. "Withdrawn? Why would he withdraw? We were..."

Zhang Ze said, "I know what you're going to say, but hasn't Zhou Dalong been transferred back to Sichuan-Shu? With him in the running, what chance does our Divine Machine Camp even have?"

"That guy is a freak. No matter what unit he leads, they become champions. Who can argue with that?" Zhang Ze said helplessly. "So, ever since Zhou Dalong spent time with them, the guys in the Divine Machine Camp look down on everyone else."

Just as Xiao Du was about to speak, Zhang Ze suddenly grabbed him and pointed to a young man at the airport entrance. "Xiao Du, look. You think that's the guy we're here to pick up?"

Behind the young man was another tall, sturdy young man, looking around curiously.

Xiao Du glanced at him and said, "No way, right? He's in casual clothes, wearing sunglasses... He looks like a tourist here for fun. How could that be our Instructor Lin?"

"Let's go ask."

Zhang Ze got out of the car and walked toward the young man.

The man took off his glasses, revealing a handsome face. He smiled and said, "You're here to pick me up, right? Let's get in the car."

This person was Lin Mu. Behind him was Shi Potian.

As Lin Mu was about to get into the car, Xiao Du grabbed him. "Hey, hold on. You've got to be mistaken. Who are you?"

"My name is Lin Mu. Of course, according to protocol, you are to call me Instructor Lin."

Chapter 554: The Welcoming Ceremony of the Divine Machine Camp!

"Damn!" Upon seeing Lin Mu's handsome face, Xiao Du was stunned.

He's so handsome! He could have been a celebrity, so why become an instructor?

He wasn't the only one; even Zhang Ze was having some regrets. If I'd known, I wouldn't have come. If I bring someone like this to the military academy, won't those guys laugh themselves to death?

"Are you really Instructor Lin?" Zhang Ze asked, needing to confirm his identity.

"Xiao Tian."

At Lin Mu's command, Shi Potian hurriedly opened his backpack and began to search through it.

"You've got to be kidding me. You even brought a bodyguard?" Xiao Du was speechless. Just look at Shi Potian's build; he's clearly a bodyguard. If the documents didn't list Lin Mu as the instructor, I would've thought Shi Potian was the one from the Divine Machine Camp.

"You can take a look at this," Lin Mu said, handing over his identification.

Only after Zhang Ze and Xiao Du had verified it did they confirm Lin Mu's identity. However, a look of helplessness crossed both of their faces. Even if he is the real deal, how are we supposed to take someone who looks like this to the base? The guys at the Divine Machine Camp will probably think we brought a celebrity.

The two exchanged a resigned look and said, "Let's go."

After seeing Lin Mu in person, their attitude toward him cooled considerably.

Shi Potian, on the other hand, had made a positive impression. This kid might look young, but his vitality is robust. He's clearly of good stock. With some proper polishing in the army, he'll definitely be a diamond in the rough.

Zhang Ze was already thinking ahead. Once Lin Mu joins the Divine Machine Camp and realizes he can't last, I'll find a way to keep Shi Potian. He glanced at Lin Mu and shook his head. Is this all he's got? Can he even last three days? He might fare even worse than the last one and get kicked out within a day.

This was because the Divine Machine Camp had a special welcome ceremony for everyone, whether they were a recruit or an instructor. A slight smile touched Zhang Ze's lips at the thought. This is a matter for the Divine Machine Camp, so I won't interfere. But there's no harm in watching the show.

「An hour later.」

An off-road vehicle arrived at a coastal port. The Divine Machine Camp's training base was on a small island. After all, the grand military competition required comprehensive sea, land, and air training. Every member of the Divine Machine Camp was an all-around talent.

A yacht was waiting at the port. However, the weather seemed a bit rough today. Strong winds and big waves made it unsuitable for setting out to sea; it was too dangerous.

But it was a mission, and the two were responsible for delivering Lin Mu to the island. The boat was captained by a veteran with a weather-beaten face.

After confirming Lin Mu's identity, the veteran became much more enthusiastic and began to brief Lin Mu on some general details about the Divine Machine Camp. Zhang Ze and Xiao Du remained cold and indifferent throughout the exchange. After all, their impression of Lin Mu was abysmal. To say they were disappointed would be an understatement.

"Instructor Zhang, what do you think the higher-ups are thinking? Bringing in someone like this... isn't it a deliberate attempt to make the Divine Machine Camp lose face?" Xiao Du muttered with dissatisfaction, watching Lin Mu idly chat with the veteran in the sea breeze.

"Keep your voice down," Zhang Ze whispered. "Look, Instructor Lin is just a temporary appointment. I'm guessing it's just to get through this competition. Besides, even our commander has given up on first place. Bringing this guy in is probably to..."

"Be the scapegoat?" Xiao Du's eyes lit up as if he understood everything. I knew it! Otherwise, with our commander's wisdom and might, why would he pick this guy?

"Just know that and keep your mouth shut," Zhang Ze said. "We'll just sit back and watch the show."

"Right," Xiao Du snickered.

"Instructor Lin, the Divine Machine Camp isn't like an ordinary unit," the veteran advised. "The men are proud and direct. You'll need to show them what you're made of, or those young rascals won't respect you." He glanced at Shi Potian and added, "Of course, this lad here is brimming with powerful qi and blood. He must be a martial artist. You could have him show them a thing or two."

"Mm," Lin Mu nodded, though it was unclear if he had taken the advice to heart.

Seeing Lin Mu's reaction, the veteran grinned, revealing a mouthful of large, stained teeth, equally unsure if the new instructor was really listening.

The yacht traveled for two or three hours before an island finally came into view.

"Instructor Lin, we're almost there."

「Meanwhile, on the island.」

Nearly a hundred men stood in neat formation.

"Captain, what do you think our new instructor is like?" The question came from a towering man nearly two meters tall. He was exceptionally large and formidable, looking like an iron tower and radiating an intensely powerful aura.

His name was Ma Biao, and he had a ferocious personality. Before joining the Divine Machine Camp, he had been an outstanding member of another military unit. Furthermore, he and Zhou Dalong had carried out many dangerous missions together, even serving overseas as peacekeepers. The missions he undertook were extremely perilous. He had killed, which was why he was steeped in such a strong aura of Evil Qi.

In fact, it wasn't just him; almost all of the hundred men present were elite talents handpicked from various units, and every one of them possessed a potent Evil Qi.

The Divine Machine Camp was one of the three great military divisions of the Ming Dynasty, tasked with guarding the Forbidden City and the Three Seas, and serving as the Emperor's personal escort. Since its modern inception, although the unit was small, every member was a formidable warrior who was close to the level of a Soldier King.

Behind its name lay honor, responsibility, and the highest glory a soldier could achieve. But it also signified blood, death, and grueling, life-or-death training.

However, ever since the Divine Machine Camp began to frequently replace its instructors, its reputation had started to decline. This unit, which had once consistently won championships, hadn't secured a single title in five whole years.

Zhou Dalong's arrival had given them a glimmer of hope, but then the higher-ups transferred him away. This caused the morale in the Divine Machine Camp to plummet, and its members became even more arrogant and unruly, refusing to submit to any authority.

In the absence of an instructor, their captain led the training. No one knew the captain's real name, but he had a codename: Jiaolong. Anyone who could bear that codename and lead the Divine Machine Camp was not to be underestimated. Indeed, even Ma Biao couldn't last three moves against him. Ma Biao was close to the level of a Soldier King, yet he was no match for Jiaolong. This just went to show that Jiaolong was, without a doubt, a true Soldier King.

"We'll find out soon enough, won't we?" Jiaolong said with a faint smile. He was lean and had an unremarkable appearance, but no one dared to underestimate him. In fact, the men of the Divine Machine Camp harbored a deep-seated fear of Jiaolong—a fear born from the experience of being personally beaten to the ground by him, one by one.

"Let's get one thing straight! I'm going first later. None of you are allowed to jump the queue!" Ma Biao licked his lips and chuckled menacingly.

"Get lost! Why should it be you?" another man, as skinny as a monkey, shot back. "You have no restraint. What if you kill the guy? The last instructor ended up crying for his mommy because of you, and we were a laughingstock for ages."

The others burst out laughing.

"Monkey, you're asking for a beating, aren't you?" Ma Biao retorted, his face flushing red. "If he can't even take a single punch from me, what right does he have to be our instructor? I'm just testing his qualifications for you all."

"To hell with that!" Monkey retorted with a laugh. "This time, it's my turn, no matter what!" With that, he scrambled onto a nearby reef, ready to make his move.

But just then, the yacht's engine cut out, and it drifted to a stop. Onshore, Monkey cursed, "Damn it! That bastard Old Huang, he dared to screw me over!"

Aboard the yacht, the veteran, Old Huang, laughed heartily. "You little rascals over there won't get to lay a finger on this one!" he shouted toward the island. Then, turning to Lin Mu, he said, "Instructor Lin, I'm terribly sorry, but the yacht's out of fuel. Looks like we'll have to swim the rest of the way."

Old Huang flashed a grin, revealing his large, yellow teeth, before executing a perfect dive into the sea and swimming toward the island. His voice carried back over the water, "Instructor Lin, this is the Divine Machine Camp's welcoming ceremony! If you want the job, you'll have to swim for it!"

Chapter 555: Is This the Work of a Human?

"Instructor Lin, you can't blame me, Old Huang—Monkey forced me to do it."

More than ten minutes later, Old Huang climbed ashore and yelled toward Lin Mu on the yacht.

"Get lost!"

Monkey was furious and aimed a kick at Old Huang, but Old Huang dodged it.

This old bastard. Slippery as an eel.

Monkey clenched his teeth tightly, glaring at Old Huang.

"Do you think he can really swim across? This stretch of water is too long, and with the raging undercurrents, only someone with immense experience could last. Even Old Huang took more than ten minutes."

Ma Biao said, "Even if he does make it up here, he'll be in such a sorry state. Will he even have the face to stick around?"

"Old Ma, if you're thinking like that, you're underestimating Old Huang." Monkey suddenly gave Old Huang a thumbs-up. "Old Huang, I never would've guessed. You always seem so honest, but who knew you were this sneaky."

Old Huang just chuckled and didn't respond.

"Old Huang, what exactly did you do? Why does Monkey have that smug grin on his face?" someone asked.

Monkey rolled his eyes. "What did he do? Old Huang's move is truly vicious. Our new instructor, the upstart from the Lin Family, is going to suffer a huge loss."

At this moment, the sea breeze swept in, kicking up waves of spray. The sea was roaring, and the undercurrents surged. Now, forget swimming across; even a yacht wouldn't be able to make it.

"Damn!" Ma Biao cursed loudly. "Old Huang, you sly old fox! You even knew the wind was picking up."

"Of course. I've spent so many years at sea that I can tell if it's going to be windy or rainy just by glancing at the sky." Old Huang smiled proudly, then sat on a reef to smoke, looking quite content.

"Haha, now this is going to be fun."

Everyone burst into laughter.

Trapped at sea, unable to arrive or leave, their new instructor wouldn't even be able to set foot on the Divine Machine Camp's base. If word of this got out, the embarrassment would be unimaginable. The previous instructor, though scared to tears, had at least lasted for three days.

"Old Huang, this won't cause any real trouble, will it?" Jiaolong asked, frowning as he looked at the increasingly dark sky.

A storm is about to break. With no fuel on the yacht, how will they leave?

"Oh no, I forgot to refuel the yacht." Old Huang suddenly slapped his thigh, a trace of panic on his face. "I'm screwed. My mistake, my mistake."

"Crap, are you really that unreliable?" Monkey grew anxious. Although he wanted to play a prank on the new instructor, if something serious happened, they would be punished. Getting kicked out of the Divine Machine Camp was a certainty! Then, they would be the ones who were embarrassed!

"A downpour is coming. Get ready for a rescue!" Jiaolong said. "Jokes are one thing, but don't gamble with your future."

Looking at the ten-meter-high waves churning in the sea, everyone's face tensed. For them, this was a small matter.

But could Instructor Lin handle it?

"Monkey, Old Huang, you two will be in charge of the rescue," Jiaolong instructed. "This started because of you, so you will take responsibility."

"Are you serious, Captain?" Monkey shouted, pleading his innocence. "You're just passing the buck!"

"Would you rather I, the captain, take the blame?" Jiaolong countered coldly.

"Fine, fine. You're the captain," Monkey said, on the verge of tears. "Old Huang, you'll be the death of me!"

"Less talk, more rescuing!"

...

「Out at sea.」

The waves were monstrous, reaching heights of over ten meters.

How can we even approach in these conditions?

"Instructor Lin, maybe we should head back," Zhang Ze said, his expression grave as he stared at the waves before them.

The waves are so high, and without Old Huang, it'll be difficult to get back.

"Yeah, let's go back," Xiao Du said. "If this isn't working, we can just admit defeat."

"Admit defeat?" Lin Mu said with a faint smile. "Why don't you two wait here? I'll go across myself."

Go across? How? And there's no fuel on the yacht; we can't leave even if we wanted to.

BOOM!

A wave struck the yacht, causing it to lurch violently and crash into a reef. The impact ripped the stern of the vessel wide open.

"This is bad, the boat's breached!"

"What do we do? We have to abandon ship!"

The expressions of Zhang Ze and Xiao Du changed drastically.

"On a normal day, I could swim over, but how am I supposed to cross with waves this big?" Xiao Du's face turned pale.

「On the island.」

The complexions of the men there had also grown slightly pale.

"Damn it, the boat's sinking! Prepare for the rescue!"

"Sigh, this new instructor has terrible luck. To think we have to rescue him... how humiliating."

"He's probably the most embarrassing instructor in history, isn't he?"

Aboard the yacht, Zhang Ze and Xiao Du watched it sink and began to panic completely.

"It's no use, we have to jump!"

"But what about Instructor Lin?"

Xiao Du's face was tear-streaked as he said, "Instructor Zhang, I can't carry two people."

"You take the kid, and I'll take Instructor Lin. Let's just get across first. I'm sure the men from the Divine Machine Camp will come to help us." Although Zhang Ze was panicking, he hadn't lost his composure.

"It's the only way."

Meanwhile, on the island, Old Huang and the others were preparing to enter the water.

"There's no need for all that trouble."

Just then, Lin Mu suddenly spoke up. For him to say such a thing at a time like this infuriated Zhang Ze.

"It'll be too late if we don't jump now!" Xiao Du shouted. "Once the yacht sinks, it'll be even harder for us to get across."

"Shut up!" Lin Mu snapped coldly. "This is an order!"

"I... Yes, sir!" Zhang Ze wanted to object but could only accept.

Lin Mu outranked him, so his words were commands. Zhang Ze had no choice but to obey. But what happened next left them both stunned.

"Xiao Tian, go."

Go? Go do what?

The next moment, they knew.

Shi Potian acknowledged the order and jumped into the churning sea.

"Damn it! You told us not to jump, but you have your bodyguard jump? Is he going to make a run for it with you?" Xiao Du was speechless.

However, at that very moment, they felt the entire yacht jolt violently. Then, to their amazement, the sinking vessel began to rise slowly. The two looked down and saw a sight they would never forget.

The yacht had actually left the water's surface, held up by a single person's hands.

Shi Potian!

This yacht weighs over ten tons! To be lifted by one person... how much strength would that take?

Suddenly, Zhang Ze thought of something even more terrifying.

This is the goddamn sea, not solid ground! How could anyone possibly lift ten tons while in the middle of the sea? Is this even human?

Then, something happened that made them both scream.

The yacht moved again, slowly inching forward. It was because Shi Potian was propelling the yacht forward through the water!

Lin Mu, meanwhile, appeared completely calm and composed, as if he considered it perfectly natural for Shi Potian to be able to do all this.

Is this something a human is even capable of?

Chapter 556: No Integrity at All!

Zhang Ze and Xiao Du were completely stunned. They even thought they were dreaming, because the scene before them was simply too incredible to believe.

Can a person lift a yacht weighing more than ten tons?

The answer is no!

Can a person walk on water?

That's impossible!

Fine. Even if someone could actually do both of those things, who in the hell could carry a ten-ton yacht while walking on the surface of the water?

This was unscientific! It defied all common sense!

「On the island.」

"Holy shit!" Monkey, who was just about to enter the water, suddenly shrieked. "Old Huang! Old Huang, come and see! Am I seeing things?!"

His voice was filled with shock, and he was nearly stuttering.

"What are you gawking at? Get in the water!" Old Huang snapped, slapping Monkey on the head. He subconsciously glanced up. "Holy crap!"

Old Huang let out a scream, his face a mask of utter disbelief.

"Old Huang, I'm seeing things, right?" Monkey asked.

SMACK!

"Why did you hit me?" Monkey cried, clutching his head in pain.

"Does it hurt?"

"Of course it hurts!" Monkey roared.

"Good." Old Huang took a deep breath. "If it hurts, that proves you're not seeing things, and you're not dreaming."

Monkey was speechless.

"Captain, Captain, you have to see this!" Monkey yelled, turning his head to shout at the others.
"Everyone, look at the sea!"

"What's all the howling about?" Ma Biao called out with a chuckle. He looked up. "Holy crap!"

"Captain, Captain!" Ma Biao shouted as well. "Come quick! There's a guy on the sea walking over here, and he's carrying a yacht!"

"Ma Biao, are you bullshitting us?" someone yelled back upon hearing his voice.

"Can you be serious for a second? Carrying a yacht on the sea? Are you out of your mind?"

But when they looked up, they were all struck dumb.

There really was a man walking across the sea, step by step, carrying a yacht.

"This... this... can someone please tell me what the hell is going on?!" Ma Biao roared.

No one answered him. Everyone, including Jiaolong, was stunned silent.

Jiaolong drew a sharp breath, grabbed Ma Biao's arm, and said, "Ma Biao, tell me I'm not dreaming."

Someone nearby chuckled. "What's wrong? Has the captain lost his mind too?"

But when that man looked up, he let out a yelp and tumbled into the sea, taking several minutes to clamber back out.

By then, the man carrying the yacht had already come into view. The raging waves couldn't impede his steps. In fact, every time a wave rose, it seemed to become his foothold, making him even faster.

Those ten-meter-high waves were just giving the man a speed boost? So much for the dignity of the waves.

BOOM!

The next moment, everyone's jaw dropped. Monkey screamed, "Holy crap!"

The man had actually thrown the yacht.

When the yacht was just floating on the water, its size wasn't as apparent. But now, seeing it thrown through the air like a small mountain, everyone's face turned pale.

"What the hell are you all standing around for? Run!" Old Huang shrieked, turning on his heel to flee.

The others did the same, running for their lives.

Still on the yacht, Zhang Ze and Xiao Du turned pale with fright. He... he threw us? All hundred meters of the way? If this thing crashes, the others might be fine, but we'll be the first to die.

"We're doomed! We're doomed!" Xiao Du's face was ashen, his eyes brimming with despair. "Teacher Zhang, we're going to die! I'm so scared!" He was on the verge of tears.

"Shut your mouth!" Zhang Ze's legs were trembling. He gripped the yacht's handrail tightly, his voice shaking. "I'm scared too!"

"As long as I am here, you will not die."

At that moment, Lin Mu spoke. His expression was placid as he stood poised at the bow, hands clasped behind his back, his clothes whipping loudly in the fierce wind.

Hearing Lin Mu's words, Xiao Du cursed outright. "It's because you're here that we're definitely going to die! If it weren't for coming to pick you up, how could I... Waaah! I don't want to die! I'm not even married! I've never even had a sweet romance! I'm still a virgin, and now I'm going to die! Waaaaah..."

Xiao Du broke down completely, crying with piercing despair. His words were enough to make any listener's heart ache and shed a tear.

Zhang Ze was rendered speechless. He thought of his wife and child. He thought of his elderly parents and the mortgage he'd never finish paying off. So this is how I die...

He sighed heavily, though he felt he was slightly better off than Xiao Du. At least I have a son. The Zhang Family has an heir. I've done my duty to our ancestors...

CRASH!

The yacht slammed onto the island with a thunderous roar. The entire island trembled from the impact, and the vessel was shattered into pieces.

Old Huang and the others, who had already run far away, were so shaken by the scene that their faces turned deathly pale and their legs trembled uncontrollably. To throw a yacht over a hundred meters? How much strength would that take? And he did it after walking on water while carrying it? If they hadn't seen it with their own eyes, they would have thought they had traveled to another world. Even so, the whole thing felt so surreal it was impossible to accept.

"Monkey, do you think we've all been collectively hypnotized?"

"Uh... Old Huang, what do you think? Old Huang?"

Monkey turned his head and nearly blew a gasket. The old bastard was cowering on the ground with his hands over his head, ass in the air, trembling all over.

"I'll be damned..." Monkey was so furious he couldn't see straight. He walked up and kicked Old Huang right in the rear. "You old goat, you're scared now, are you? Where was this fear earlier?"

Old Huang rolled with the kick, scrambled to his feet, and dusted himself off, saying calmly, "What does a kid like you know? This is the art of survival. You've still got a lot to learn."

"Pah!" Monkey spat. "Survival? By sticking your ass in the air like an ostrich? You're a disgrace!"

"Alright, everyone quiet down!" Jiaolong commanded, his voice cold. "You're men of the Divine Machine Camp. Look at yourselves! Have you no shame?"

"Captain, I take issue with that. You were running faster than a rabbit just now," Monkey retorted, unconvinced.

"Get the hell out of here!" Jiaolong's leg shot out, sending Monkey flying.

This brat! Does he have no respect for the chain of command? I'm his captain, after all!

Seeing everyone staring at him, Jiaolong's face flushed slightly. He cleared his throat and announced, "Everyone, with me! Let's go welcome the instructor!"

"Yes, sir!"

And so, the members of the Divine Machine Camp, who had been in such a pathetic state just moments before, followed Jiaolong's lead and marched toward... Lin Mu.

Monkey limped along behind them.

"Heh, enjoyed that kick, did you?" Old Huang said, rubbing his own butt with a lewd grin.

"Enjoy my ass!" Monkey sneered. "You're the one who personally went to get our new instructor. Any idea how he's going to deal with you later?"

But Old Huang just smirked. "Kid, what if I tell Instructor Lin this was all your idea? Who do you think he'll believe, you or me?"

Seeing Old Huang revert to his simple and honest facade, Monkey panicked. "Old Huang! My friend, my brother! Please, don't! We're thick as thieves, you and I!"

"Forget it!" Old Huang shoved Monkey away disdainfully. "It's no use even if you call me grandpa now."

"Grandpa!"

Monkey immediately dropped to his knees before Old Huang.

"Damn it, you're shameless!" Old Huang exclaimed. "You have absolutely no integrity!"

Chapter 557: One Person is Not Enough to Fight!

On the beach.

Lin Mu set down Zhang Ze and Xiao Du and shook his head slightly. The two men had already fainted from fear.

When he saw a group of over a hundred people approaching, he immediately stood with his hands behind his back, sizing them up.

Is this the renowned Divine Machine Camp of Huaxia? The unit I'm supposed to lead from now on? Too weak!

Just when Lin Mu thought these people were coming to greet him, he was startled to find that they walked right past him as if he weren't there at all.

Lin Mu was left speechless.

When Jiaolong and the others saw Shi Potian, they were all slightly taken aback.

Is this our new instructor? Is he even twenty years old? He looks like a kid, doesn't he?

Although his build and presence seemed right, it was still hard for them to believe. But recalling the scene from just a moment ago, no one dared to hesitate.

"Attention!"

"At ease!"

"Salute!"

Jiaolong snapped his heels together, raised his right hand to his temple, and shouted towards Shi Potian, "Divine Machine Camp, all ninety-eight members salute Instructor Lin!"

"We salute Instructor Lin!"

Behind Jiaolong, the rest of the unit also saluted and shouted their greeting. Their voices were as loud as a great bell, scaring away the seagulls overhead.

Shi Potian was also stunned. He had just come ashore and didn't quite grasp what was happening.

Did nearly a hundred men just walk up and salute me?

Seeing Shi Potian remain silent, the members of the Divine Machine Camp dared not speak. No one said a word; only the strong wind howled. They all felt a growing anxiety.

It's over. We're done for. Instructor Lin must be holding a grudge against us. He could lift a yacht, walk on water, and even throw the yacht back here. This Instructor Lin is terrifying. If he holds this against us, are there any good days ahead? Absolutely not!

Ma Biao whispered, "Captain, what now? Is Instructor Lin really going to make trouble for us?"

"I think our enthusiasm scared Instructor Lin."

"Right, right! Baozi finally said something that makes sense."

"All of you, shut your mouths!"

Jiaolong's face twitched. These little rascals. They're usually so undisciplined, but how dare they joke at a time like this? They're practically asking for death!

"Instructor Lin, would you like a cigarette?" Jiaolong chuckled and stepped forward. "Instructor Lin, are you alright? The situation just now was extremely urgent. We were planning to send people to pick you up, but we never expected Old Huang to be so careless as to not prepare enough fuel!"

He added, "Rest assured, I'll be sure to teach him a harsh lesson!"

Hearing Jiaolong's words, everyone was stunned.

Is this still our captain? Look at him, with that sycophantic expression. I really want to stomp on his face with my size-forty-two shoe.

"Instructor Lin, I, Old Huang, swear I didn't do it on purpose!" At that moment, a voice filled with the utmost sincerity came from the other side. "I've been waiting for this day, hoping for the stars and the moon, for Instructor Lin to come lead our Divine Machine Camp! From the moment I saw you, Instructor Lin, I knew that only you could lead us!"

"If a single word I've said is a lie, may I never find a wife in this lifetime!"

"Old Huang, have some shame!" Monkey's voice rang out. "You don't have a wife to begin with, so what's the point of that oath?"

The crowd instinctively turned their heads. They saw Old Huang and Monkey standing before another young man, spouting all sorts of oaths and fawning compliments. And that young man was watching Jiaolong and his men with a wry smile.

Shi Potian scratched his head, looking simple and honest as he said, "I'm not your instructor; he is."

GASP!

The nearly one hundred men were instantly rendered speechless, as if they were ducks with their necks being wrung.

Did we... get the wrong person?

Meanwhile, Old Huang and Monkey were still chattering away.

"Instructor Lin, your stance just now was just too cool! I, Old Huang, am in complete awe."

"Instructor Lin, don't listen to that oaf Old Huang! My admiration for you is like a surging river, endless and unstoppable, like the Yellow River bursting its banks!"

Watching Old Huang and Monkey spout such shameless flattery, the corners of Jiaolong's and the others' mouths twitched. They were on the verge of tears.

"Enough." Lin Mu waved his hand, too lazy to bother with these two clowns, and walked toward Jiaolong and the others.

"I,

Lin Wudi,

am the Divine Machine Camp's future instructor!"

As Lin Mu took a step forward, every member of the Divine Machine Camp took a collective step back.

"I heard some of you aren't too welcoming of my arrival?"

"You're not convinced?"

"Is that right?"

Lin Mu's gaze swept over all the members of the Divine Machine Camp. Not a single person dared to meet his eyes.

"I heard your tradition is to challenge the new instructor, is it not?" Lin Mu rolled up his sleeves and said, "Come on then."

But after waiting for a long time, no one dared to respond.

"Hm?" Lin Mu let out a faint snort.

"Monkey, didn't you just say you wanted to challenge the new instructor?"

"What?" Monkey hurriedly scurried behind Lin Mu and said to the man who had spoken, "Ma Biao, don't you go spouting nonsense! My respect for our Instructor Lin is like a surging river..."

"Shut up," Lin Mu said flatly.

"Yes!" Monkey snapped to attention, took a step back, and exchanged a look with Old Huang.

"Kid, I wasn't lying to you, was I? You can't go wrong following me."

"Impressive, big bro. You were right."

Lin Mu looked at the members of the Divine Machine Camp before him and asked, "Who is Ma Biao? You want to challenge me?"

"Instructor Lin, don't listen to their nonsense! I never said that!" Ma Biao shouted.

Are you kidding me? As if I'd dare to challenge you!

"What's this? Is this the so-called Divine Machine Camp? You have the guts to do it, but not to admit it?" Lin Mu shook his head. "No wonder the seven other military regions look down on you and you can never hold your heads high. Always finishing last. Is this all the backbone you have?"

"The Divine Machine Camp... is nothing more than this!"

Lin Mu's tone was filled with utter disdain, causing every member of the Divine Machine Camp's face to flush red as they clenched their fists.

"What's the matter? Not convinced?" Raising an eyebrow, Lin Mu said coolly, "If any of you aren't convinced, step forward now. I'll take you on, one-on-one."

"Of course, if you think you can't win alone, you're all welcome to come at me together."

"I, Lin Wudi, will take you all on!"

Take us all on at once? That's unbelievably arrogant!

Old Huang huffed and said, "As expected of Instructor Lin! So domineering! I, Old Huang, am completely convinced!"

Monkey smacked his lips. That shameless Old Huang...

"Instructor Lin!" Jiaolong suddenly roared. "You can humiliate me, you can even humiliate every single one of us, but you will not humiliate the name 'Divine Machine Camp'!"

The others all glared at Lin Mu, their faces contorted with anger. Joining the Divine Machine Camp was the greatest honor of their lives. But Lin Mu's words had disparaged their unit as worthless, driving these hardened, iron-willed soldiers to the brink of fury.

"I, Jiaolong," Jiaolong stepped forward and shouted, "challenge you!"

Lin Mu nodded calmly and asked, "Anyone else?"

"Just him alone won't be much of a fight."

Chapter 558: From now on, you are mine!

One isn't enough for a fight?

Isn't that a little too arrogant?

In the eyes of outsiders, the Divine Machine Camp was a group of monsters. They were the elites of every unit, the beings closest to the rank of Soldier King. Any one of them could easily take down a hundred ordinary soldiers. If this unit were deployed for a collective operation, they could effortlessly handle an army of ten thousand men.

For that reason, they never respected any new instructors, and they certainly didn't respect ordinary people.

But now, Lin Mu had actually said that one of them wasn't enough for a fight? This wasn't just belittling them; it was a humiliation to the Divine Machine Camp—a humiliation to every single one of them!

"Instructor Lin, I alone am enough!" Ma Biao stepped forward, his face filled with anger. "Instructor Lin, I, Ma Biao, challenge you!"

"You?" Lin Mu shook his head. "You're even worse."

It wasn't that Lin Mu was bragging. These men really were too weak. Although they were seen as monsters by outsiders, in Lin Mu's eyes, they were just ordinary people who were slightly stronger than average.

"We won't know if I'm good enough until we try!" Anger flared in Ma Biao's eyes. He had just realized something. The one who had carried the boat and walked on water was Shi Potian, not Lin Mu! That was why he dared to issue a challenge. Shi Potian was formidable, but could Lin Mu really be even more formidable than him? Ma Biao figured that Lin Mu was just riding on the coattails of Shi Potian's earlier display to deliberately provoke them. After all, if the entire esteemed Divine Machine Camp had to fight him, it would be an embarrassing story even if they won.

"Fine," Lin Mu nodded and said, "Since you want to challenge me, I'll give you a chance."

Ma Biao stepped forward and took an offensive stance. "Instructor Lin, are you ready?"

"Come on. Don't waste time," Lin Mu said, sounding somewhat impatient.

"Alright!"

Ma Biao was incredibly tall, built like an iron tower. His strength was astounding, and his speed was nothing to scoff at. Once, in a bare-handed battle, Ma Biao had taken down more than two hundred opponents. It was after that fight that he was selected to join the Divine Machine Camp. After all this time training with them, Ma Biao's strength had become even more formidable.

"Ah, why didn't I think of that?" Monkey said, having an epiphany. "The person who carried the boat across the waves wasn't Instructor Lin, but his bodyguard. We have no idea what his actual strength is."

"I can't believe that guy Ma Biao beat me to it," Old Huang chuckled. "You can still give it a try."

"Forget it," Monkey pouted. "Ma Biao is strong. Our Instructor Lin is no match for him."

The others came to the same conclusion. They felt Lin Mu had just been bluffing. Once Ma Biao made his move, his true colors would be revealed.

"It's starting!" Everyone's gaze sharpened as Ma Biao moved. His speed was incredible. He truly embodied the saying: as still as a maiden, as swift as a startled rabbit. Ma Biao threw a punch, the force of it whistling with the sound of wind and thunder!

BAM!

However, just as Ma Biao's fist was about to connect with Lin Mu, everyone watched wide-eyed as Ma Biao was sent flying backward, moving even faster than his initial attack.

"COUGH, COUGH!" Ma Biao lay on the ground, his face pale and his eyes filled with utter shock.

It wasn't just him; the others were stunned too. What had just happened? None of them had even seen Lin Mu move, yet Ma Biao was already defeated?

"With such a pathetic level of strength, I really don't know how you got into the Divine Machine Camp," Lin Mu said, shaking his head mockingly. "I'll say it again: the Divine Machine Camp is nothing special."

The way the men looked at Lin Mu began to change.

"Holy crap, he's that strong?" Monkey's mouth hung open, his face a little pale.

"Weren't you just saying Ma Biao got lucky with the opportunity? You can go up now," Old Huang teased with a grin.

Just as Monkey was about to speak, Lin Mu's voice cut through the air. "I'll give you one more chance. All of you, at once."

He continued, "Of course, you can refuse. But if you do, I'm leaving immediately. Because I, Lin Wudi, have no interest in leading a bunch of cowards who don't even dare to fight into the military competition!"

Hearing Lin Mu's words, the eyes of every soldier in the Divine Machine Camp turned red with fury.

"Dammit. I can't take this anymore!"

"Me neither! I'm going to kill this son of a bitch!"

"Count me in!"

"And me!"

"..."

In an instant, more than a dozen men stepped forward, their faces burning with anger. Jiaolong was no exception.

"Just you few?" Lin Mu raised an eyebrow, his tone dripping with scorn. "Are the rest of you just spineless cowards? Don't make me look down on you!"

"How can we stand for this?"

"If it's ganging up on him, so be it! Let's go!"

"Everyone, get him!"

Lin Mu's words were like a lit fuse on a powder keg. Nearly a hundred soldiers of the Divine Machine Camp charged toward him as one. Each man let out a furious roar, as if unleashing a torrent of pent-up frustration.

SMACK! SMACK! SMACK!

However, these men couldn't even touch the hem of Lin Mu's clothes before they were sent flying.

"Damn it!" A fallen soldier spat out a mouthful of dirt, scrambled to his feet, and charged at Lin Mu again.

Dozens of men attacking one person, and they couldn't even graze his clothes? It was beyond embarrassing.

THUD!

SLAP!

THUMP!

A series of dull impacts echoed across the field—the sound of fists meeting flesh, punctuated by cries of pain and howls of frustration. The face of every soldier was flushed with a mixture of humiliation, anger, and defiance. Their eyes were bloodshot, as if they were finally venting all their bottled-up emotions.

"I'm a man of the Divine Machine Camp! Who are you to look down on me!"

"Aaaah!"

Another man went flying.

"Remember my name! It's Baozi!"

"Oof!"

He too was sent flying.

"I, Mountain Chicken, will fight you to the death!"

"Ouch!"

...

Watching his teammates get tossed away one by one, Ma Biao, who had been lying on the ground, let out a furious roar. He climbed to his feet and charged at Lin Mu again.

"Ma Biao is coming for you!"

Like an enraged bull, Ma Biao rushed Lin Mu, let out a great bellow, and threw a punch aimed straight for his head.

BAM!

Lin Mu caught the punch with ease. "Now that's a bit more like the Divine Machine Camp," he chuckled. "But you're still lacking in strength, and your speed is too slow."

With a casual flick of his wrist, he sent Ma Biao screaming through the air again.

"Awesome!"

However, this time Ma Biao just laughed heartily, his eyes shining brightly. He wiped a trickle of blood from his lips and charged once more. After being sent flying three times in a row, Ma Biao could no longer get up. Yet, a look of exhilaration he hadn't felt in a long time spread across his face.

"So thrilling! So exhilarating!"

The others felt the same way.

"Dammit, brothers, I'm coming!" Monkey bellowed, his eyes bloodshot as he rushed forward, only to be sent flying by a swift kick from Lin Mu.

"Shit!"

Before he hit the ground, two of his teammates caught him.

"Thanks... damn you two bastards!"

It turned out they had just thrown Monkey right back at Lin Mu.

Lin Mu laughed loudly. "Eat my fist!"

His punch was as fast as lightning, flying straight for Monkey, who saw a flash of despair in his eyes. Just as the fist was about to hit him, Monkey felt his body get yanked backward. It was Old Huang, who had grabbed his legs at the last possible second.

"Old Huang..."

BAM! BAM!

A figure appeared in a blur and, with a single punch for each of them, sent both Monkey and Old Huang flying.

CLAP! CLAP!

Lin Mu dusted off his hands and looked down at the nearly one hundred men lying on the ground. "Do you submit?" he asked. "If not, we can continue."

After dealing with a hundred men, Lin Mu wasn't even breathing heavily. There wasn't a speck of dirt on him, a stark contrast to the members of the Divine Machine Camp, who were sprawled on the ground like heaps of mud.

"Never!"

"Submit my ass!"

"Brothers, are you rested up? Ready for more?"

"Let's go, let's go!"

"Get him!"

A few minutes later.

"Do you submit now?" Lin Mu asked with a grin.

"Never!"

"Get him!"

"Aargh!"

Lin Mu's smile widened. "Do you submit?"

"We... will not... submit!"

"..."

A few minutes later.

Lin Mu just said, "Hm?"

A single hand shot up from the pile of bodies. "Help me up... I can still fight!"

THWACK!

Lin Mu walked over and knocked the guy out with one punch. "How about now?"

A collective groan rose from the soldiers of the Divine Machine Camp. "We submit! We submit!"

"Good." Lin Mu nodded in satisfaction. "From today onward, you all belong to me!"

Chapter 559: Everyone Else Stays, He Gets Lost!

"From today onward, this place," Lin Mu pointed at the ground with his foot, "is mine to command!"

"Any objections?"

If he had said this before, Lin Mu would have certainly been beaten half to death. But now, they were already nearly half dead. Lin Mu alone had taken down every single one of them.

"No!" the still-conscious members of the Divine Machine Camp roared, mustering their last ounce of strength.

"Good," Lin Mu said. "Remember this. This is the first and last time! From now on, I don't want to hear a second voice in the Divine Machine Camp. My will, and my will alone, must be followed!"

Lin Mu's tone carried a chill that made every member of the Divine Machine Camp shiver.

"Understood!" the men of the Divine Machine Camp spoke in unison.

"Louder! I can't hear you!" Lin Mu said coldly, his voice landing like thunder in their ears.

Even those who had fainted sat up abruptly and shouted, "Understood!"

"Good!" Lin Mu said coldly. "Now all of you, get up and go back to sleep!"

Huh? The men thought they had misheard him. Not training, but sleeping?

"What? Are you defying my command?" Lin Mu asked coldly.

"No, sir!"

Jiaolong struggled to his feet and started toward the barracks. He had been the focus of Lin Mu's attention earlier, so his injuries were the most severe, leaving him with no strength at all. Gritting his teeth, Jiaolong headed for the dormitory. The others helped one another up and obediently went back to sleep as well.

"Huh? What's going on?"

At that moment, Zhang Ze and Xiao Du came to their senses. They were momentarily baffled to see all the men from the Divine Machine Camp heading toward the dormitories, looking utterly ragged.

"Old Huang, what in the world happened?" Zhang Ze asked, walking over to Old Huang, who was rubbing his arms and legs while wincing in pain.

"What happened?" Old Huang rolled his eyes. "Can't you see for yourself?"

Why so much resentment? Did he get beaten up? Zhang Ze wondered.

"Come on, Old Huang, tell me what happened."

Zhang Ze lit a cigarette for Old Huang, who chuckled, took it, and inhaled deeply. "Ah, that's the stuff. I needed that."

Looking supremely satisfied, Old Huang gestured toward the young man not far away. "Just now... he... took on all of us from the Divine Machine Camp. By himself."

"It was a total victory."

Zhang Ze's expression changed. "Old Huang, what are you saying? Instructor Lin challenged all of you by himself and won completely?"

"Old Huang, you're not pulling my leg, are you?" Xiao Du couldn't help but interject. "If it were the other guy, maybe, but him..."

It wasn't that Xiao Du looked down on Lin Mu. It was just that Shi Potian's earlier feat had been too astonishing. Lifting a boat while walking on water—what kind of person possessed such terrifying power and heaven-defying abilities? If anyone could take on the entire Divine Machine Camp alone, it had to be Shi Potian.

Lin Mu? No way.

"Believe it or not!" Old Huang grumbled, struggling to his feet. He swayed as he headed toward the dormitory, muttering, "Ouch, this is killing me. The kid has no respect for his elders."

Watching Old Huang's retreating back, Zhang Ze and Xiao Du exchanged a look, seeing the same shock mirrored in each other's eyes.

Could it really be true?

"Once the storm calms down, call for a boat to pick us up!" Zhang Ze ordered. "I need to ask the commander just where he found these two monsters."

"Instructor Zhang, do you really believe he took on the entire Divine Machine Camp by himself?" Xiao Du asked.

"Just do as I say! Stop asking so many questions!"

Xiao Du went to make the call while Zhang Ze approached Lin Mu.

"Instructor Lin, you..." Zhang Ze opened his mouth, but for a moment, he didn't know what to say.

"If you have something to say, say it."

Zhang Ze took a deep breath. "Did you... really beat them all down just now?"

Lin Mu offered a slight smile. "If you're curious, you could always give it a try."

Seeing that smile, Zhang Ze suddenly shivered. For some reason, this instructor's smile is terrifying.

"No, that's not necessary!" Zhang Ze said with a forced, awkward laugh. "Right, Instructor Lin, the Divine Machine Camp's authorized strength is one hundred men. Including Old Huang, we only have ninety-eight right now, so we need to recruit some new blood. We need at least three."

Lin Mu nodded. "You handle it. Of course, I'm in charge of the Divine Machine Camp now. They'll need my approval to join."

Although Lin Mu's tone was flat, Zhang Ze could feel an undeniable authority in his words. He didn't dare object. Since Lin Mu was now the chief instructor, he called the shots.

"Understood, Instructor Lin. There are a few promising recruits at the base, all with the potential to become members. I'll bring them over for your review."

For some reason, when facing Lin Mu, Zhang Ze felt the same caution he felt when facing his commanding officer. No, it was even more daunting.

This young man is like a behemoth in human form. Placid if left alone, but a man-eater once enraged.

Zhu Tao was ecstatic. He was about to become a member of the Divine Machine Camp. Once he joined, his career would skyrocket! A comrade had even told him that with his skills, he was a shoo-in. The thought made Zhu Tao even more thrilled.

Lin, just you wait! Malice flickered in Zhu Tao's eyes. I hear you're the chief instructor of the Southeast Military Academy? Once I'm in the Divine Machine Camp, you'll be nothing to me! The Divine Machine Camp operates independently of the Southeast Military Region, and I've already heard the chief instructor position there is just for show. When the time comes, I'll challenge you personally! My grandfather and younger brother will be avenged! Just you wait!

「The next morning.」

Zhu Tao set off early. Today was his assessment for the Divine Machine Camp. As long as he passed, he would officially become a member. Besides, his friend in the camp had told him last night that their new instructor was incredibly strong; following him was a guaranteed way to improve rapidly. His friend had sworn on it.

Looking at the other candidates traveling with him, Zhu Tao's face radiated confidence. There were only three spots available. Anyone who failed would be sent back to their original unit, so Zhu Tao cherished this opportunity.

When Zhu Tao stepped onto the Divine Machine Camp's training island and saw the advanced equipment scattered about, his eyes lit up with excitement. This was the place he had dreamed of! He was going to make a name for himself here.

Led by Zhang Ze, Zhu Tao and the other candidates walked toward a large tree. To Zhu Tao's surprise, the island was full of people, but they were all lazing around. Some were sunbathing, others were... playing cards?

This is the Divine Machine Camp? It's nothing like I imagined.

It wasn't just Zhu Tao; even Zhang Ze was a bit bewildered.

"Alright, listen up," Zhang Ze said. "I'm about to take you to meet Instructor Lin of the Divine Machine Camp. All of you, be on your best behavior and show some respect!"

Zhang Ze had confirmed it yesterday: Lin Mu had single-handedly defeated the entire Divine Machine Camp. He knew how proud every single one of those men was. If it weren't true, they would never speak of Instructor Lin with such reverence. The last thing Zhang Ze wanted was for these elite candidates to lose their chance by offending him.

"Don't worry, Instructor Zhang!" Zhu Tao said with a smile. "We won't let you down."

"Good." Zhang Ze nodded in satisfaction. "Zhu Tao, you're my most prized candidate. I'll put in a good word for you with Instructor Lin to make sure you get in."

"Instructor Lin?" Zhu Tao asked, startled.

"Yes, that's him over there." Zhang Ze pointed toward a young man under the tree, his face filled with admiration. To tame the Divine Machine Camp in just half a day—this Instructor Lin was the real deal.

"How can it be him?!"

The moment he saw Lin Mu, the color drained from Zhu Tao's face, leaving it a ghostly white.

"Let's go," Zhang Ze said, pulling the stunned Zhu Tao along.

"Instructor Lin, I've brought the candidates. How would you like to assess them?" Zhang Ze pointed at Zhu Tao. "This is Zhu Tao. He's an excellent soldier—trains hard, has a solid foundation, and his potential is astounding, so..."

Before Zhang Ze could finish, Lin Mu spoke, his voice indifferent. "The others can stay. Tell him to get lost."

Chapter 560: I am the Boss in My Own Territory!

The others stay. He gets kicked out?

This means... I wasn't selected?

Zhu Tao's face flushed red, then turned deathly pale, his expression twisting with fury. The others, however, were ecstatic. They were actually being kept.

Before coming, they knew there were only three spots available. Choosing just three people from a group of over a dozen was an incredibly brutal selection process. Furthermore, they were all aware that among them, Zhu Tao was the strongest. He was supposed to be a shoo-in. That meant there were really only two spots up for grabs.

Originally, they had all been worried. If they weren't selected and got sent back to their original units, it would be utterly humiliating. But now, with a single sentence, Instructor Lin had dismissed the one person who seemed like a sure thing, Zhu Tao, while the rest of them got to stay.

This was a truly pleasant surprise.

"Instructor Lin, I don't quite understand..." Zhang Ze's expression was grim. He had personally assured Zhu Tao that he would definitely get him into the Divine Machine Camp. And Zhu Tao certainly had the strength for it.

"Instructor Lin, twelve o'clock, behind that rock! There's a guy prone!"

"Damn, a one-tap headshot?!"

"Nice one, Instructor Lin! You're amazing!"

"Winner, winner, chicken dinner!"

Monkey's voice, full of worship, came through the phone. "Instructor Lin, you're incredible! You got over thirty kills! You're my idol! My admiration for you is like a—"

"Monkey, shut your trap!"

Listening to the voice from the microphone, Lin Mu cracked a small smile. He put down his phone, looked at Zhang Ze, and said, "You only need to understand one thing."

He paused for effect.

"This is my turf. I call the shots!"

That was what Lin Mu meant. On his turf, he made the rules.

Zhang Ze's face darkened. "Instructor Lin, even if you are an instructor for the Divine Machine Camp, you can't just..."

"What? Do you need me to repeat myself?" Lin Mu raised an eyebrow and shouted, "Jiaolong!"

"Sir!" Jiaolong rushed to stand before Lin Mu, his eyes filled with respect.

"Handle the others." Pointing at Zhu Tao, Lin Mu ordered, "As for this one, throw him out."

"Instructor, this..." Jiaolong glanced at Zhu Tao, his face etched with hesitation.

"What now?" Lin Mu's eyes narrowed. "Are you going to disobey my orders?"

A shiver went down Jiaolong's spine, and he immediately barked, "I wouldn't dare!"

"Then what are you standing around for? Throw him out!"

Hearing the command, Jiaolong looked at Zhu Tao with resigned helplessness. "Sorry about this, brother."

"Instructor Lin, aren't you going a bit too far?" Zhang Ze spoke up, his face dark with displeasure. "You dismissed Zhu Tao without even conducting an assessment! This is completely unfair to him!"

Logically, even if Lin Mu disliked Zhu Tao, he should at least have him go through the assessment before making a decision, right? How could he make such a judgment after just a single glance? It was totally unfair and would surely invite criticism.

"You want to talk to me about fairness?" Lin Mu said coolly. "Is he worthy?"

Hearing such a blunt dismissal, Zhang Ze's expression grew uglier. Zhu Tao's face turned ashen, and he could no longer contain the rage blazing in his eyes.

"I refuse to accept this!" Zhu Tao stared daggers at Lin Mu. "Instructor Lin, I admit I've offended you in the past, but there's no need for personal revenge, is there? You can make me leave, but at least give me a convincing reason! Otherwise, I won't accept it!"

Originally, Zhu Tao saw this as his final opportunity. He believed that as long as he made it into the Divine Machine Camp, his hard work and strength would allow him to secure a firm position. It wouldn't even be impossible to eventually replace the captain. When that time came, he would take his revenge on Lin Mu. It was Lin Mu who had killed his grandfather and caused his brother's death. And so, Zhu Tao craved revenge. But he could never have imagined that the instructor for the Divine Machine Camp, the very unit he yearned to join, was none other than Lin Mu himself.

This threw Zhu Tao into a panic, even a state of fear. He had no idea how this had come to be, and he certainly never expected Lin Mu to publicly tell him to get lost. This wasn't just simple disdain; it was a blatant, naked humiliation, grinding his dignity into the dust. Naturally, Zhu Tao refused to submit.

"Instructor Lin, although Zhu Tao's words were a bit disrespectful, I think he has a point," Zhang Ze said. "I don't know what kind of grudge you two have, but you don't have the final say on who gets into the Divine Machine Camp."

"Oh?" Lin Mu raised an eyebrow. "If I don't have the final say, then who does?"

"I do, of course!"

Just then, a thin, reedy voice cut in. A white-haired elder with a grim expression on his face walked over. He wore a pair of reading glasses and carried the faint scent of Chinese herbs. Following behind him was a tall, stunning girl with short hair, which, far from diminishing her beauty, gave her a unique and spirited aura.

"Professor Feng, you've finally arrived." Upon seeing the elder, a smile touched Zhang Ze's lips, as if the professor's presence gave him a surge of confidence. Zhu Tao was also ecstatic, so thrilled he almost shouted for joy. Even Jiaolong's expression shifted slightly, a troubled look in his eyes.

"Did I just hear someone say that he alone calls the shots in the Divine Machine Camp?" Professor Feng appeared and immediately fixed Lin Mu with a hostile stare. "I've been in the Divine Machine Camp for many years, and I've never heard of such a rule. Or has someone gotten it into their head that they can act tyrannically just because they have a little bit of strength?"

The professor's words were blunt, carrying a scolding tone that made the faces of the Divine Machine Camp members darken.

"Professor Feng, Instructor Lin didn't mean it that way, you..."

Jiaolong was about to explain when Lin Mu spoke coolly, "I meant exactly what I said, old guy. You got a problem with it?"

Old guy? Did Instructor Lin just call Professor Feng an old guy? It's over! It's all over! Instructor Lin is really done for this time!

This professor was of critical importance to the Divine Machine Camp. If they offended him, Instructor Lin might really be the one getting kicked out. At this thought, Jiaolong shot frantic, meaningful glances at Lin Mu.

But Lin Mu acted as if he hadn't seen a thing. Instead, he called out, "Xiao Tian!"

"Present!" Shi Potian instantly appeared behind Lin Mu.

"As of now, you will temporarily serve as the captain of the Divine Machine Camp," Lin Mu said with a wave of his hand. "Next, throw out all irrelevant people. If anyone dares to resist, kill them!"

A murderous intent laced his words, sending a chill through everyone present.

"Teacher Lin, this..." Zhang Ze panicked.

Although he knew Lin Mu wouldn't dare do anything to him, Zhang Ze had witnessed what happened yesterday. One man against the entire Divine Machine Camp. That level of combat prowess proved that Lin Mu wasn't just some scapegoat. In fact, Zhang Ze had already personally asked the commander about him. They had gone to great lengths to recruit this instructor. He was not to be offended.

And so, faced with Lin Mu's overwhelming dominance, Zhang Ze found himself unable to speak.

"Hmph!" At that moment, Professor Feng snorted coldly. "In all my years, I have never seen such an arrogant and presumptuous young man! How utterly audacious!"

"Well, now you have," Lin Mu said flatly. "Get lost. Don't make me do it myself."