

Wow 271

Chapter 271 stand out

"A tough nut to crack?" Ren Fengxing raised an eyebrow, "How tough?"

No sooner had his voice faded away than a peculiar sound, carried by the breeze, reached their ears.

"Rattle-tattle-tattle-tattle~"

The distinctive rumbling sound, which would stand out even among tractors, was particularly grating on the plains of the wilderness.

A brightly colored... car was approaching from a distance.

"Tui!" Ren Fengxing spat out the dogtail grass he had been chewing on and sprang up from the shabby cart, "Never seen that before..."

It wasn't that he had never seen a car, but he had never seen a player who could afford to own one.

Of course, it was a player—the fact that someone could come from the nearby city with a clear purpose and find this place from afar meant they were undoubtedly here for that quest.

Who wouldn't covet a chance to hit the jackpot?

Even the chance to join a group fight for 100 experience points seemed quite tempting.

So, it had to be a player.

But all players aside... What sort of background does a player need to have to be able to whip out a car so soon after starting the game?

You should know that the origin of the dozen or so mines they had was not clean, and it had taken great effort to acquire them, resulting in the death of over ten tools... comrades.

Using them up was supposedly part of the task, but there was also a sense of disposing evidence; otherwise, the glaring red warning signs would always be unnerving.

Having a show of strength was all well and good, but it could only be used once; it was nothing more than a fluke, not genuine strength.

However, a car that could be used continually would undoubtedly strengthen mobility.

He had asked about such things... but those cunning NPCs either ignored him or were ready to rip him off big time.

Otherwise, they wouldn't have resorted to the most primitive human relay to carry two heavy boxes of mines across such a long distance.

But there had been no sign of a third major player guild existing in Blackwater City in previous events...

There are many spawn points for players in the game world; guilds don't need to cluster together. Perhaps they could bloom in more than one place, but they tended to avoid each other to prevent early conflicts over resources.

Black Hole and Thorns are the only two overlords here.

Ren Fengxing stood still, his eyes sparkling with a light as he fell silent for a moment before his face regained that aggressively predatory smile.

"Let's go! Brothers, follow me and let's see which deity this is."

Gu Lan curved the corner of his mouth slightly and silently followed.

The gathered solo players watched the scene from afar.

Being incorporated unwillingly, they wouldn't be content; however, the advantage of combining two guilds from the start allowed them to be pushed around.

If these solo players could truly unite in heart and mind, then they wouldn't be solo players anymore.

But if there was something that could stand against these two guilds, they would be the first to consider switching sides, depending on the situation.

"Rattle-tattle-tattle-tattle~"

The engine's roar gradually softened, and Kuang Xin, sitting in the front, looked at the two or three groups gathering in the distance with some excitement, "I've found the organization!"

Dai Lian's approach was not as relaxed seeing the players, who had straightened their weapons but had not aimed directly at them or confronted them head-on.

Open and covert fights among players are just too common.

Murder and looting are all in a day's work.

The car they were driving was their biggest "treasure," and he knew its value. He absolutely didn't believe that the players gathering in groups weren't tempted by it.

The problem, though, was that the car was too noisy, making it impossible to approach silently and stay hidden.

By the time they noticed others, those others had already spotted them first.

"Careful," Dai Lian warned in a low voice.

"Click!" Gong Yan, sitting in the back seat, promptly showed her vigilance with her actions; she chambered a bullet into her small pistol and then tucked it back into her waistband.

Before figuring out how to deal with the orcs, they might have to tussle with other players first.

"Whoa~ Whoa~ Whoa! Brother!" Ren Fengxing stepped in front of the car, not far ahead, stretching out his arms and laughing exaggeratedly.

As the car's rumbling finally ceased and it came to a halt just a meter away from him, he approached and patted the hood of the car.

The makeshift metal shell trembled violently with a "thud thud" sound.

It was empty... The connections were not tight.

The condition of this little car didn't seem great, as could be told from both the exterior and the noise from the engine.

Yet, it was for this very reason that it was possible for the current players to have gotten hold of it.

But looking at the paint job on the car... Why did it look so familiar?

"Hey! Brother! Are you here for the quest too? Where'd you get this thing? Impressive!"

Kuang Xin was the first to jump out of the car, leading the way.

When it came to taking action, he was truly on it, no hesitation.

Circumventing to the other side, Dai Lian was clear about his role; he deliberately went to the rear door to open it for Gong Yan, then moved behind Kuang Xin from the back of the car.

His actions were smooth and reasonable, showing not the slightest hint of fear outwardly.

"So, what do you say, brother? Are you here for the quest as well?" Kuang Xin took up the conversation promptly, as Dai Lian had taught him.

Ren Fengxing's eyes swept over the three people before him and then gazed into the distance following the direction they came from—no one?

Just three of them?

Could he swallow them directly?

But they didn't seem at all afraid, and if they really had some skills up their sleeves, acting rashly could lead to an unexpected catastrophe, not to mention if they escaped, it might disturb the guild's future development.

Offending ordinary solo players wasn't an issue, but to offend players of an unknown origin showing certain strength... It wasn't advisable.

He would test the waters first.

Ren Fengxing leaned casually against the side of the car, "We've formed an alliance; interested in joining us for some action?"

By that time, Dai Lian had also stepped up but still stood half a step behind Kuang Xin, "What are the rules?"

"Very simple, I have more people, so you listen to me," Ren Fengxing smiled, looking rather radiant.

Dai Lian gestured toward the others in the distance with a tilt of his chin, "And them?"

"Them?" Ren Fengxing glanced back, "They're in the alliance too!"

"They don't seem very willing?"

"Hey, we're all brothers here; play together, and they'll become willing."

"We're not very willing either," Dai Lian said, looking directly into the other's eyes with a light, faint smile on his lips.

It was a bit cold and sharp.

"Then... shall we try?"

...

"Give it a try."

It was a perfect understanding.

No knives, no guns.

Once the equipment came into play, it meant they were dead enemies.

A follower behind Ren Fengxing, who looked like a bear, stepped forward half a step, clenching his fist until it crackled.

In the guild, every member's role was assigned before entering the game.

They focused on differentiated development—with physical strength and stature maxed out, they played a brute force game.

"This is the weakest underling of mine, who among you wants to play with him?" Ren Fengxing said, his eyelids low, lying through his teeth.

Kuang Xin stepped forward, looking up at the other side, "I will."

His body trembled with excitement; it was his first time facing off against another player head-on.

"Kid, I'll let you go first." The burly man looked down at Kuang Xin with eyes full of disdain.

This little grasshopper, effeminate with handsome features, could be flattened into a pancake with a single punch.

"You said that?"

"I said it."

Kuang Xin earnestly gathered power for a punch on the spot.

His muscles flexed, channeling startling strength with his more than 14 points of physical fitness.

"Boom!"

The heavyweight body flew backwards and landed on the ground, raising dust.

With a turn of the head, he passed out cleanly.

"..."

"..."

The scene fell silent.

"Boss, number three got taken out in a second..."

A hint of red-raged mark faintly appeared on Ren Fengxing's forehead.

He said in a deep voice, "I fucking saw it!"

"He's a pro, I'll take him." Another composed voice came from behind Ren Fengxing.

The taciturn man stepped forward, waved Ren Fengxing behind him, and looked fervently at Kuang Xin, "You're a pro; he didn't deserve to fight you."

He had seen it clearly from the side; number three wasn't completely surprised, he had sensed the opponent might be more than ordinary at the last moment.

However, the hasty block didn't work.

Dai Lian couldn't stand it any longer and asked from behind Kuang Xin, "What? Planning to fight in turns?"

Ren Fengxing, suppressing his voice, said, "Just this one."

"It doesn't matter how many rounds." Kuang Xin's eyes were ablaze with excitement, what was the point of fighting NPCs in the combat arena all day long?

If you want to show off, you need to do it in front of "acquaintances"!

He had just learnt a specialized fighting skill from his boss and was eager to put it to use!

Interception!

Joint locks!

Combo hits!

He interrupted the opponent's attacks, reversed his hand to lock the joint, and at the moment of joint dislocation, a barrage of punches came crashing down like a storm.

The fight ended in the ninth second after it began...

Kuang Xin, blessed with numerous special attributes, was in a league of his own when it came to fighting skills among the players.

"..."

"..."

Switching opponents made little difference to the outcome.

For a while, every player who looked at Kuang Xin unintentionally showed a hint of wariness in their eyes.

Gu Lan, the mature lady who had been quiet at the back, looked at the young man of average build and handsome features before her and couldn't help but narrow her eyes.

'So strong...'

Where did this monster come from?

"Lost again, boss..."

"I fucking saw it!"

Ren Fengxing focused on the three before him, his gaze wandering restlessly.

To admit defeat would be unsatisfactory.

Moreover, those who had already surrendered but were also watching would start to waver.

Even a draw would have been acceptable...

But to lose without being able to fight back!

As dangerous thoughts brewed, even the air seemed to grow stagnant.

No matter how strong... surely not stronger than a bullet, right?

Even if these three had some skill, could they not be randomly shot dead?

He didn't have much confidence either...

Kuang Xin smiled broadly, "Anyone else?"

After being thrashed by NPCs all this time, he finally got the chance to thrash others!

"Boss! Boss! There's movement with the orcs!"

The sudden cry broke the tense atmosphere on the field.

Close observation could be dangerous, but large movements could be seen from a distance.

Ren Fengxing had always had people watching the large movements of the orcs since the mission briefing stated these creatures liked to wander around.

Blocking them within the assigned area had been pure luck.

Now, the orcs seemed to be preparing for some new activity.

Ren Fengxing turned his head toward the running underling, "Don't panic, explain slowly."

"They've taken everything and left!"

Chapter 272 Main Quest - Human Traitor

"What are they going off to do?"

"I don't know, boss..."

"I didn't ask you!"

The orcs suddenly pulled out, seemingly with a purpose, rather than just wandering aimlessly.

"Let's go! Let's follow them and see..." Ren Fengxing made a decision.

The orcs' abrupt change disrupted his train of thought. The awkward stalemate he had been hesitant to break was now shattered by this unexpected twist.

"All together now."

Everyone burst into laughter, an unoccurred dispute unable to affect their brotherly camaraderie.

...

The orc leader, striding with axes in hand, cast a backward glance and saw those black dots lingering far behind. He snorted in disdain, "Hmph!"

These hairless monkeys are slippery like eels, cowardly and irritating. Those not on their own turf would rather avoid combat and cannot be caught up with, nor is fighting them satisfying enough.

Only humans backed by their so-called "homes" would cling to something called "home" out of attachment and choose not to leave.

His target this time was those humans; using their heads for axe-throwing practice was extremely efficient, and he felt his throwing skills improving rapidly. With more time to practice, next time he met that human, he definitely wouldn't let himself be shot down by a bow and arrow.

But he couldn't always use the heads of his own people for practice. It was one thing to chop off a few displeasing ones, but he couldn't well kill them all.

So humans it had to be!

Especially since on their wanderings, they had stumbled upon a settlement of humans...

Next time we meet... Next time, I definitely want to blow up that human's head with my flying axe!

He purposely controlled his shoulder wound to not fully heal, a reminder that the minor injury wouldn't impede him in any way. He kept it just to remind himself—do not forget!

"Hmph~" The orc leader withdrew his gaze, looking ahead.

Those hairless monkeys following behind might just trigger their so-called "compassion," "mercy," "justice," or other such boring emotions when they witness their "brethren" in distress.

Capture them all! Every single one!

Make a skull flag, and plant it in front of the humans' city gate!

...

[You observe your surroundings with curiosity, realizing this is a whole new unknown world...]

"Are you a poor soul who escaped from the city too?"

A kind-hearted person came up and asked.

Xu Ruoguang patted his head, feeling it heavy and foggy.

In fact, ever since he "woke up," his head had been in a constant state of grogginess.

Multiple "crossings"... "Crossing"? What "crossing"?

"Heh~"

He knocked on his head again, and Xu Ruoguang laughed helplessly.

He had read too many novels, and it made his mind muddled.

He clearly knew his family background, and he had memories of his path of growth.

His existence was real, not fictitious; there was no such thing as a special mission.

"Mission"...

"Mission"?

"Mission," huh?

Heh... I got a hell of a "mission"!

Time to play some games.

The words of the NPC in front of him helped Xu Ruoguang find his bearings—

'A poor soul?'

'I'm a poor soul? Escaped from the city?'

[You begin to accept the identity of coming to this world, and a brand new world unfolds before you...]

An arrival background with history—could this mean that he naturally had a quest line attached to him in the game?

This identity is just... terrific!

Main quest—Take back the city!

Kill, kill, kill!

Take out everyone who's looked down on me, despised me, or harmed me in the past!

[Activate main quest—Human Traitor!]

[Human Traitor: The Human Emperor has betrayed humanity, never belonging to humankind! His origins have countless ties to demons. Kill the Human Emperor before he ascends to power! The whole Galaxy Human Empire will thank you for your effort! Kill him! Kill him!

Kill him! Quest Requirement: Assassinate the Human Emperor before his coronation 0/1. Quest Reward: 10000000000000 universal experience points, Omniversal Wish Card*1, item reward unknown.]

"?"

"Tsk tsk!"

I get a mission just by entering the game? Buddy is truly the chosen one!

The Human Emperor?

Who is the Human Emperor?

Show yourself!

I'll stab you to death!

"Hey! Do you know where the Human Emperor is?"

"The Emperor?" The man coming over to talk asked with a start, "I did hear that our empire had an emperor... but it seems he has already passed away a while ago."

"..."

"..."

The two stared at each other, eyes wide.

"Passed away?"

"Passed away."

"Then who the hell is the Emperor?"

"..."

"..."

"Forget it..." Xu Ruoguang waved his hand dismissively.

The main quest might require some twists and turns, even if he found the other party, they might not be someone he could contend with at this stage.

Just by looking at the string of countless zeros in the mission reward, anyone would know the difficulty of this quest. Although he still didn't know how much quest experience was generally given in this game, there probably weren't many games that threw out such an absurd number of digits for a newbie quest.

Maybe... it's better to develop first.

"What is this place?" Xu Ruoguang looked around curiously and asked.

"The wilderness... we were all driven out of Grey Iron City. What about you? Aren't you the same?"

"Grey Iron City..." Xu Ruoguang murmured softly, remembering the name before saying, "Of course not, what's it like in Grey Iron City? I was planning to go there, but unfortunately, I got lost and couldn't find the way."

Of course, he couldn't originate from the same place as the other person; if they were to dig deeper, he wouldn't know anything and would immediately give himself away.

Although this was a game, Xu Ruoguang naturally didn't consider this world as a real game world. When facing the natives, he could instinctively switch his thinking to adapt to the game's world, as if it were an instinct.

"Oh~" The man coming up pointed in a certain direction, "Grey Iron City is over there. If you want to go, just head in that direction. But I advise you, it's best not to go."

"Oh? Why?" Xu Ruoguang asked with a light smile, "Is there any place worse to live than that?"

As he spoke, he casually pointed in a direction. As long as his background was different from the man's, he wouldn't have to worry about being exposed.

"Over there?" The man looked bewildered, "That way... it seems to be the direction of Blackwater City. You came from there?"

"Hmm... not exactly," Xu Ruoguang replied ambiguously, "What happened to Grey Iron City?"

"We couldn't get by there, so we ran out. What do you think happened... I don't know about the other places, but almost everyone there has to undergo biochemical surgery and modifications. Those who don't want the surgery are considered heretics, and the side effects of the modifications are so severe that people either cannot survive or have to flee."

[Obtained Faction Information (Unidentified): Grey Iron City.]

"Oh~" Xu Ruoguang nodded, his tone full of sympathy, "That does seem like a bad place to go."

"Hey~ in this era, where is a good place to go, huh?"

"True..." Xu Ruoguang sighed in agreement before asking, "Is there anything here that needs help? I'm new and don't have many skills, but I'm strong. If there's any way I can help, just let me know. I'll be relying on you all for my future life here."

"Oh, is that so..." The man pondered for a moment, his eyes suddenly lighting up, "We're actually preparing to build a waterwheel over there. Do you think you can help?"

[Triggered side quest—The Unfinished Waterwheel.]

[The Unfinished Waterwheel: The oasis in the wasteland is full of hope. The people here are attempting to create a waterwheel to start a new life! Quest Requirements: Help the local residents build a waterwheel 0/1. Quest Reward: 100 universal experience points, Science Points *1.]

"A waterwheel? That's what I'm best at!" Xu Ruoguang rolled up his sleeves and headed over.

"Great, follow me!" The man laughed heartily, jogging to keep up, looking extremely pleased, "By the way, what's your name?"

[A new life, a new name, you only have one chance, you want to tell them your name is...]

"Me?" Xu Ruoguang was taken aback, then replied truthfully, "Xu Ruoguang, my name is Xu Ruoguang, from the Seventh Army... emmmm, just blathering."

Where did that slip of the tongue come from?

"I'm Xu Ruoguang, just call me Guang," he said.

"Alright, Guang, come on! We can live well here, no need to be always scheming with those noblemen in the city."

[Welcome, esteemed wanderer 'Kuang Xin,' you have officially joined the world of Galaxy Online. From now on, please enjoy exploring freely!]

"Right, right~" Xu Ruoguang's face broke into a broad smile.

Entering this game world, even the air tasted familiar.

Though the real world was good, and his relationships with his parents were harmonious, it always felt somewhat unreal.

It was as if only in this game world could he truly be alive...

[Triggered side quest——The Collapsed Roof.]

[Triggered side quest—Hunting in the Wilds.]

[Triggered side quest—Dancing at the Campfire Party.]

[Triggered side quest...]

"Guang~ give us a hand here."

"Guang! Come to your sister over here."

"Guang... help me carry this rabbit."

"Guang..."

"Guang..."

...

"Guang! Run for it!"

On the third day in the game, before his eyes... flames reached for the sky!

Green figures wreaked havoc, and lying flat on the ground, Xu Ruoguang's eyes reflected the shadows of his foes—

Orcs!

Chapter 273 Bullet Time!

"They've started fighting over there..."

"Is that orc's target this human settlement?"

The line of players trailing far behind finally realized the orcs' intention.

"Could they be trying to lure us over?"

"What do we do, boss? Should we join in?" Many eyes turned toward Ren Fengxing, waiting for his decision.

Whether willing or not, since everyone was here to complete a mission, even if temporarily submitting to others was unpleasant, revenge had to be planned for after the fact.

Ren Fengxing slightly furrowed his brows, gazing at the makeshift fence that enclosed the wilderness oasis. The calm pond quietly flowed past the settlement, which used to be a peaceful haven but now overshadowed by the dark clouds of war.

Scattered sparks from overturned fires accompanied the fleeing and chasing figures, easily igniting the flammable materials used in construction.

Endless screams seemed to squeeze into his mind from all directions.

This game was made too realistic...

So much so that even witnessing this kind of game scenario could make one feel the direct cruelty and brutality.

Even though it's only a game...

Humans were being slaughtered by aliens...

Right before their eyes, completely powerless to retaliate.

The humans settled in the wilderness might have had some weapons, but they were still caught off guard by the ferocious orc assault.

The reason this wilderness oasis had survived until now was simply luck...

Having the orcs deplete a bit more energy in the process of chasing down game NPCs was undoubtedly the best option for himself and the others.

What do the lives of NPCs have to do with them, the players?

But... Ren Fengxing clenched the gun in his hand, feeling his palm grow stiff with force.

He had yet to voice his decision when another sound exploded beside him.

"Damn it! What are you waiting for?" Kuang Xin, holding a pair of axes, charged toward the battlefield.

Orcs? Orcs? Is this what they call orcs?

These green-skinned, big-bellied creatures that looked like ogres out of legends, these are the f*cking orcs?

Where's my beast-eared girl?

Where's my feisty little Furie?

Give me back my orc sister!

Looking like a pile of shit! And they dare to invade our human territory!

Watching Kuang Xin suddenly rush into action, Dai Lian let out a slight sigh and turned to persuade the others, "They're resisting too. With NPCs to help us distract them, we should have an easier time fighting."

Kuang Xin, who was running ahead, roared back without turning his head, "Why are you talking nonsense with them?! This is just a game! If you don't dare to fight even in a game, when will you ever dare? You're all damn cowards!"

Ren Fengxing's eyes flashed; he sensed some restlessness in his team.

This wasn't reality, nor was it about tremendous benefits.

In the game, players' loves and hates were distinct and direct.

Passion was always the easiest emotion to infect everyone in the game.

Ren Fengxing bit down hard and said, "Damn it! Attack!"

Gu Lan had already given orders to her people, her commanding voice crisp and decisive on the battlefield, "Charge!"

Accompanying that command was the clear sound of longswords being drawn from their sheaths.

"waaaaaagh!"

In an instant, the unorganized players issued a charge more frenzied than the orcs' roar.

"waaa..."

"Smack!"

"Smack!"

Two subordinates carrying a wooden box and shouting to charge each received a slap on the head, turning their fervent cries into whimpers stuck in their throats.

"Hmm?"

"Boss?"

The two looked at Ren Fengxing with teary eyes, filled with confusion.

"Just because they charge, you charge?" Ren Fengxing glared at them, kicking the wooden box they were still carrying, "Go plant landmines!"

"Right away, boss!"

The two turned to leave but then turned back, "Boss, where should we plant them?"

"Anywhere, find a place that's not the main battlefield..." halfway through his sentence, Ren Fengxing paused, feeling he should be more explicit, and pointing to a spot he said, "See that? Bury them there! Open the switch once planted, and if things go south, I'll lead the team to retreat in that direction."

"Got it, boss!"

...

"Bang! Bang! Bang!" Gunfire had already erupted from the frontline battlefield.

The orcs knew players were following behind, and the players also knew that the orcs had long since discovered them, so they kept very close.

When the decision to charge was made, it was only a moment after that the distance had been closed to within the firing range of the guns.

Chaos, gunfights, ambushes, group battles.

All the points that got players excited converged together, and those who initiated the charge were so exhilarated that they could hardly contain themselves.

However, beneath their frenzied desire for battle, they had not lost their sanity to become beasts that knew only hand-to-hand combat.

Only a fool would directly engage in a bayonet fight with the orcs, given their huge and robust figures.

If they can shoot, they certainly wouldn't get up close; it's better to kite and take half their lives first!

The players, spread out along the long frontline, surged forward like a tide, but they didn't actually get too close except for a few fanatics keen on melee combat who charged right into the orcs' faces, embarking on 1v1 fierce man-to-man battles.

The settlement was not small, and orcs chasing and killing were widely scattered; moreover, their numbers were not that many.

So, there were large areas of chaotic combat everywhere, and being in the midst of it, without a bird's-eye view from above, no one knew whether it was humans or orcs who had the upper hand.

Immersed in the chaos and bloodshed, Xu Ruoguang was not faint from the stench of blood filling his nostrils, for even if everything in this game world was incredibly realistic, and the blood splashing on his hands was so wet and sticky, he felt not the slightest discomfort.

It was as if he had been born for this.

"Huff! Huff!"

The orcs' heavy breathing filled his ears, under the rusted axes were the agonized cries of his kin.

They had their own Hunting Team, and they too were armed with both melee and ranged weapons.

But faced with these bulky, exotic fellas, the short guns and longswords in their hands seemed all too powerless.

"Whoosh!"

A flying axe spun through the air.

The wind it stirred up tousled his hair.

Xu Ruoguang's eyes narrowed slightly, fully focused on the short axe flying toward a certain spot beside him.

The rapidly spinning axe looking like a mini whirlwind, yet in his eyes, it appeared as if it were a frozen animation, playing frame by frame in slow motion; he seemed to be able to see directly the dark red scabs congealed from bloodstains on the blade...

Everything in his peripheral vision slowed down, and the sounds seemed unable to break through the barrier of time and space to reach his ears... The world fell silent.

Talented skill: Bullet Time.

The target of this axe... was the uncle beside him.

The man he had met on the day the game began...

Xu Ruoguang turned his head quickly; the uncle seemed completely oblivious to the flying axe approaching from behind, his hands gripping a heavy Longsword as he attempted to cleave through an orc's defense.

He wanted to take him away...

He won't dodge this axe...

The instantaneous judgment made Xu Ruoguang realize the uncle's forthcoming fate— the flying axe would pierce his heart, and his head would be chopped off by the orc in front of him.

Turning his gaze back to the still slowly rotating axe before his eyes, Xu Ruoguang reached out his hand.

He grabbed the handle precisely.

The surging rotational force was transmitted from the axe to Xu Ruoguang's hand at the moment of contact.

The small axe, carrying a force strong enough to easily toss a person...

Such strong power!

Xu Ruoguang's heart jolted, yet it was not completely unexpected.

Bullet Time... only sped up his own movements and reactions.

In interaction with other objects, one still had to follow the simplest principles of kinematics.

He had paid the price in this aspect before... Before?

What was he thinking about, all this nonsensical stuff?

The moment he reached for the axe, Xu Ruoguang's body had already synchronized with the movement.

As he flipped and jumped, he tried to synchronize his body with the rotational rhythm of the axe.

As long as he didn't let go, the axe would carry his body.

And then... change its direction!

Just a touch of force...

The balanced trajectory of such a flying object was actually quite easy to disrupt!

Change... the stars!

"Whoosh!"

The flying axe changed course, reversing direction with the same force and flying back the way it came...

...

Chapter 274 Spiritual Power Enchantment

...

Xu Ruoguang, propelled by the force of the axe, spun through the air four or five times before centrifugal force violently threw him to the ground with a heavy thud.

The voices, transcending the barriers of time and space, squirmed into his ears once more, screams mixed with the sound of steel as he hit the ground.

Covering his right arm with his left hand, Xu Ruoguang struggled to his feet, feeling as though his arm had been torn apart by pain.

Of course, the pain was secondary; the nature of players made their perception of pain resemble an indescribable thrill.

Mainly, it wasn't just his arm—all the joints in his entire arm were limp and unable to exert any strength at that moment.

"Clang!"

The clash of greatsword and axe rang out behind him; the uncle and the orc were trapped in battle, oblivious to what had happened behind them.

"Whizz whizz whizz whizz~" The axe returned with a terrifying whistle, and the orc leader who had thrown it while sparing a fraction of his attention to see if his attack was effective immediately noticed that his attack was returned as it came.

Watching the spinning axe return, his mind replayed the fleeting movement of the human from just moments before.

"Quite interesting."

The orc leader grinned, aimed at the incoming axe, and reached out his hand...

"Pfft!"

The spinning axe, with its erratic trajectory, viciously sliced across his arm, raising a small spurt of green flesh and blood.

He didn't catch it...

"Swoosh!"

"Pfft!"

The relentless spinning axe struck another orc's body.

An orc, in pursuit of a villager but feeling an axe embedded in his backside, abruptly pulled out the "hidden weapon" and turned around with eyes full of rage looking for the source...

It was the boss, huh? Then, it's fine.

Withdrawing his gaze from the spinning axe, the orc leader turned to look at the human instead.

He didn't care about the minor wound on his arm; he was more curious about the human's method of returning the attack.

I reckon I can do it too...

"Catch!"

The orc leader bared his teeth with a wide grin, striding toward Xu Ruoguang, their gazes locking over the chaotic battlefield.

As he passed an orc about to chop at a human woman with an axe, the orc leader booted him aside, "Enough! Don't kill them all!"

He was here to practice catching axes, not to use motionless dead humans as targets.

He figured living targets would ensure a 100% hit rate—what was the difference between dead ones and wooden dummies?

Seeing the exceptionally tall orc charging straight for him and realizing that his counterattack had drawn the attention, Xu Ruoguang, along with the uncle who was entangled with another orc, attempted to flee.

"Let's go! Uncle! Move it!"

Gunshots rang out from outside the settlement, and some humans were still following behind the orcs... Although he didn't know their exact situation, it was clear that in face of the orcs, everyone naturally became allies.

So long as they didn't die immediately, there was always a chance.

"You won't escape!" the uncle, unmoved, allowed himself to be pulled by Xu Ruoguang, his hand steadfast as if made of steel.

He was fully focused on the orc in front of him, both sides seeking a chance to defeat the other, with no room for distraction.

He was the finest warrior in this settlement, yet even against ordinary orc grunts, he couldn't easily prevail.

Aliens were aliens after all, their robust bodies their brazen capital for domination.

"Bang!"

"Bang!"

He heard those gunshots too.

But unless it was the great power of machine guns, sniper rifles, or a massive concentrated barrage, the damage to the orcs was also insufficient.

Only explosions and fire were the true bane of these aliens!

In the absence of those, cold weapons in hand were the only hope for victory.

"You go first, I'll cover you," the uncle said in a stern voice, his gaze fixed on the orc in front of him without daring to be distracted for a moment.

...

"...Okay!" Watching the massive orc stride across the battlefield, heedless of all, Xu Ruoguang could only grit his teeth and turn to run.

The other party was clearly after him, and if he stayed, he would only bring the danger from that hulking orc to Uncle.

Run!

Escape outside!

Linking up with those humans who had come to support was the only way to survive!

If those people dared to follow the orcs, they must have some confidence in dealing with them!

Ducking and weaving, Xu Ruoguang's form was exceptionally slippery amidst the chaotic scene.

His not fully unlocked talents couldn't always be effective, but the occasional slowdown of his thoughts was enough to let him plan the best course of action while others couldn't respond.

The chaotic noise of the battlefield didn't disrupt Xu Ruoguang's hormonal balance—his vision remained clear, his brain sharp, processing all the information he gathered flawlessly.

However...

Faced with almost simultaneous interceptions by two orcs, and the giant hand of the pursuer nearly grabbing the back of his neck, Xu Ruoguang had no choice but to hurl himself towards one of the interceptors, attempting to use their body for a last-second evasion.

"Bang!"

The muffled sound, whether transmitted through bone or air, first erupted in his ears, then the shockwave through his back that went straight to his vital organs left Xu Ruoguang feeling like his insides had instantly turned to mush.

A bitter, salty liquid was violently expelled from his mouth, but fortunately, the orc's tremendous strength also sent his not-so-tall body flying a great distance.

"Glug glug glug..."

Like a rolling gourd, Xu Ruoguang's body instantly rolled more than ten meters on the ground.

[You have sustained 49 points of impact damage and have fallen into a critical injury state!]

[Warning: Your internal organs are bleeding continuously, immediate rescue is needed!]

"Cough cough!" Falling to the ground, Xu Ruoguang couldn't pay attention to the alerts popping up on his panel, struggling to get up still.

The unique mechanism of players meant he couldn't feel much pain; the attack on his back was more of a relief than pain.

But the severe blow to his body put him in an unsustainable state, his limp arms and legs unresponsive, slipping in place a couple of times before finally crashing down hard.

"Don't be afraid."

A cold and resolute voice came from above, and Xu Ruoguang squinted only to discover a red figure had, at some point, stood in front of him.

Long legs emerged from the slit of her skirt, and the woman took out her seemingly petite pistol from the black holster strapped to her thigh, aiming it in a certain direction.

Looking up from below, Xu Ruoguang felt as if divine light was shining through her shoulder-length silver hair into his eyes, too dazzling to look at directly.

"You won't get hurt again."

The woman said so, and with her left hand, she pulled the trigger.

"Boom!"

The petite silver pistol made a deafening sound like a hand cannon, and the orc hit by the bullet was blown away as if struck by a high-powered shotgun.

Spiritual Energy artifacts, extraordinary.

But it could only fire one shot in a short time...

Watching the two orcs—one large and one small—striding towards her, the woman held a knife in one hand and drew it slowly through the crook of her left arm, the gray Spiritual Energy in her pupils burning to its peak as the abundant energy began to radiate a faint pressure.

Spiritual Power Enchantment!

[Spiritual Power Enchantment: Strengthen your Spiritual Energy output with a specific action, enchanting your weapon with the protection of Spiritual Energy.]

Like Ren Fengxing, Gu Lan chose a completely different path of development for her guild.

Where Ren Fengxing secured two large boxes of land mines through the power of his organization, she... used the entire guild's strength to forge herself.

Thorny Guild always favored the high-end route of individual combatants, with all the members of the guild drawing salaries from the real world to serve every "leader" completely.

In past games, outsiders preferred to call them... the Thorn Valkyries!

Noticing the faint scent of danger emanating from the human woman blocking his way, the orc chieftain pursuing them slowed to a halt.

Gazing at Gu Lan for roughly two seconds, the orc chieftain's mouth curled into a grin, "Me been waiting for you guys!"

Chapter 275 Are you the f***ing beast, huh?

Refining skills with the death of life, displaying one's martial prowess in battle with other races to elevate one's prestige within the clan.

As long as companions believe that one is invincibly strong and trust in this, they can indeed become truly powerful.

Growing stronger and stronger... until one becomes the war boss of all orcs!

Every orc has this opportunity!

Every orc, even those at the lowest rank, has a channel through which they can gradually elevate themselves by following this path.

Their bodies can grow indefinitely; the larger their physique, the more formidable their strength becomes.

Big is good, big is powerful!

Whether they are consciously aware of this or not, many orcs will act on this instinctively.

They never miss a chance to confront a formidable enemy!

They never pass up an opportunity to display their martial might in front of their companions!

This is their path to ascension!

"waaaaaagh!"

The orc leader suddenly roared, his fighting spirit brimming as he faced Gu Lan blocking his path.

"waaaagh!" The leader's war cry elicited passionate echoes from the battling orc youths all around, their response noisy, discordant, and fervent. Almost visibly, a red glow adhered to each of the axe-wielding youths, enhancing their actions' strength and speed even more.

"I was just waiting for you cowards to come out and be squished!" The orc leader grinned widely, his smile somewhat simple and hearty.

He had not been fighting at full strength, nor had he allowed his subordinates to slaughter wantonly, all for the purpose of... luring out these human youths who had been ghosting around sneakily behind them!

Now that they were up close, was there any chance of escape?

Gu Lan snorted coldly, showing no intention of responding.

The so-called thorns path... it was about seeking everything undefeatable, challenging all that was unchallengeable, embarking on a thorn-filled path that no one had ever trodden before!

They were a group of incredibly bored young ladies from rich families! After having enough of their carefree days, they had to find some excitement!

The single-edged longsword slashed through the air, cutting through a drifting spark.

"Clang!"

The clash between the longsword and axe, the first strike was evenly matched.

As a "Magic Swordsman", physical and Spiritual Energy are two absolute attributes that need to be developed in parallel.

The enhancement from Spiritual Energy made her seemingly slender blade appear indestructible, and in a pure contest of strength, she did not fall far behind.

Moreover, the lightness of her weapon allowed her form to be more agile; the blade touched and withdrew, then swept toward another orc who seemed a bit "frailer" in comparison.

"Frail" was relative; the orc leader was almost twice her height, and even this "frailer" one was a good twenty or thirty centimeters taller than her.

But with the enhancement of Spiritual Energy, the gap in strength was nowhere as apparent as the difference in stature.

The single-edged longsword easily broke through the frail orc's defenses, slicing away a large chunk of green flesh from its shoulder. Gu Lan, with her Level 4 expertise in light weaponry, was equally skilled in technique.

Lying on the ground, Xu Ruoguang glanced at the silhouette of the woman in red who had come to help, with a strange look in his eyes.

Who... are they?

Why does their use of Spiritual Energy seem so primitive?

"..."

Xu Ruoguang suddenly froze.

Primitive?

How could I, a person without Spiritual Energy, consider others' use of it primitive?

The mind must be going haywire.

[Your internal organs are continuously bleeding, Health -1.]

[Your internal organs are continuously bleeding, Health -1.]

[Warning: Your internal organs are continuously bleeding, urgent rescue needed!]

Am I going to die?

Is this the end of my first life in the game?

I don't want to die...

Even if it's just a game.

I instinctively feel that I shouldn't die too much in this game, not because I'm worried about falling behind in progress, not because I fear my accumulations since entering the game will be lost.

It's just... I simply cannot die too often.

It feels like something bad will happen, although what that is... I don't know!

So, who... who can save me?

"Clatter clatter clatter~" Amid the chaos of the battlefield, the sound of trinkets and a metal box colliding rang out clearly to Xu Ruoguang's ears as a girl in wasteland hip-hop style approached from a distance, running towards him.

Upon arriving, the girl opened the metal box while soothingly telling him, "It's okay... it's okay... you won't have any problems, don't worry."

The girl's hands seemed to possess a miraculous power, easily halting the internal bleeding in his body.

Feeling the easing of his injuries, Xu Ruoguang looked dazed.

Who... are these people?

They are so powerful...

Are they also players?

"RUA!"

The scrawny Orc knew better than to mess with the sword-wielding human woman, mainly because she was the prey their leader had set his sights on. So, he turned his attention to Gong Yan who was in the middle of a rescue operation.

Carrying a mallet, he had just approached when he was suddenly sent flying by an immense force.

On the ground, Kuang Xin roared like a madman.

The more chaotic the scene, the more exhilarated he felt.

Ever since fighting in that arena for over a dozen rounds, he had completely let loose of himself in the game.

The repelled scrawny Orc, also fearless, charged back in with his mallet, and Kuang Xin, wielding a heavy axe, didn't even know the meaning of the word 'fear'.

Faced with these green-skinned monsters, he couldn't wait to tear them limb from limb, if only to reclaim his beautiful fantasy of Orc sisters.

"Swoosh~"

"Clang clang clang!"

"Boom!"

Amidst the endless chaotic noises, Xu Ruoguang, lying on the ground unable to move, felt his heart race and feared being caught in the crossfire.

However, each time his gaze swept over the eyes of the woman who seemed to be focusing on treating his wounds, all the panic vanished.

Her hands were so steady...

"All right, you're good to go," Gong Yan, who had been squatting, straightened up and let out a breath as if to relax.

As time trickled by deceptively, Xu Ruoguang was surprised to find his mobility returning, "Huh? Am I okay now?"

He tried to get up and felt a faint warm current surging in his chest.

"You're okay..." Gong Yan, subconsciously wiping a bead of sweat from her forehead, smiled gently at Xu Ruoguang, "But you still can't exert yourself too much. Leave this place to us."

As she spoke, a green figure was sent flying behind her.

Following closely was a burly man holding a massive axe, letting out unintelligible roars as he chased after and hacked away.

"Pfffcht!"

"Pfffcht!"

The sound of the axe cleaving flesh followed one after another, green blood and flesh soared into the air, fires flickered in the distance, and all seemed to become the backdrop for the smiling girl.

Xu Ruoguang watched, somewhat dazed...

This scene... was indeed impactful.

"Bang!"

The loud explosion behind him and the sound of a body sliding across the ground snapped the dazed Xu Ruoguang out of his trance.

Gu Lan, kicked in the abdomen, slid across the ground towards him; her once brightly colored red dress was now tattered and worn, revealing her legs stained with dark soot.

It had a certain wild beauty.

"Cough!"

The dignified woman suddenly spat out a mouthful of surging stomach acid and propped herself up with her Longsword, intending to stand.

"If you're okay, get out of here fast; this guy's tough to deal with," she said to Gong Yan and Xu Ruoguang.

This was the first formidable opponent she'd encountered since entering the game.

Surging battle will empowered Gu Lan's sword, and her body thrummed with such excitement that it trembled.

Maybe it was actually trembling.

A player's body wouldn't be impaired by pain, but apparently the system simulated the physical feedback realistically; several strong clashes caused her sword-wielding right hand to tremble imperceptibly.

Watching the mountain-like figure approach, Gu Lan's eyes sharpened, ready to fight to the death.

Just like the muscle-bound gorilla had said at the beginning of the battle—

It's just a game!

If you don't dare to fight in a game, when will you ever dare to fight?

[You have strengthened your combat strength in a battle beyond your limits. Spiritual Energy maximum +1.]

"..."

The Longsword sensed Gu Lan's will and hummed softly under the enhancement of Spiritual Energy.

As the heavy axe was brought down on her, Gu Lan moved to dodge.

At that moment, another figure charged in at an angle, his equally heavy axe colliding head-on with the opponent.

"Clang!"

The dull sound of the collision echoed, and the voice of a certain muscle-bound gorilla boomed enthusiastically.

"RUA!"

Watching the figure that had suddenly appeared in front of her, the once seemingly goofy silhouette now looked incredibly solid and dependable.

"Step back, don't get in the way of a man's fight!"

Without looking back, Kuang Xin exploded with remarkable strength in his hands, lifting the Orc chieftain's massive axe.

With the help of the Advanced Physical Training Program 3.0, his physical fitness was gradually approaching the critical point of 15, not to mention that his innate talent, Brute Physique, had long been unlocked through various heavy physical activities and battles.

The talent that gave him a +3 bonus to direct physical performance meant he was almost unbeatable in contests of pure strength.

"You're the damn Orc here, huh!"

Chapter 276 Bracing against strong wind (Third watch of the night)

The battle unfolded before Gu Lan's eyes.

The fight between the handsome orangutan and the beastman leader was as wild as two real beastmen going at it.

Both possessed immense strength and unmatched swiftness.

Having been the beastman's opponent herself, she understood the beastman's power better than anyone else.

A brief standoff was manageable, but any longer and she would be no match, especially since she couldn't see any sign of weakness in the beastman as the fight went on.

Like its colossal stature, its stamina was far beyond her own.

Of course, beastmen were of a different race, with attributes hard to estimate.

But what about this handsome great ape?

Also a player, their demonstrated strength and speed even surpassed her own enhanced by "Spiritual Energy," not to mention his reflexes and skills were on par with hers, honed since the start of the game.

She had the backing of an entire guild.

The entire guild's resources were focused on her, to create the gear and strength she now possessed.

But now... a player she had scarcely seen before was capable of standing toe to toe with the beastman, whom she couldn't defeat?

Strong, fast, with quick reflexes and adequate skills, yet not quite as exquisite in martial arts as what he showed.

There was nothing particularly outstanding, but his combined abilities allowed him to stand up to the beastman leader without falling behind.

What force had nurtured such an expert?

Watching the agile figure of the handsome orangutan, awe flickered in Gu Lan's eyes.

"Let me treat your wounds..." Gong Yan had approached Gu Lan at some point, her eyes on Gu Lan's injuries.

Black ash stained the red skirt at the abdomen where the beastman's kick had landed, the torn fabric revealing the sculpted ab lines beneath.

Only now did Gu Lan have a chance to notice the other things around her...

"You... you're alright?" Gu Lan's gaze sharpened upon seeing the handsome young man, unsure if an NPC or a player, obediently following Gong Yan.

Just earlier, this kid was getting beaten as if he was hanging by a thread under the beastman's chase and now...

Her guild didn't lack members who had learned medical techniques, but none could perform the miracle of healing quite like this.

In this world, all knowledge had thresholds, and acquiring such abilities was hardly achievable through the channels she had seen so far.

The importance of a "healer" to a team was clear to anyone who'd played games.

This mysterious trio that had emerged from nowhere... impressive.

But could they also treat injuries caused by shock and muscle strain?

She had no visible cuts or internal bleeding, just a reduction in combat effectiveness due to muscle fatigue.

"Is it possible?" her mature voice was straightforward.

Gong Yan smiled gently, "Of course, trust me."

"Then go ahead, what should I do?"

"Nothing at all, just relax."

Gong Yan took a bottle of orange-yellow essential oil from her medicine kit, warmed it in her hands, and then gently applied it to Gu Lan's body.

The seemingly simple massage brought a warm flow from her palms to the touch points.

Like rain nourishing cracked soil, the sore and tired muscles soon recovered to normal under the nourishing power of the mysterious force.

"..."

Feeling the real changes in her body, Gu Lan's eyes widened, slightly dazed.

Could she snatch away this healer!

"The power you just used, was that Spiritual Energy?" Xu Ruoguang, who stood nearby, couldn't contain his curiosity and, seeking to confirm his hunch, asked out loud.

"Hmm?" Gu Lan opened her eyes from the blissful warmth and looked towards the handsome young man following the healer.

"What, do you also have Spiritual Energy?"

Xu Ruoguang felt a bit shy under the gaze of the goddess and waved his hands quickly, "No, I can't... but I feel like the way you used it just now was a bit crude."

"Oh?" Gu Lan's eyes brightened. She didn't know if the handsome young man in front of her was a player or an NPC until he revealed himself.

If he was a player, he might have access to channels unknown to her; if an NPC, even more likely to possess the knowledge about Spiritual Energy she desperately needed.

She certainly knew her approach wasn't advanced. Currently, she only had two ways of using it—one was to amplify her own three-dimensional attribute performance, the other was to enhance the texture of the weapon she held.

These two techniques, one an instinct that came with the awakening of Spiritual Energy and the other a superficial technique learned after a quest.

High-end techniques for using Spiritual Energy were something she needed more than anyone.

"What do you suggest?"

"Energy shouldn't be held for long. You should learn to control it... like breathing. There should be rhythm, peaks and troughs, so you can exert greater strength when needed, and not waste too much will during downtime."

Spiritual Energy itself was a force governed by will.

It stemmed from the soul and was granted by the will.

[Special Information (Unidentified): Breath of Spirits.]

"..."

Gu Lan stared at Xu Ruoguang, her eyes full of questions—What next?

Xu Ruoguang looked back blankly—That's all I've got.

Seeing that Xu Ruoguang had no further explanation, Gu Lan couldn't help but take the initiative to ask, "Is that it?"

"That's it..."

Are you expecting me to learn some technique of using Spiritual Energy from just that one sentence?

???

Gu Lan rolled her eyes and turned to look at Kuang Xin, who was tangled in battle with the orc leader.

Although this handsome gorilla could maintain an undefeated stance in front of the orc leader, he also had no way to defeat the opponent.

Most of the attacks he made were blocked, and the few that did hit the body seemed to have no effect on the thick-skinned orc...

The most terrifying wound on this orc leader's body was still the gash on his arm from the flying axe in the early stages of the fight.

This was the handiwork of that handsome young man behind her, and had she not seen that moment from afar, she would not have been drawn to it amid the chaotic battlefield.

And obviously, whether it was the efforts of the handsome young man or their current attacks, the effects were limited; perhaps... only the through and through wound on his shoulder was the opponent's weak spot.

We need to find a way to target that...

"I've got your back!" A brisk voice rang out behind Kuang Xin.

Thorn Valkyrie's axe and sword together blocked the orc leader's descending blow, their bodies pressed closely, as Gu Lan turned her cheek to whisper to Kuang Xin, "Pay attention to that wound on his shoulder—find a chance to hit it there!"

Kuang Xin nodded silently in acknowledgment.

The presence of that steamy, rosy face so close at hand might easily have led one's thoughts astray on any other day, but right now it did nothing to distract Kuang Xin.

On the chaotic battlefield, instincts easily triggered, this trait not only significantly enhanced his reflexes and insight during combat but was crucial in allowing him to focus entirely on everything happening around him, pondering only on how to take down his opponent.

With a burst of force, Kuang Xin shoved the orc's massive axe aside and quickly said, "I'll take the lead, you wait for the chance!"

This kind of decisive leadership undoubtedly made him especially charismatic at that moment and Gu Lan easily disengaged.

Perhaps her strength, even her speed, weren't a match for Kuang Xin's, but the advantage was in her lightweight weapon.

A weapon sheathed in Spiritual Energy was hard to destroy and could also bring out the speed and agility of a light weapon.

For her to look for opportunities to attack the weakness was perfectly reasonable.

The two top combatants among the current players separating to attack the orc leader from different directions undoubtedly made it difficult for him, who was still in the midst of growth.

But this slightly pressuring battle was exactly what he craved and sought, excitedly roaring out, "waaaaagh!"

The deep battle spirit in his voice momentarily caused his body to swell, his momentum increasing even further.

This intense bravery spread like a tide, easily enveloping every orc who heard the sound.

The aura of rage inspired every orc child, and in an instant, all the clever boys' actions became more ferocious as well.

"Damn it! Tough bastards!"

Ren Fengxing wasn't directly involved in the front-line battle; he was different from those Thorn Valkyries.

He saw himself more as a commander.

He needed to stay calm enough to oversee the whole situation.

At that moment, he had found a wooden watchtower to observe the entire scene, and in just a short period of combat, he easily recognized a fact—

The players' bullets were evidently not very effective against those thick-skinned orcs.

This was almost all the players' first time facing orcs, and they hadn't anticipated bullets failing to penetrate their defenses...

To say their defenses weren't penetrated wasn't quite accurate; apart from a few homemade pistols, most rifles and shotguns could easily break through, but they couldn't inflict damage.

An orc sprayed in the face by a shotgun acted as if the bullets lodged inside his body were nothing, grabbed a player in front of him with his thick hand, and tore off an entire arm with one bite.

Although the player who had their arm torn off was still marveling at this special experience in the game, happily running around and flaunting it, it did not change the fact that, with the players' strength, it was difficult to win.

Not afraid of bullets...

Or rather, not afraid of the current level of firepower of hot weapons.

Those wielding swords and fighting in close combat seemed to have more of an advantage, but it was limited.

First, the number of such players was limited; in a game that felt like a trip back in time, which player wasn't a lurking behind-the-scenes player? If you can hit someone from the shadows, why charge face-first?

Secondly, even those fond of melee combat, given the current strength of the players, were unlikely to gain the upper hand against a common orc.

The physique and body structure of the orcs also made them entirely dismissive of the players' sneaky tricks.

No matter how skilled in infighting, when facing a different species, strength was what ultimately mattered.

This slight realization dawned on him, and Ren Fengxing noted the experience learned from this chaotic battle.

In an instant, he raised the horn in his hand, "Brothers, code red! Retreat!"

Chapter 277 Phantom... Phantom Sword Dance?

"We need to go first," Gong Yan said as she grabbed Xu Ruoguang, ready to leave with him.

The shapes of the beastmen rampaged in every direction, and this area might have been designated as a hunting ground by the beastmen leader, deterring other beastmen from approaching for the moment.

However, the danger would surely increase over time.

She trusted Kuang Xin would fight to the death to protect her, but human strength has its limits, and there are many things one wishes to do but cannot.

"You're going to retreat?" Xu Ruoguang asked, shaking off Gong Yan's hand with some difficulty accepting it.

"What are you doing?" Gong Yan asked with an urgent tone but without panic.

"Them!" Xu Ruoguang pointed at the natives who were still suffering casualties at any moment under the chase of the beastmen, "They're all good people!"

Good people shouldn't have to suffer like this!

Xu Ruoguang, who had grown up in this settlement, had interactions with almost every person here.

Everyone was good!

Maybe some were outspoken, maybe some had quick tempers, but regardless, everyone was the only support for each other... in this desperate world.

Moreover, he never saw himself as a player, nor did he dwell on the differences between natives and players; the distinction never seemed to exist to him since he entered the game.

They are all humans!

All purebred humans!

They don't deserve to die.

"You guys go," Xu Ruoguang said as he pushed Gong Yan away, not expecting anyone else to help with what he had decided to do, "Just, can I borrow your sword for a bit?"

"Sword?"

Gong Yan was taken aback, looking down at her waist.

Gong Yan, who had learned some swordsmanship from the lady of the Arbitration Place, had some ability to defend herself, which was why she dared to step onto the chaotic frontline.

"No problem," Gong Yan agreed immediately, removing the sheathed longsword from her waist, "Feel free to use it, and it doesn't matter if it breaks."

A person skilled in martial arts naturally needed a suitable weapon to match; the longsword was made of ordinary iron and was not a divine weapon.

Xu Ruoguang held the sword's scabbard tightly, "If the sword breaks, I'll compensate you for it."

Having said that, he turned and left.

He had impulsive desires, he had the desire to fight.

Seeing and hearing fellow humans suffer under the attack of an alien race, a boundless rage burned coldly in his heart, and it was under the roaring will that some fighting "instincts" kept surging uncontrollably from the depths of his memory.

The longsword in his hand seemed to naturally begin to conform to the structure of his palm.

As his gaze swept over the beastmen, he saw their vulnerabilities clearly revealed...

At this moment, it was time for the longsword to leave its scabbard!

Xu Ruoguang's figure moved swiftly through the battlefield, vanishing behind the corners of the huts in the blink of an eye.

"Let's go!" Gu Lan and Kuang Xin, who also heard Ren Fengxing's voice, began to retreat while fighting.

The strategy the two had planned was ready to execute, but they first had to see if the beastmen leader would agree.

With a size nearly double that of a human, Gu Lan found it difficult to reach the wound even when jumping, clearly unable to inflict serious damage immediately.

And they all knew Ren Fengxing's trump card; the feigned retreat now was surely intended to lure the beastmen into the minefield.

When a more effortless way existed, no one was foolish enough to ignore it.

The scene was chaotic.

The players' retreat naturally tempted some stubborn-headed beastmen to pursue the victory, while many others were busy capturing the scrambling natives of the settlement.

Against two human beings working together, the beastmen leader didn't have much of an advantage.

As he watched their retreating figures, the beastmen leader reached to the side, and two relatively small hand axes were passed to his hands.

"Whoosh!"

"Whoosh!"

After two thrown axes, more followed.

A slightly advantageous side view gave a glimpse of a row of other beastmen preparing to throw, now hidden behind the bulk of the beastmen leader's body.

A wave of spinning axes, issuing death calls, struck at the backs of the fleeing players.

"Thud! Thud! Thud!"

A series of sounds of axes sinking into flesh arose amongst the disorderly fleeing crowd, with players falling and cursing loudly as they hit the ground.

The beastmen quickly followed up, striking down those who tried to crawl away after falling.

"Slash! Slash! Slash!"

Flesh was torn and blood splattered.

There were only a few screams, though.

"Stubborn humans!"

The beastmen leader pursed his lips and gestured towards the fleeing players, "Chase them!"

They didn't particularly enjoy one-sided battles, but the pursuit of prey also brought them genuine excitement.

The beastmen had few aspirations in this world; finding pleasures that could excite them was their only mission.

The only thing that troubled him was that those hairless monkeys nearly all looked the same to him, sometimes distinguishable by the distinctly colored clothes they wore—like a stroke of pure white in a sea of black, a stroke of bright red against green...

But if everyone wore the same style and color of clothes, he had no way to tell who was who.

Or, like now, the garish colors everywhere gave his brain a proper freeze.

He had just locked onto two figures, but after a few crisscrossing sprints, he had no idea where they went...

"Tui!" The beastman leader, disgusted, spat out a thick loogie.

...

"Hurry, hurry, hurry!"

Ren Fengxing, who had reached the chosen minefield early, stood on a tall rock and frantically waved his hands at everyone.

He also saw the last players caught and hacked to death.

But it didn't matter, it was just a three-day gift package.

Furthermore, players reborn in the game would not change their approximate spawn point and might even experience subtle changes in their identity and surroundings with each respawn; dying and then refreshing their identity was a method his guild used to explore the content of the game.

As for people not from his own guild... what did their deaths have to do with him?

Watching as the pursuing orcs step by step entered the minefield he had laid out, Ren Fengxing uncommonly gripped the black remote in his hand, his thumb gently brushing over the trigger button again and again, his heart filled with anxious unrest.

This kind of "real" game's landmines were unfamiliar to him, and he had no idea what the blast would look like.

Nor did he know whose kill experience would count...

And could it be a bit faster!

Dilly-dallying had scattered the pursuing orcs!

"The NPCs are running out too!"

"Boss, look over there!"

Standing behind a rugged and uneven boulder at a slightly lower vantage point, two of Ren Fengxing's mine-laying subordinates suddenly pointed in a direction and yelled.

The chaotic native troop fled clumsily, gathering into a somewhat substantial force of resistance behind a young swordsman leading them.

In addition to the orcs chasing players, most of the other orcs followed the NPC troop.

And those orcs who had been chasing players also noticed the human escape squad running out from the side, turning their heads to intercept.

Blocked in front and chased from behind.

Those NPCs probably couldn't escape.

"They've been diverted, boss!"

"They're not running toward the minefield anymore, boss!"

"I fucking see it, boss!" Ren Fengxing's hand abruptly left the remote.

A landmine can only explode once, naturally, he had to lure as many orcs as possible into the minefield to catch them all at once!

He faced two choices—

Either he could watch all those natives get slaughtered by the orcs and wait for them to turn their attention back to chase him and his people.

Or... save them.

Save the NPCs and at the same time guide them to evacuate to the minefield, enticing all the orcs to give chase.

Neither choice had a distinction of right or wrong, good or bad, but simply a matter of efficiency.

After all, regardless of the choice, he first had to entangle with those ten or so bloodthirsty orcs still tangled up with the players.

Save or watch them die?

The decision swung rapidly in Ren Fengxing's mind.

And this sudden turn of events was clearly noticed by many players who had escaped to the rear or still had spare strength.

Concern for those NPCs rose instantly in the hearts of many players.

...

"Uncle Zeta, you take people to watch the left, Ms. Zeli, you all cover the right flank; tell those behind to speed up and take care of yourselves—no one can look out for anyone else at this time. Everyone, prepare for the final sprint!"

"Alright! Guang! We're all listening to you!" The natives following Xu Ruoguang affirmed with conviction.

Despite the fact that the intercepting orcs had ghastly green faces and looked ferocious, why shouldn't they believe Guang, the young fellow who had only joined the settlement for a few days but was willing to take the lead in the charge?

Watching those orcs wielding various heavy weapons coming to intercept, Xu Ruoguang's world slowed down... slower and slower.

Slow enough to see clearly each rise and fall of the orcs' chests as they breathed, and the blood-stained human skin on the raised spike hammers...

Bullet time!

When needed, it appeared.

When believed in, it appeared.

Everything in this world was connected with will, highly concentrated in the moment of combat, will as solid as a rock; everything was possible to create miracles.

Believe... the power of belief!

"With me as the spearhead!"

Xu Ruoguang raised his longsword high, broke away alone from the group, and accelerated towards the dozen or so orcs surging forward.

His vibrant voice echoed above the battlefield, "Charge with all your might!"

"Kill!"

A phantom dashed through the crisscrossing formation of orcs in the blink of an eye.

The sharp edge of the sword effortlessly slashed open the orcs' weapon-holding wrists.

"Swish!"

Nearly in an instant, those heavy weapons, losing the support of wrists, moved forward an inch due to inertia and then plummeted to the ground.

Completely trusting Xu Ruoguang, the native troop surged forward, pushing through the slightly stupefied intercepting orcs affected by the unexpected blow.

"Huff! Huff!"

The exhausted Xu Ruoguang appeared behind the intercepting orcs, kneeling on one knee with his longsword planted on the ground, gasping for breath.

Strength drained, reserve of movement energy depleted.

For him at this stage, bursting out such an intense move was still somewhat forced...

"Bang!"

The longsword supporting his body also instantly shattered under this heavy load, fragmented metal pieces scattering in the air, falling chaotically and reflecting the sunlight in occasionally blinding flashes.

The sword... had broken.

The players who witnessed this moment collectively froze.

"Pha-phanto... phantom sword dance!"

A player pointed in that direction, his lips trembling.

"Bullshit! It's clearly an Alpha Assault!"

"It was a phantom sword dance, definitely a phantom sword dance!"

"So cool!"

"Damn it! Hurry up and save him!"

Whether he was an NPC or a player, saving him was the first priority if there was any chance of learning this cool, explosive skill.

Compared to surviving, showing off was the foremost affair in playing games.

"Charge!"

"Let's go!"

Chapter 278 Explosion!

With a goal in mind, the previously nebulous idea of fighting for that one quest slot became a much more tangible pursuit.

Only one person could be the lucky recipient of the quest, but the skill could be learned by many.

"Cover them!" Ren Fengxing ordered through the megaphone.

He needed to let the indigenous people know who was really in charge among the players.

The natives had already demonstrated their strength and effort; what might follow could be the players' choice.

He had been in this game for some time, but his thought process from past games still affected his strategy to some extent.

Many game plots only unfolded when players arrived.

And the choices players made at crossroads would affect all subsequent quests or the progression of the storyline.

Perhaps these ordinary humans at this wilderness settlement were a special storyline triggered by the players themselves.

And each special story point like this one could be hiding an exclusive reward—

Treasures? Skills? Quest chains?

Who knows?

The higher the invisible performance score, the more likely it was to be obtained.

Who would've thought that this quest for the prize pool was hiding such hidden plots? Truly an unexpected pleasure.

Ren Fengxing suppressed his excitement and jumped down from the large rock.

Having decided to curry favor, he naturally had to put on a performance.

He reached out to the side and said, "Give me a gun!"

The gun didn't have enough firepower to pose a lethal threat to the orcs, but the kinetic energy of the bullets could still impact them to some extent.

Most importantly, it was loud.

After breaking through the interception of a dozen or so orcs, there were no more obstacles between the players and the natives.

However, the pursuing orcs didn't stop. Xu Ruoguang's explosive performance might look cool to players, but to the orcs, it was just flashy and superficial.

Unless he could use it to continuously hack them to pieces, the wounds made by the Longsword were insignificant to them.

The orcs, whose wrists were severed by the Longsword, paused briefly before realizing their hands were gone.

The command from their will was transmitted through fungi; the "omnipotent" substance bubbled in the mushroom broth in their chest cavity and instantly began flowing from their "veins" toward the wound.

At a pace visible to the naked eye, new flesh sprouted from the severed palms...and kept wriggling and growing until the hands were whole again.

Ren Fengxing, witnessing all this in the vastness, couldn't help but curse, "Fuck!"

These orcs were just too freaking absurd!

It was hard to imagine how people of this world managed to survive to this day in a world dominated by such monsters.

"Bang!"

Ren Fengxing fired the gun in his hand, knocking back a slightly slenderer orc.

Setting down the gun, Ren Fengxing caught Xu Ruoguang, who was carried by other natives. He smiled warmly at the somewhat handsome young man, his voice firm and steady, "Don't worry, you're safe now."

Without looking back, he waved his hand to the players behind him and commanded, "Take them to the rear safe zone. Leave the rest to us."

As if it were a gentle breeze and passing clouds.

Players like Kuang Xin and Gu Lan, skilled in close combat, stood behind the retreating natives, forming a protective wall for these unlucky ordinary people.

"Huh~"

"Huh~"

Two hot breaths spewed from the nostrils of the orc leader, his heart for brutal slaughter stirring restlessly as he looked at all the humans gathered together.

Think you can escape?

Today, not a single one will get away!

The larger the stage with more people, the better the opportunity to showcase his bravery.

Lifting his bloodstained axe, the orc leader roared to the sky, "waaaaaagh!"

Around forty or fifty orcs also spread their arms and howled, "waaaaaagh!"

"Boom! Boom!"

With each heavy step the orc leader took when charging, the ground shook violently.

"Retreat! Retreat!"

Seeing all the natives retreat to the back, Ren Fengxing raised the megaphone, directing everyone on the field as the battle line between players and orcs was stretched just right.

Players turned and ran with no bottom line, their undisciplined flight making the retreat seem like a real rout, not a calculated entrapment.

Even those with some tactical sense would find it hard, in the hurry, to see through the players' real performance, let alone these orcs who were more brawn than brains, thinking only of fighting.

"Waaaagh!" The roar from behind made the last player to run feel terrified.

"Don't bite my ass!" A large hand gripped the back of his neck, and before he could react, he was flung away by an immense force.

Having issued the order and retreated to the safe zone, Ren Fengxing stood on a rock silently watching his "prey" ensnared.

"Almost there... almost there..."

There were still a few players bringing up the rear not completely out of the danger zone, but if they delayed any longer, the orc main force would leave the area of maximum explosive impact.

Some orcs hadn't fully entered the core explosion area either, but the few survivors after the blast would not be a match for the six or seventy players remaining on site.

This battle, it's in the bag!

Ren Fengxing gripped the remote controller tightly and suddenly pressed the red button!

"Beep~"

"Beep~"

A series of faint electronic trigger sounds arose from underground simultaneously, with dim red lights flashing in the darkness, trying to break through the soil barrier and see the daylight again.

"Beep! Beep! Beep!" Rapid warning tones almost went off within a second, and the next moment...

A surge of exploding flames filled everyone's vision...

"Boom boom boom boom boom boom!"

More than a dozen mines went off in near unison across the minefield, their explosions melding into one continuous roar.

The intense flame, like an incandescent lamp, almost blinded every watching player in that instant.

The wave of heat followed the earth-shattering explosion, blowing directly in their faces.

Players and natives alike, who hadn't prepared to stabilize themselves, staggered under the blast of heat, filled with inner turmoil.

Even in the game, where death wasn't a reality, such an explosion could easily instill fear.

"Are they dead?"

Ren Fengxing, who had made thorough preparations, took off the magic glasses from his face and squinted towards the center of the slowly fading explosion.

The gigantic orc chieftain at the center of the blast would undoubtedly be the best news for them if he were directly killed.

The dark shadows emerged gradually from the flickering flames, their flesh charred, as the orc chieftain loosely released his grip on the great axe, dropping it heavily to the ground.

He reached for his chest, peeling off the charred layer like a rigid garment forcibly stripped from flesh and blood.

"waaaaaagh!"

The same cry now carried a tinge of sorrow.

"Crack~"

"Crack~"

Crisp sounds one after another, as many orcs regained their movement from the smoky center of the explosion.

Imitating their leader, they stripped off the burnt "shell", revealing a structure beneath that looked like a mix of fungi entwined with muscles and blood vessels.

The brutally bloody scene made many less hardened players shiver, feeling as if their own skin had been peeled off...

Fortunately, it was green, or it wouldn't have passed the censor.

Except for the few unlucky orcs whose bodies were torn apart by the blast wave, this group of orcs... suffered almost no deaths.

"They... aren't dead?"

Everyone still had hope during the recent retreat, as all knew there was an ace up their sleeve.

But now, the ace was played, and the enemy had survived unharmed.

The fleeting sense of helplessness against the orcs surged, and many players already felt like retreating.

"Is nobody there yet?"

"The mission didn't say we had to kill these orcs. Just grab the stuff and run..."

The players split into two groups.

Killing the orcs was to vent the players' desire to fight, but the real goal was the other group sent to seize the "human creations".

Only, it was uncertain... if they had succeeded.

"Hasn't anyone told you, to deal with us, you need to chop us up and then burn us?"

The orc chieftain's right hand, a blurred mass of flesh constructed from fungi, recoiled and grasped the giant axe stuck in the ground. The heat rolling up the axe handle couldn't cause him the slightest discomfort; instead, it triggered his violent urge to vent.

Injured, vent.

A fight where forces are evenly matched.

This is what orcs loved the most!

Even their methods weren't so evenly matched...

"waaaaagh!"

"Tatatatatata!"

Like the sound of a tractor, a vehicle approached slowly from the distance. Dai Lian rolled down the window, stuck out his head with a peculiar look, and said to everyone, "Why are you all standing there? Run!"

Atop the car, they mounted a large, irregular piece of silvery metallic artifact.

That was the target of all the players who had taken on the prize pool mission!

"We got it!"

"Let's skedaddle!"

The loot was secured, and now it was up to each individual's skill.

The alliance among players was only until the loot was secured. On the way back to return the mission target, it was everyone for themselves.

Not good at dealing with other races, but surely they had tricks for their own kind?

Only the orc chieftain looked oddly at the slow-moving vehicle dragging a large object.

'That car... looks somewhat familiar?'

Chapter 279 Rebellion

That familiar paint job...

Those familiar teeth...

That familiar moon pattern...

Wasn't that TM painted by himself?

There's a thief!

Oh no, wait... my car was stolen a while back!

It was a group of humans.

Many people.

Of course, it was mainly those dressed in black... including one with a bow and arrow.

The injury on his shoulder was left by that hairless monkey, he remembered it profoundly, the only regret being unable to recall his face.

After all, humans all seemed to look the same...

Thinking of that human with the bow and arrow, the orc leader felt a twinge of pain at his own shoulder wound.

Even though he did not possess the sense of pain, he still felt the sharpness of a threat.

Was that hairless monkey here?

But it seemed there was no one in those black clothes?

"waaaaaagh!"

Seeing his property reappear before his eyes, the orc leader charged forward as excited as if he had been injected with chicken blood.

Orcs were tall and robust, with powerful legs.

They may not have been as agile in changing directions or reflexes compared to humans, but in a straight sprint, their size was an advantage.

Many of the scattering players were easily caught up to.

"Save me, save me, save meeee!"

"Don't you TM drag me down!"

"I don't care, if I can't live, neither will you! Stop playing!"

Gu Lan was running with one hand on the hilt of his sword, looking back at the individual players falling behind under the pursuit of the orcs, feeling somewhat reluctant, "Let's turn back and fight!"

Mere running would only lead to their defeat one by one, the so-called running faster than your teammates only worked on beasts that hunted to satisfy their hunger.

These orcs, although equally feral, hunted for more than just satisfying their hunger.

The road back to the city was still far away, after all, it had taken them nearly an entire day to get there, and such a long pursuit distance was enough for the orcs trailing behind to completely devour everyone.

Unless these orcs were utterly defeated, no one could leave!

Ren Fengxing's gaze was conflicted, his lack of knowledge in the game made him less confident in his judgments.

The fact that mines were not very useful against these orcs was something he hadn't anticipated at all! And to think those NPCs had sworn those mines would 'blow their ancestors' graves sky-high'.

Perhaps it was because of the shockwave mines? TM, a shrapnel mine might have been more effective.

As for now, he knew that running away was just a slow death.

But the fact that his own men were in the lead was the core reason he hesitated... even if it comes to death, his own people would be the last to die.

Often, when things haven't turned for the worst, few people seriously consider the worst-case scenario as a reality to confront.

Gu Lan's words had intensified the gloom he had also considered deep inside.

Ren Fengxing, who had been running at full speed, suddenly stopped, raised the megaphone in his hand, and stood amidst the crowd fleeing rearward, "TM! Stop running! Turn back and fight!"

No one paid him any attention.

Solo players didn't have that much thought, 'every man for himself, full belly for the family', finding an opportunity to break away from the main group and dart in any direction, surely those orcs wouldn't abandon the pursuit of the larger group for just one or two humans.

There was strength in numbers, and flexibility when fewer.

"TM these dumbasses!" Ren Fengxing stood in place, shaking with fury, but fortunately, he still had a clear head, "You TM think about it! If we die, who's going to secure the mission objective? Even if you run, it's just a wasted effort!"

Some footsteps hesitantly paused.

Their brains, began to turn.

"And these... refugees! If they die, where will you go to learn skills? Running for nothing, what's the difference between that and being dead?"

Some of the players ahead gradually stopped and turned back to observe the reactions of others beside and behind them, only to see that everyone was doing the same.

Ren Fengxing seized on this, striking while the iron was hot, "I, Ren Fengxing, am putting my words down here today—anyone who doesn't leave now, regardless of whether the mission is successful or not, whether we can make it back alive or not, you can come to me for a cash reward afterwards! A thousand bucks! A man's word is his bond!

You can go ask around about the reputation of Black Hole if you didn't know about us before. If I go back on my word, you can bash me all over the internet!"

"TM, if you'd said this earlier, would I not have fought with you?" A player suddenly drew his knife, "I just thought your guild was always dilly-dallying TM like a bunch of girls! I don't want the money, I'm with you in this fight!"

"Who TM do you think you're insulting?" A feisty female player couldn't stand it, "What's wrong with being a girl? Weren't you raised by a woman? TM count me in today, I'll show you what a woman can do."

"If it's death that awaits, so be it, it's just three days! I'm in with you guys!"

With some brave warriors taking the lead, even players who had their own little schemes stopped in their tracks.

Whether they valued the thousand dollars, the rewards within the game... or perhaps they thought Ren Fengxing made some sense, under the sway of the crowd, they finally unified their front.

And then... the rout stopped as abruptly as it had started.

Ren Fengxing felt a surge of joy and continued to share his thoughts, "They may not be completely unscathed either, I refuse to believe they are immortal. There's got to be a limit to their recovery. Pay attention to the varying degrees of wounds on them. We have a chance!"

The fact that the orcs were healing at different rates was ironclad evidence; he had realized this earlier, but it was pointless to mention it when the players were unwilling to fight back.

But to speak of it now... that was the turning point for the counterattack.

The orc leader, in the midst of a frenzied pursuit, halted, squinting his eyes in confusion.

Based on his past experiences, these weak, hairless human monkeys could never regroup and counter once they began to falter.

But now...

What had sparked their courage anew?

Watching as those scrawny hairless monkeys turned and attacked like they were injected with adrenaline, the orc leader sneered and was the first to charge forward with his battle axe raised.

"waaaaaagh!"

"waaaaaagh!"

Resistance only made the thrill of the chase more exhilarating for them!

"We're still no match..." Ren Fengxing frowned slightly, taking stock of the situation.

Steadfast will was just that - will. The undeniable gap in strength could not be overlooked.

The players, compared to the orcs, were still too green, and unless they had access to more powerful firearms, most players who had only recently joined the game were no match for even a single average orc.

Perhaps after returning, he needed to focus on training melee players? Or after a reset?

But no matter what, they would not retreat again this time!

It was just three days, after all. Trading an early wipeout for a major strategic adjustment wasn't too high a price to pay.

...

From the rearview mirror of the car, Dai Lian, driving the overloaded vehicle that couldn't go too fast, caught sight of the players turning back collectively. He clenched his teeth with a hesitant look.

He obviously knew that if they continued as before, it'd only be a matter of time before disaster struck, with the players being caught and slain one by one. And, owing to the car's heavy load and the limits of its fuel tank, running all the way back to base wasn't an option.

Taking this chance to abscond alone while the players collectively covered the rear might be the most sensible choice.

However...

Looking at the players fighting desperately among the crowd, and at the large gorilla dousing fires everywhere... Dai Lian suddenly felt uncertain.

He spun the steering wheel sharply, and the car made a U-turn.

"What are you doing!" a fellow player exclaimed in surprise.

It wasn't just Dai Lian on this mission to sneak into the enemy's territory; as a temporary alliance, trust was a rare commodity, and including Dai Lian, there were four sitting in the car.

One representative from thorns, black hole, and freelance, respectively.

Dai Lian didn't have time to answer his question and simply shot back, "Can you drive?"

"No... I can't," the player sitting in the passenger seat said, somewhat dazed.

He hadn't even touched a car in the game before, and this was his first time in one today; he had no clue how to drive.

"Then when it's time, just hold on and don't move."

With the direction set, he quickly found something heavy to press down firmly on the accelerator. Dai Lian pulled the passenger's hand toward the steering wheel, "Hold the direction, don't move!"

Having said that, he unbuckled his seatbelt and flipped out of the open driver's side window onto the roof of the car.

"What's he doing?"

"I have no idea..."

The three in the car looked at each other with bewilderment.

The wind rushed past Dai Lian's face as he stood alone on the roof, setting up his longbow and pulling out an arrow.

He held the bow against his body while the arrow hung limply on it, his eyes sharp as he scoped out the battlefield not far away, seeking the most suitable angle for an attack from the side.

An angle... where as many orcs as possible were aligned in a straight line!

The bow was newly purchased.

The arrows were custom-made to order.

With money in hand, it was only natural to upgrade his equipment, not just for everyday consumption but to have a few reliable, high-quality weapons at critical moments to settle the fight.

The skill that Dai Lian possessed was regarded by the trio as their ultimate trump card!

Forward, a bit more!

Just a little further!

The howling wind nearly drowned out all other sounds, but Dai Lian tuned out the roar, focusing entirely on seizing that fleeting opportunity.

'Now is the moment!'

As the orc leader launched himself toward the area where the large gorilla and the beautiful guild president were, Dai Lian's voice seemed to traverse time and space, reaching Kuang Xin's ears.

"Big Gorilla! Fall back!"

Chapter 280 A Arrow's Charm

"Clang!"

The familiar sound of metal clashing echoed in his ears once more, and Gu Lan couldn't help but instinctively look towards that agile figure moving across the battlefield.

In a crowd of players scrambling and fleeing in desperation, only the area around him stood firm, like a mountain.

It was not just that he could fend off the attacks launched by the ordinary orcs, he even had the spare capacity to help block the attacks directed at other nearby players.

Although he was just one person, he played a role on the battlefield that could match the combined efforts of four or five others.

"Puchi!" The longsword, bolstered by Spiritual Energy, pierced through the chest of an orc in front of him. Gu Lan lifted his right leg and kicked the orc's body away to withdraw his blade, then spun around to evade another orc's hammer, all the while not forgetting to survey the situation elsewhere—

Amongst the players, only he and Dai Lian could consistently inflict damage on the orcs.

But Dai Lian, for one thing, had limited killing efficiency, and, for another, could only make sure to protect herself.

Not like him, capable of defending a vast area all at once.

His amazing control over the flow of battle and his timely assistance to his teammates made his area of the battlefield impregnable.

Without a direct attack from an orc leader, it seemed like a fanciful thought for any ordinary orc to bypass him and harm his comrades.

Was it simply individual quality?

Or perhaps some skill learned in the game?

At this thought, Gu Lan felt somewhat intrigued.

She likely couldn't leave today, and although she could escape at any time by herself, under these circumstances, how could she flee alone?

So... before dying, why not ask that guy about his origins and where he learned all his skills?

If it was personal talent, perhaps after three days everyone could start over together.

If it was learned in the game... they who had already developed a character once might have derived their own experiences.

This game indeed doesn't allow for infinite respawns, but what players could carry out of the game were their memories, which became their biggest advantage in each new run.

No sooner thought than done.

When she was alone, she could move freely amidst the ordinary orcs' attempts to encircle and block her path.

"Puchi!"

"Puff!"

One sword decapitated, one axe crushed a skull.

[You have trained your combat abilities amidst intense battle, Physique +0.1, Reflexes +0.1.]

Kuang Xin looked towards the hand extended to help him, and followed the longsword to its owner.

"How come you're here?"

Everyone had tacitly separated before the battle, to stabilize the players' front lines as much as possible.

The battle between dozens of players on both sides wasn't that big, yet it wasn't small either; chaos could easily ensue if allies got in each other's way, and they'd lose without even fighting.

Spreading out the battle line and then creating small pockets where they could outnumber the enemy was the players' subconscious cooperation.

Now...

Gu Lan smiled indifferently; the players were almost twice the number of orcs, which was why they could hold on temporarily, but defeat was almost certain.

She didn't care much anymore and just lifted her damp and disheveled hair due to the sweat from the fight to one side, and gave Kuang Xin a cool smile. "I have a question for you, and of course, it's your freedom to answer or not; there's no pressure."

After a brief acquaintance, she understood Kuang Xin's straightforwardness. With someone like him, there was no need to beat around the bush or try to coax information out; she could be direct, "Where did you learn all your skills?"

It wasn't just saving teammates at any moment; it included his abnormal strength and reflexes, which clearly exceeded the limit of 15 points for the three-dimensional attributes of all players.

Because her own three-dimensional attribute performance, with Spiritual Energy enhancement, fluctuated around 15 points.

His performance was even above hers, which meant his attributes were definitely not limited to 15 points.

Either... he obtained the legendary Gene Optimization Solution and underwent a qualitative transformation.

Or... he learned various powerful skills.

She was more inclined towards the latter since even if Gene Optimization Solution improved the attribute limit, it would still take time to train.

And even if a player focused on enhancing their basic attributes as soon as they entered the game, it was impossible to reach the 15-point limit in such a short time after the game's launch, let alone exceed it.

The game's basic attributes were extremely difficult to improve, and as far as she knew, there were no shortcuts.

Faced with Dai Lian's inquiring gaze, Kuang Xin nonchalantly waved his hand, "Our boss taught us."

'Our?'

Gu Lan was taken aback, realizing this was a small group of three, and she couldn't help but look towards the girl at the rear of the players.

"That girl's healing ability?"

"Also taught by our boss," bragged Kuang Xin proudly; after all, he had been the first to discover a great supporter, "Yanzi has many more skills, it's just that you haven't noticed them yet."

"Gulp!"

Gu Lan clearly heard the sound of her own swallowing.

Your boss, does he still want a little brother? A little sister is good too...

This somewhat astonished thought leapt forth immediately, and Gu Lan hesitated, wanting to inquire about the origins of this mysterious "boss."

But it seemed too abrupt to ask such a question, so she struggled to articulate it.

Instead, Kuang Xin was glancing at her... and then behind her.

"That brother over there is about to go down, aren't you going to help?"

Gu Lan smiled helplessly, "We are all going to go down... it doesn't matter anymore."

"Who said we're all going down?" Kuang Xin's eyes were filled with confusion.

"Huh?"

"We still have a trump card!"

In his vision, a figure was waving from the speeding car in the wind.

The shadow beside him suddenly covered the sunlight falling on both of them, as the orc leader's massive axe came down with a heavy whistle.

He didn't know which furless monkey was which, but targeting the tough guy on the battlefield meant he couldn't be wrong.

As long as he killed the strongest among humans, he would be recognized as the strongest among orcs!

"Boom!"

Axe and sword rang out together, trembling unabated.

At the same time, a voice traveled through time and space to them, making Kuang Xin hear the words made unclear by the wind due to their mutual understanding—

"Big Ape! Fall back!"

'They still dare call me Big Ape!'

Kuang Xin grabbed Gu Lan's left hand and, together with her, who had just withstood an axe blow from the orc leader, retreated hurriedly as he shouted, "Fallback!"

Retreat!

Retreat!

The great man had taught Dai this arrow with such vivid style that even if he could only unleash half of that man's power from back then, he would surely be able to easily overpower the enemy.

"What?" Gu Lan didn't quite understand.

But she obediently retreated, pulled by Kuang Xin.

As they retreated, Gu Lan looked in the direction Kuang Xin was gazing, her eyes augmented by Spiritual Energy, allowing her to see the distant scenery with absolute clarity.

She saw the car that had turned back from ahead... and the slender figure leaning against the "mission target" on it.

He stood tall, bow bent, arrow nocked.

Like the most professional archer, his eyes sharply fixed on this direction, pulling the bowstring back beside his body.

He was the last one remaining of the trio, deeply remembered by Gu Lan.

She hadn't interacted much with this remaining individual and wasn't familiar with his personality or abilities.

But at this moment, her heart suddenly started pounding furiously.

Kuang Xin had just said... they still had a trump card.

Yes, this trio, coming from the same place, capable of being companions on the road, each should have their own strengths.

And what kind of formidable strength must a skill be considered a trump card by this trio?

An arrow?

Firearms were hardly effective against these orc-like beings, let alone a bow and arrow?

Yet at this moment, she inexplicably felt a chilling threat from that sharp arrow yet to be released, as if it could pierce her skin.

The bow drawn full, the arrow like a shooting star!

Shoot!

This arrow was both fast and slow.

The arrow whistled through the orc-like beings, almost drawing a straight line with its slight curve, with the force it carried tearing apart everything in its path in an instant.

Including blades, spears, hammers, axes, including flesh and blood.

The last of the orcs in the arrow's path happened to be facing directly towards the incoming shaft.

In his belated realization, all he "saw" was everything shattering and dodging before his eyes, a fist-sized hole opening up in direct pursuit of the rapidly enlarging metallic arrowhead on an unstoppable straight line.

"Whoosh!"

An arrow passed through, bringing decay and destruction.

Weapon shards and greenish flesh fell slowly in the wind, and everyone who witnessed this arrow was caught in a kind of slow motion of stunted thought...

So they could fully savor the finesse embodied by this arrow.

"Tsk!"

Dai Lian, having shot an arrow, clicked his tongue in dissatisfaction.

The lethality was far from the great man's.

Lacking the special attribute of anchoring wind, the powerful strike didn't exhibit its strongest form.

The biggest differences were its killing power and range of impact.

Far less exaggerated than what the great man had shown.

So he drew another iron arrow, preparing to aim once more.

Before setting off and along the way, he had deliberately gorged himself, accumulating enough reserves of energy to support him shooting two arrows in succession.

If these two arrows couldn't secure a victory for the players, that would be troublesome...

"Waaaaagh!"

Seeing his arm fall off due to the piercing wound, the slightly stunned orc turned and ran.

The orc holding a nail hammer looked at his own minor scrape and, puzzled, watched his fellow suddenly legging it.

The youngsters of the Fu Yue Clan are just cowards.

Is that it? That's it?

They're running away?

He mocked them in his mind with a derisive sneer.

Then he saw more of the Fu Yue Clan's youngsters turning their heads and bolting...

Newcomer orcs were still dazed, while the experienced ones had already run over ten meters away.

'It's that human again!'

'It's that furless monkey dressed in black!'

Only today, he wasn't wearing that black outfit!

The orc leader, seeing the huge hole in his chest, felt the memories of being dominated flood back.

They didn't know fear.

But the feeling of powerlessness instinctively repulsed them.

He hadn't mastered his flying axe technique yet, lacking the confidence to counter-kill the enemy across such a distance.

Time to slip away, no more fighting!

Watching the enemy nock another arrow, the orc leader turned and ran, "Waaaaagh!"

"..."

"..."

The voice echoed back from afar, "I'll be back!"

With the boss running away, the youngsters also instantly abandoned what seemed like easy prey right in front of them.

"Waaaaagh!" A host of orc youngsters followed their leader, shouting messily together, "I'll be back!"

"..."

"..."

"They ran... ran away?"

"They're scared! Hahahaha! They're scared of me!"

"Scared my ass, take a look at that expert over there."

The car continued to race swiftly, and Dai Lian stood alone atop it, a silhouette of a master.

"Handsome, handsome! We're going to hit a rock! I can't drive this thing!" shouted someone from inside the car frantically.

'Why are they running away? I didn't even kill that many...' Dai Lian snapped out of his daze, promptly responding, "Oh, oh, here we go!"