

## Wow 541

### Chapter 541: Arrested

"Understood!"

"Don't worry!"

It was a joke; this was the highest combat power they had encountered in this world. The ability of a single person to annihilate an army of smart machinery alone was far more direct and fierce than the last assault on the Smart Machinery Factory.

He even piloted the mecha that every boy dreams of!

The possibilities of getting more benefits from such a powerful NPC, with whom they had established contact, were far greater than trying their luck with other high-level NPCs elsewhere.

"Alright, go now, and be quick. We don't have much time left."

With the order given, the crowd scattered and merged into the shadows.

As the instructor and the senior member of the Mechanical Court simultaneously descended from the mecha cockpit, Bai E was already sitting on the ground with Gong Yan and several other players, as well as some ordinary people from Grey Iron City, all waiting quietly.

Bai E calmly gazed at the collapsed buildings in the distance, his eyes lost in thought, as if mourning.

Just by witnessing this scene, the instructor had already conjured his own speculations.

The image of a hero who dared to defy military regulations to save this wilderness refuge for the dispossessed easily sprang to mind.

Whether it was the motives behind his actions or the overwhelming strength Bai E had demonstrated this time, they all infused the instructor's tone with a deep respect.

"Captain Bai, due to your serious violation of military district regulations, I am here to arrest you... Please cooperate," he said.

Bai E remained silent, stood up, and voluntarily stretched out his hands.

"Click!" The senior member of the Mechanical Court pulled out a pair of metal handcuffs and snapped them onto Bai E's wrists.

The Mechanical Court was the absolute force in the city for judging high-end entities.

Their opponents were targets like Bai E, who were beyond the city's control and posed a significant threat to it... whether they were mutants, smart machines, beastmen, or demons.

Compared to "unstable" Spiritual Energy users, humans always trusted the power of technology more.

The handcuffs that locked Bai E were made of an unknown metal, and they clearly had special Spiritual Energy effects added to them. The moment Bai E put on the handcuffs, he felt the flow of his Spiritual Energy slow down by nearly 99%.

At the same time, a prickly sensation emanated from where the handcuffs were, and Bai E felt a strange pheromone being injected into his body.

[Your body has been infected with a toxic substance, reducing your physical performance by 50%.]

Weak and powerless.

Accustomed to Spiritual Energy and a strong constitution, Bai E instantly felt weak at the knees, fully exhibiting signs of being suppressed.

However, a pair of strong arms supported Bai E's nearly collapsing body. The senior member of the Mechanical Court looked at Bai E intently, with warmth in his eyes, and said in a low voice with absolute confidence, "We're just going through the motions... Don't worry, even if the military district wants to abandon you, we at the Mechanical Court won't agree."

One hand on Bai E's shoulder, the other expressed his reliability in a calm and steady voice, "We won't let anything happen to you."

Even though the senior member of the Mechanical Court deliberately kept his voice low, it was still loud enough for everyone nearby to hear.

The players exchanged silent glances, their eyes betraying a sense of 'I knew it.'

With such formidable strength, their leader must have an extraordinary position in the military district, and of course, he would have backers. What's a minor infraction against military regulations in comparison? Regardless of their testimonies, the leader was sure to be safe.

If anyone truly betrayed the leader, they would be truly blinded by ignorance.

Just as awkwardly, the instructor heard the senior member's proclamation and a wry smile appeared at the corner of his mouth.

His allegiance lay with the military district, and they hadn't yet determined what to do. The Mechanical Court, however, seemed eager to intervene.

Even if he personally longed to join the Mechanical Court, he was still an officer of the military district.

He couldn't help but feel a bit awkward as he spoke out, "Senior... Captain Bai's case is not yet decided. Isn't it premature for us to be saying these things?"

"..." The senior member of the Mechanical Court glanced at him. His white eyes stood out starkly against his dark skin.

Obvious disdain.

...

The military base was restless through the night.

The news of the mecha desertion had spread to every corner of the military base. Even without knowing the actual truth, the sight of a mecha acting alone without orders, followed by an unexpected curfew and the nighttime mobilization of the base's troops, was enough to alert every soldier that something serious had happened.

All of the military base's generals were gathered in the large reporting hall that night, as the desertion of the first mecha pilot was a matter of concern for everyone.

"Just now, one of our Mech Armored Corps' mech pilots took his mecha and left the camp without any orders, after forging a military command," reported the officer with a serious and stern voice. "His name is Bai E, but he can also be called... 95B27."

As his voice faded, the information about Bai E instantly appeared on a big white screen in front of everyone, clearly displayed.

Everything about Bai E, from his "birth" until today, was detailed in the records, even the top-secret elevation of an artificial human to a natural person couldn't be hidden under such a breach of discipline.

The multitude of officers who had been suddenly summoned only knew the general direction of the event and were still unaware of what had actually happened or who was involved.

Now, seeing the individual's information appear on the screen, an eerie silence enveloped the room.

'Artificial human?'

Some officers grasped the keyword and immediately stood up with fiery eyes, ready to passionately express their opinions. However, upon rising, they realized that the entire room was looking at them with a strange gaze, so they forcibly swallowed the harsh words that had reached the tip of their tongues.

'What does this mean?'

'Why is everyone silent?'

In the military, there were clearly defined factional disputes, and normally any small matter would provoke a fierce attack from the opposing party.

This officer had recently been promoted from the lower ranks, eager to fight for his faction and to make a strong impression on his superiors.

But now... what did this all mean?

The officer looked at the leader of his faction with confusion.

Hamilton sat with his thick arms crossed, seated without even glancing at the information on the screen, as if it had nothing to do with him.

'That's right! A mech pilot from the Mech Armored Corps!'

Could just anyone join the Mech Armored Corps? Those who were part of it were certainly core elites trusted by the leader.

No matter whether one is an artificial person or not, those trusted by the leader are definitely one of our own.

So... what about the opposition?

If it's one of our own, the other side would certainly want to suppress it, right?

The officer then looked toward the distinct other side, where Carlos, the leader, was looking up at the ceiling as if the ceiling held the most fascinating object, absorbing all his attention.

"..."

What's going on?

Below us, there's a fierce battle raging, but above it's all harmony?

The officer swept his gaze around, only to find not a single warrior willing to speak out at this moment.

'What on earth has happened?'

Weslin also had a dark expression on his face.

Bai E was someone he had promoted personally, someone whom he was fond of, as the young man's words and actions had often matched his expectations.

But now, with such a big incident occurring, as the marshal of the military base, he couldn't be without a stance.

With a deliberate cough to capture everyone's attention, Weslin looked towards a corner of the hall below, "Dewa, say something?"

"I won't speak," Dewa simply shook his head bluntly, a man known for his straightforwardness who never minced his words, "I won't do something as offensive as this. But since the marshal insists, I will say just this... the commissioner in charge of investigating the truth has not returned yet. Captain Bai E may not be a deserter. If there's no rush, we could all wait a bit longer."

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"What are you saying? What is this talk?" a dark-faced military officer, who had been standing aside, asked seriously, "Just because it's not desertion, does that mean one can casually violate military discipline and pilot a mecha outside the camp? If everyone acted like that, what would be the point of military discipline?"

The person who suddenly spoke was not affiliated with any of the factions within the military region, nor was he a part of the Military Department itself.

The meeting involved not only military officers from the barracks but also personnel from the Legal Affairs Department, who were crucial to this meeting. It was for this reason that Weslin had no choice but to step forward to carry out justice.

If such serious breaches of discipline occurred within the Military Department, it would give the Legal Affairs Department even more justification to interfere with the affairs of the Military Department in the future.

As soon as the investigator from the Legal Affairs Department spoke up, the room once again fell into silence.

However, the investigator from the Legal Affairs Department obviously did not intend to let Dewa off the hook, the first to jump out. He keenly sensed the incident was filled with secrets unknown to many, and the reason the Military Department had not made substantial contributions to the city these years might very well be due to their bloated and corrupt system!

The investigator fixed his eyes on the dark-faced military officer standing there, just like a hawk scrutinizing its prey. The officer's recent words sounded fishy, "Officer, is the soldier who broke the rules under your command? Are you trying to cover up his serious breach of discipline?"

On hearing this, Dewa let out a wry smile and shrugged his shoulders, "I said I didn't want to offend anyone... Forget what I said, my lord. I don't have any comments on this matter; you're free to investigate me however you like."

Having said that, he sat down and kept silent, only crossing his arms and looking away.

Weslin's mouth twitched slightly, feeling that the situation couldn't continue like this.

With the people from the Legal Affairs Department present, it wasn't the time for them to handle matters in-house as they pleased; they needed to come up with a formal set of procedures for handling the situation.

Although he did rather like the young man in question, it certainly wasn't worth compromising his complete control over the Military Department for a mere soldier. It would be better to make an example of this soldier...

With a thought, Weslin cleared his throat and said sternly, "Lord Lewis is correct, military discipline must not be violated. Whoever breaks the rules of the military region must be punished severely. Mechas are a critical combat unit of our military region, and piloting a mecha away from the camp without authorization poses a significant hazard and risk, both to the military region and to the outside world. This behavior must not be encouraged; issue a pursuit order immediately. No matter his reasons for piloting the mecha away from the camp, they are irrelevant. Upon sighting the target, shoot to kill without hesitation!"

"Cough!"

"Cough, cough!"

Weslin's decision clearly went against the wishes of many officers present.

Carlos and Hamilton almost stood up at the same time. However, each opened his mouth only to find, at first, that no words would come out.

The motive behind Bai E's unauthorized departure from the camp was unknown.

As long as it wasn't desertion, they were prepared to make a certain sacrifice to protect Bai E.

But the problem was, the current situation was unclear, and they dared not place their bets until they received news from the personnel sent to pursue Bai E.

If Bai E truly harbored rebellious intentions, what Carlos and Hamilton stood to lose might be much more than a little sacrifice.

Carlos and Hamilton exchanged glances, lips moving slightly. Eventually, it was Carlos who slightly lifted his chin and stated calmly, "I think Major Dewa was right, the situation is not clear enough. Why don't we wait for news from our people at the front line before making a decision?"

"..." Dewa looked sidelong at Carlos with a face full of speechlessness.

The technical department's in-charge personnel at the side suddenly looked up with delight, interrupting everyone's thoughts, "We've received contact from the front line! They have captured the target! They're currently on their way back."

"Good!"

"Additionally, they are still investigating the exact reasons for the target's unauthorized departure from the camp but, they have sent back a recorded video first. I wonder if..."

Mechas are large units, and naturally, the equipment they carry is not limited by size.

The little gadgets Bai E made himself were already capable of ultra-long-distance communication without delay, so the new equipment developed by the city's scientific research department was naturally even more powerful.

Despite the distance of a thousand miles, they were still able to transmit video files.

Weslin nodded and commanded, "Let's see it."

The opinion of his own officers under the Legal Affairs Department also needed to be considered.

It seemed that both Carlos and Hamilton intended to protect Captain Bai, so, Weslin thought, why not do them a favor—provided the situation wasn't too serious, they might be able to present some favorable "evidence."

"Received!" The technician who received Weslin's order nodded and then tapped a few keys on the control panel in front of him. A slightly shaky recorded video appeared on the massive white screen in front of everyone.

In the video, starlight twinkled in the sky.

"What is this recording?"

"Can't see anything clearly..."

"Looks like it's on the move?"

After all, the direction of those twinkling stars was getting closer and closer.

The officers focused, watching silently.

As the shapes of sharp, angular shadows began to emerge into a visible and clearly observable field, the person behind the camera drew nearer to the sparks of light.

"Robots?"

"Robots!"

"And there's a mecha... Is that our deserter mecha?"

As the image gradually became closer and clearer, a series of low gasps erupted among the officers.

Chapter 543: The Legendary Road\_2

"The original Intelligent Mechanisms!"

"And there are two of them!"

"Isn't that white original Intelligence Mechanism flying in the sky the one with the highest authority from the Mech Central Base on the northern plains? How can it appear in such a place?"

"How did our deserter Mech Pilot end up fighting with these Intelligences?"

"Could it be that he found out these Intelligences intended to storm our Blackwater City and went ahead to intercept them?"

Knowing that their superiors intended to protect the deserter Mech Pilot, some clever officers had already proactively concocted a reasonable excuse for the breach of discipline.

However, the stern-faced representative from the Military Department glanced indifferently at the officer who had spoken, then turned his gaze back to the screen.

Even if he had learned of the situation and gone to intercept the Intelligences, it was still a serious breach of discipline.

One cannot disregard the evil in the process because the outcome is just.

What the Military Department cared about were the rules, not the reasons.

No matter how righteous the deserter Mech Pilot's reasons, breach of discipline is a breach of discipline!  
He would not be spared!

But... it seems there's no need for them to spare him now.

On the screen, the ochre original Intelligence Mechanism had fully revealed its might under the command of the "white devil."

Fire at full power!

The light of the guns illuminated the faces of many officers present, some of whom sighed softly.

"He's done for..."

"No wonder he was captured so quickly, turns out he's already a dead man..."

"To be targeted by two original Intelligences, Captain Bai really has bad luck."

"Deserting and running into an Intelligence the first thing, who could be blamed?"

"Boom!"

On the screen, a shell was split in two, and the blue-and-white figure darted out of the onslaught of shells like a specter and charged toward the ochre original Intelligence Mechanism. The only weapon equipped on the Mech—a composite metal sword—suddenly slashed toward the seemingly indestructible original Intelligence species.

The suicidal attack brought astonishing results—all shattered with a single slash.

It split the ochre original Intelligence Mechanism, as well as the minds of all the officers present.

"Ah?"

"Ah?"

"Ah?"

Thousands of words couldn't compare to a single, simple question.

What had just happened?

Right before their eyes, an original Intelligence Mechanism was slashed apart by that rogue Mecha?

When had the Military's Mechas ever possessed such a level of output power?

Or was the sword held by the deserter Mech actually a secret cutting-edge weapon covertly given to him by a certain scholar from the city's scientific research department?

Otherwise, how could one explain the explosive scene that unfolded before their eyes?

However, the development on the video did not waver for anyone's will and continued. With two more slashes, the large ochre original Intelligence Mechanism was sliced up like a harmless watermelon and exploded where it stood.

"That's an original Intelligence Mechanism!"

"We have encountered that white devil before, and it easily annihilated one of our field army divisions."

"Yet it seems to have been scared off..."

"I'm actually seeing this!"

At this moment, even those officers in the camp who usually held opposing views were looking at Hamilton in amazement, asking, "Hey! Are all the Mech Pilots in your Mech Armored Corps this fierce?"

Hamilton was also completely stupefied.

My people are this fierce?

How come I don't know about it?

If they were all this fierce, wouldn't I have flattened their Intelligent Mechanism homeland by now? Intelligences don't have the kind of large-scale mental control ability that the bug masters have.

The reason everyone is reluctant to touch the Intelligences is because they are tough to fight and yield little gain.

If all the Mech Pilots in his Mech Armored Corps were at this level, couldn't he just send a corps to wipe out the Intelligent Mechanism Base and avoid any competition for resources with humans?

He knew Bai E was fierce, but he had never thought she was this fierce.

Just one blow to cripple, and three slashes to tear apart a first-generation intelligent mechanism; one wouldn't even dare to dream of doing such a thing.

The fierce performance subdued every officer present, or perhaps it burned out their CPUs causing a momentary short circuit, as everyone silently watched the video progress, their brains already emptied.

However, the explosive scene they first witnessed was far from the limit. As the filming perspective followed behind the runaway mecha, the camera meticulously swept over every detail they passed along the way.

Wreckage everywhere...

The fires started by the intelligent mechanism stretched out into a legendary path that left people speechless.

The two first-generation intelligent mechanisms were not acting solo. Before the charge and slaughter of the two, that renegade mecha first took down an entire army of intelligent mechanisms.

"What the hell kind of level is this?"

"I have no idea..."

"I know! I know! It must be a secret order from the scientific research department! This is a test of secret weapons for them!"

"Stop spouting nonsense! The mech's inspection report is still lying in the files... It even only has one blade."

Just one blade... to take down an entire Intelligence Machinery Group Army.

"Hahaha! Hahaha!" The first outrageous laughter echoed through the conference hall. Hamilton slammed the table and glared at the investigator from the Legal Affairs Department, "I ordered him to go! What breach of military discipline? Meaningless drive! It's just that I didn't get the chance to go through the proper procedures! You want to investigate me? Has nothing to do with him!"

The investigator from the Legal Affairs Department was completely subdued by the fierce combat record as well, but Hamilton's words were undoubtedly a provocation to his intelligence, "If it really was your order, why didn't you come forward as a witness earlier? And if I'm not mistaken, that deserter mech pilot is an artificial human, right? Promoting an artificial human to the status of a natural person, and also entrusting them with such an important role, you owe a reasonable explanation for this!"

"Explanation?" Hamilton arrogantly waved his hand, "No fucking explanation needed!"

Power is the explanation.

In the barracks, if someone had that kind of power, Hamilton would worship him as his father.

At this moment, even if Bai E truly intended to defect, it didn't matter to him.

Defection was simply for profit.

No matter the price offered by the other side, he would double it!

Or was it because Bai E was wronged by someone in the barracks?

He would immediately air out the entire family history of the person who wronged Bai E!

Confronting head-on, no one backs down!

Even if the city lord came today, Bai E leaving the camp privately was by his order.

"In a word, if you want to investigate me, it has nothing to do with him."

It's all my doing, so come and arrest me!

Hamilton held his head high, not caring about anyone.

"You! You! You!" The investigator, enraged, pointed fingers but couldn't utter half a sentence.

Arrogant! Way too arrogant!

The people from the Military Department really are rotten to the core.

No matter how strong, one person's strength isn't enough to settle this chaotic world; it's the rules... that ensure the city's enduring prosperity.

Such brainless warriors!

Weslin shot Hamilton a look, signaling him to tone it down a bit.

The Legal Affairs Department was part of the upper echelons of the city's power structure; if this escalated to the City Senate, their entire military region would be sanctioned.

It really wasn't worth it to fall out with them over a mere soldier, even if that soldier's might was somewhat over the top...

"Don't be so hasty, Lord Lewis..." Weslin said with a cheery smile, the video's emergence providing a bit of confidence, "Based on the video sent back from the front lines, our Captain Bai left camp late at night, and it was also for the sake of humanity. We shouldn't so hastily decide his fate; even if there is a minor procedural error, we can allow him an opportunity to atone for his mistake, right~"

Weslin deliberately avoided the word "defection."

The visitor from the Legal Affairs Department certainly couldn't be offended, but such a fierce fighter also couldn't just be discarded on a whim.

The attitude was positive, the protection firm.

That was his plan now.

"Lord Lewis, isn't the man already on his way back in custody? Why not wait until we meet Captain Bai himself and talk with him, then decide how to handle this incident, what do you think?"

The investigator thought for a moment and nodded, "All right."

The incident had happened so suddenly; they probably hadn't had the chance to collude on their testimonies yet.

Just bring him back and confront him in court immediately; the truth would naturally emerge.

At this thought, Louis turned his head towards his subordinates and whispered, "Go! As soon as the escort personnel arrive, bring them here directly. Don't let anyone contact the target in transit."

Chapter 544: Hiring rush?

Bai E and two others, escorted by an instructor and members of the Mechanical Court, were again escorted by a line of people to the vast conference hall.

Sweeping his gaze over the faces of everyone present, Bai E lowered his eyes in silence, hands simply hanging in front of his chest, waiting for what would happen next.

A stranger approached quietly, his stern eyes fixed on Bai E. The man's voice, captured by the microphone and spread through the speakers to the entire hall, said, "95B27, you forged orders and unauthorizedly piloted a mecha to leave the military camp, which constitutes a serious violation of the military district's regulations. Are you aware of your guilt?"

95B27? It's been a long time since I heard that designation...

Lifting his head slightly, Bai E looked calmly at the other party, "self-restraint" tightly controlling his body's hormone levels, and replied evenly, "I am aware."

"..." The investigator from the Legal Affairs Department paused briefly, "You are aware?"

Not even trying to make a defense?

It felt like punching into cotton.

"I am aware," Bai E said sincerely, looking at the other, "but I had to go."

The investigator wasn't interested in entangling further with a soldier who had breached discipline, "Since you admit to leaving the camp unauthorizedly without a superior's command, there's no need to say more. Whatever your reasons might be, they should not serve as an excuse for you to disregard military camp regulations."

Having said that, the investigator turned away and looked down at the still-standing, arrogant officer, "I'll settle the score with you later for trying to deceive the Legal Affairs Department. For now... we need to first pass judgement on this mech pilot who disobeyed military discipline. Marshal Weslin, according to military district regulations, Titan-class armed mechas are classified as special military equipment. You should be clearer than I am about what kind of crime it is to steal special military equipment."

"This...", Weslin glanced at Bai E, the rest of us are still trying to find a solution for you, and yet you've confessed to everything as soon as you arrived.

Looking at the likewise motionless Hamilton and other officers, Weslin's face was filled with concern, wondering what to do next.

In the corner, a slender figure hidden in a black cloak gently stroked the sheath of her Longsword, a fleeting, dark glimmer passing over the hilt.

The commotion Bai E caused was too great, and she was unsure whether her "face" among humans was enough.

If not... her sword would speak for her.

"You plan to execute him, don't you?" The person from the Mechanical Court, who had been silently observing, hadn't spoken since the return, until now, when no one could think of a good solution, he broke the silence, "If so, it means Captain Bai is hereby stripped of his military status, correct? In that case, I formally represent the Mechanical Court in sincerely inviting Captain Bai E to join us. Before coming here, I had already informed our Chief Justice, who is on his way here. We from the Mechanical Court claim this man."

On the way back, this judge from the Mechanical Court had been subtly inquiring about the reason Bai E was reluctant to join them previously.

Learning that the core reason was actually just Bai E's reluctance to accept mechanical augmentation, the judge couldn't help but feel rueful.

To those in the Mechanical Court, undergoing mechanical augmentation is seen as forming a deeper connection with machinery, a prerequisite for qualifying to communicate with a mech soul.

But now that Bai E already possessed a mech soul, forcing him to accept mechanical augmentation would be putting the cart before the horse.

Of course, perhaps after mechanical augmentation, Bai E would form an even tighter link with the mech soul, thereby maximizing the mech's potential, but that would have to be after Bai E voluntarily joined the Mechanical Court and chose to undergo augmentation after prolonged persuasion.

The prerequisite was Bai E joining the Mechanical Court first.

The judge had been contemplating how to persuade Bai E to voluntarily join their Court; after all, the Mech Armored Corps didn't have superior authority over the military, and while most mech pilots aspired to join the Mechanical Court, all such decisions were down to personal will, and formal proceedings still required communication and coordination between the Court and the military...

If the military was adamant about not releasing someone, they couldn't just force the issue.

But now... the military was planning to execute Bai E.

Could there be a better opportunity than this?

A mere charge of military indiscipline was all, and if the Mechanical Court insisted on protecting him, no one would dare to challenge them.

This round was secure!

"What are you talking about?" Hamilton slammed the table fiercely, "Did we say we were going to deal with Captain Bai? Is it your place, the Mechanical Court, to protect him? Not needed! Captain Bai, alive, belongs to our armored camp; dead, he is the soul of our armored camp!"

After that, Hamilton fiercely turned to Weslin, "Marshal, Captain Bai is the soul of our Mech Armored Corps; without him, our whole corps would cease to function. As to how to deal with him, you decide!"

A coup!

For Weslin, who was parachuted in as Marshal, not many of the original high-ranking military officers were convinced by him. In ordinary situations, they'd give each other face and let it pass.

Now, during a core incident, could an outsider step in and make our military district kneel?

"I stand with Hamilton on this," said Carlos with resolute voice, "Captain Bai's capability is second to none in the military district, and he has earned great merit multiple times for us. If we really decided to dispose of him, I believe it would cause dissension among the entire military district's soldiers. Moreover, in a few days, we will launch the total offensive against the Black Rock District Hive. It's utter folly not to utilize Captain Bai's tremendous combat power. Even if Captain Bai is truly at fault, we can delay the discussion until after the total offensive against the Hive, giving Captain Bai a chance to redeem himself through meritorious service. I trust he will provide us with a satisfying answer. Here, I am willing to ensure Captain Bai with my own military rank. If he fails to contribute sufficiently in the offensive against the Hive, I am prepared to accept any consequences alongside him, no complaints!"

Chapter 545: Hiring rush?\_2

The two military factions, usually at loggerheads over the treatment of artificial humans, for the first time stood united in their stance.

Weslin, who had been forcibly cornered by his subordinates, looked as black as charcoal, but he knew all too well the character of the officers beneath him—he knew they were all a bunch of muddled fools.

'I'll get someone to replace you all when I get the chance!'

Heart hardening, Weslin, with a bitter smile, looked towards the investigator from the Legal Affairs Department, "Lord Lowis, what they said is not without merit. To kill Bai, with such formidable strength, seems a waste. It would be more fitting to give Bai a chance to redeem himself through merit, don't you think?"

"I think..." The investigator smiled coldly.

He never believed that just one or two high-end combatants could change the course of the world. If the situation was winnable, they didn't need this insubordinate Mech Pilot, and if not, having him made no difference.

In the end, it was just personal agendas at play, everyone wanting to groom and win over their loyalists!

"Sizzle sizzle~"

A sudden electrical noise flashed through the entire conference hall, followed by a solemn voice booming overhead like thunder.

"What's this? The Mechanical Court wants a person, and it's this difficult?"

"The Judgment Chief!"

"The Judgment Chief has arrived!"

A cry of surprise rose from the crowd.

The Judgment Chief of the Mechanical Court was one of the few true top figures of the city, and with his involvement, there was likely no need for further dispute.

Hamilton and Carlos exchanged a glance, their eyes reflecting the same gravity.

Although their military faction was the largest, they didn't have much say over high-end combat forces and top-tier levels.

If the Marshal of the military faction was prestigious enough, perhaps they could have contended with the opposition.

But Weslin, this parachuted Marshal...

If he couldn't even manage the internal affairs of the military faction, how could they expect him to stand firm in front of the Judgment Chief?

In the silence, a clear, young girl's voice rang out from a corner of the hall.

Franca, with a smile on her lips, looked askance towards a certain direction of the ceiling, "Your Honor, the Judgment Chief, I bring greetings from Nolanitz, the Grand Judge, to you. I may need to remind you of something, Bai E was always a potential seed under the watchful eye of the Arbitration Place. If the military faction doesn't want him, Bai's first consideration should be our Arbitration Place, not the Mechanical Court, don't you think?"

No major event at the barracks slipped past any officer of significant rank. Franca, as an instructor stationed in the barracks for the Arbitration Place, saw no reason not to join in the excitement.

Upon discovering the protagonist was Bai E, she promptly took interest.

Of all those present, only she knew the true identity of Bai E.

The video that had been played earlier was indeed shocking, but in Franca's eyes, it still didn't compare to what the other could achieve in the field of Spiritual Energy.

Single-handedly combating and killing an invading war demonic prince from the material world—this level of combat strength was rarely matched even within their Arbitration Place.

The combat power of the material world could be converted into the equivalent of weapon yield, but it was the demons of the Spiritual Power World that humanity must truly be wary of as the eternal enemy!

She knew Bai E had no intention of leaving the barracks before, but if Bai really couldn't stay in the military faction any longer, then their Arbitration Place was his true home!

As for Grandfather Nolanitz... he would certainly understand her acting first and reporting later.

"..."

The sudden interjection from Franca was obviously yet another wrench in the works.

Arbitration Place, as the city's institution solely responsible for armed combat against demonic entities, held an equally substantial weight in influence.

And the Judgment Chief, Nolanitz, stood on par with the grand judge as one of the city's top figures.

But that presupposed... that the young lady speaking out truly had the credentials to speak for Judgment Chief Nolanitz.

Everyone was aware that the grand judge was watching the young lady who had raised her voice.

After a prolonged silence, that imposing yet hollow voice finally spoke softly, "Young girl, if what you say is true, I can go talk to Nolanitz."

Considered separately, whether it was her identity as a third-generation member of that family or as Nolanitz's favorite new executive officer, neither was enough for this young lady to have the right to speak before him.

However, when these two identities were combined in one person, even the grand judge dared not disregard Franca's words lightly.

However, with a "bang," the conference room door was suddenly thrust open with brute force, the clear sound of heels striking the floor approached rapidly, and a raspy yet sharp voice fearlessly addressed the grand judge who had come from afar, "I think you've all forgotten something, Bai E is an asset of the Scientific Research Institute!"

Striding through the doorway in a white lab coat, the tall figure swept in. The guards at the door were confounded, not understanding why they were seeing so many important figures tonight—

Helen!

As the youngest rising star of the Scientific Research Institute, Scholar Helen had authority second only to the director of the institute.

Even though, in theory, armed institutions such as Arbitration Place, Mechanical Court, and cultural institutions like the Scientific Research Institute all belonged to the city's elite institutions, as the provider of all the city's cutting-edge technology, the institute's status was inherently superior to all others.

The legendary tale of a Mech Pilot single-handedly wiping out an entire mechanized army swept through every top institution in the city this deep night, and the prominent name of Bai E naturally appeared on the desks of most of these institutions' leaders.

A familiar name, remarkable feats.

Upon hearing the news, Helen immediately wanted to check on this warrior who had left a deep impression on her and whom she hadn't seen for a long time to see what his physical condition was now, but she hadn't expected to walk into such a scene upon arrival.

A struggle for possession?

"The original intention of the synthetic human project was for us to collect data for mass-producing super soldiers, and these artificial human soldiers are only lent to the military district for use. Fundamentally, they're assets of our Scientific Research Institute. Since when is it your turn to fight over them here?"

Helen's slender brows swept across the room, her petite figure backing the overpowering energy of the Scientific Research Institute.

Gazing indifferently at the military district marshal, Helen's eyes flashed as she issued a stern warning, "Even if they are to be scrapped, it must be done with the signature of the Scientific Research Institute. Since when is it your turn to take things into your own hands?"

The room erupted in shock.

None of the officers participating in the conference had anticipated that the situation would escalate to what it had become.

For a mere synthetic human soldier, the top figures of the city's elite institutions were all jumping out to fight over him?

While the soldier's personal ability was indeed staggeringly high, it seemed excessive to act this way, didn't it?

Eventually, all eyes converged once more on the silent figure standing before them all.

The individual's head was slightly bowed, the breath calm, appearing utterly unconcerned with everything unfolding around.

Was it a prediction or a complete lack of desire?

Regardless, such nonchalance still elicited admiration from the officers present.

Taken as today's events would be, putting any of them in place of the protagonist would probably be overwhelming with the dramatic ups and downs.

Just what kind of magic power did this legendary Mech Pilot possess that he made the entire city restless tonight?

["Lucky Strike" charge +50.]

Chapter 546: For the sake of 'humanity'!

How did the situation evolve into what it is today?

A perfectly good accountability meeting, how did it become a scramble for people?

The investigator from the Legal Affairs Department had a gloomy expression on his face. In a gathering filled with top brass like this, it wasn't his place to push any further.

Yet, to fall silent thus did not sit well with him.

Legal statutes must govern above the entire city, only then can it develop sustainably and healthily.

Right is right, wrong is wrong.

If you are correct, you should be rewarded; if you err, you must be penalized.

Right and wrong are not interchangeable.

If those in power are allowed wanton behavior, even the greatest city will one day crumble and fall apart.

His fists clenched tightly; suddenly, a gentle male voice came from behind, "Believe in what you stand for, don't give up."

The man donned in a green semitransparent trench coat silently appeared behind the investigator. Looking at Helen, he gave a slight smile, resembling a harmless and gentle breeze, "Helen, when a child turns 16 and leaves home to work, the parents can no longer bear any responsibilities or obligations on their behalf. Once this soldier stepped out of the cultivation pod and joined the world of his own volition, everything he does should be his own responsibility. Artificial humans with normal genes are not slaves, and the Scientific Research Institute does not have absolute dominion over them. This is explicitly stated in the charter related to the artificial human project. When you discuss him as a commodity, you've already deemed him a defective product of the project... So, tell me, Helen, do you think this soldier is a defective product of the artificial human project?"

"..." Helen narrowed her eyes, staring at the other party.

The man was all smiles, his eyes squinting into a slender slit; even his words were whispered softly, appearing totally harmless.

But even those who had not seen the head of the Legal Affairs Department had heard of his cunning and ruthlessness.

The people of the Legal Affairs Department were like cold poison snakes coiled around everyone's necks, greedily flickering their icy tongues at every fresh and tender throat.

When dealing with any other armed department, the Scientific Research Institute could seize control and behave unreasonably if desired.

However, for the Legal Affairs Department, an institution that governs the city purely with reason and philosophy, they had no fear of being thwarted by the Scientific Research Department.

If they cannot truly "defeat" the opposition on moral grounds, even the Elder Council must take the department's demands seriously.

Helen was a tech person, not very good at, or interested in engaging in, this kind of sophistry.

At this moment, she remained silent, merely staring intently at the other party.

The man didn't care and just looked tenderly at Bai E, his words gentle, making one feel like basking in the spring breeze, "Bai E? Here, I would like to first apologize on behalf of my subordinate for the rudeness shown to you earlier. He should not have overlooked the motives behind your disciplinary violation, perhaps you truly had no choice but to act as you did. Now, may we hear your side of the story?"

Standing not far from Bai E, Helen immediately instructed Bai E after the man finished speaking, "It's okay, speak freely. I'm here, and no one can do anything to you."

Even if the issue escalated to the Elder Council, no one could touch Bai E.

What she said, no one could counter.

Bai E still did not utter a word, merely glanced at the technical staff in the distance.

Having returned for so long, the military camp's investigative officials should have already uncovered the whole "truth" behind her departure and reported back by now.

The same matter, coming from one's own mouth, always feels different than when others speak on one's behalf.

Bai E did not wish to blow her own trumpet; perhaps the investigation reports from the military zone specialists recounting the same story might be somewhat more convincing.

'What's taking so long? Can't you hurry it up?'

Seeming to sense Bai E's anticipation, a technical staff member suddenly leaned back, carefully confirming the content on his screen before hurrying over to Weslin, whispering something into his ear.

"What?" Weslin's eyes flashed, joy evident on his face.

After patting the shoulder of the reporting technician, Weslin gestured for him to proceed with the task, and then, clapping his hands to draw everyone's attention, he spoke in a deliberate and solemn voice, "The account of the involved party may not be reliable. I have here an investigative report from the commissioners, which should be more accurate."

The Minister of the Legal Affairs Department, his seemingly gentle and delicate eyes, gave one last look at the silent Bai E, then turned to Weslin with a smile, "Since the Marshal has already obtained a frontline investigative report, we naturally need not waste time on the party involved."

Weslin nodded, gestured towards the technical personnel on the sideline and instructed, "Begin."

"Yes."

The white screen came to life with video.

The investigating official, still stationed in the town and dressed in military uniform, held all the collected data, standing upright as he eloquently addressed the camera.

"The path of the rogue Mecha is clear and traceable, with a definite target and no pauses in its course."

"The forces involved in combat are distinct, all combat traces are followable, consistent with the accounts of eyewitnesses."

"There is a high number of survivors, who all describe the events consistently when sampled separately, largely excluding the possibility of collusion in advance."

Chapter 547: For the sake of 'humanity'!\_2

"After our detailed investigation, we have reconstructed the entire truth of Captain Bai E's unauthorized departure with the mecha..."

"On xx month xx day, while Captain Bai E's special squad was executing the task of cleaning up synthetic organisms in the Northern Mine, they encountered a group of refugees who had just been expelled from Grey Iron City. At that time, the refugees were discovered by a group of passing synthetic organisms and were fortuitously rescued by Captain Bai E's squad."

"Captain Bai E, who had rescued the refugees, originally planned to lead them back to Blackwater City. However, having suffered from injustice in Grey Iron City, they were reluctant to have any contact with another city. At their plea, Captain Bai E led them to a group of ruins from the Golden Age, which he had passed by on a previous mission, and helped them clear the threat of the mutated beasts in the ruins."

"Considering the refugees' isolation and helplessness in the wilderness, Captain Bai E left them with a personal communicator through which they could directly contact him."

"It was because they contacted Captain Bai E that he piloted the mecha out of the camp in the dead of night when they encountered a retaliation from the synthetic organisms. The communication information and the devices are now in our possession, and these pieces of evidence cannot be falsified."

"This report is the preliminary report of the first phase; it is not guaranteed to be entirely correct but holds certain reference value."

"We will also send personnel to investigate the place where they claim to have encountered the synthetic organisms, and to Grey Iron City, to verify the truthfulness of their statements and provide a second phase report... That is all."

"Buzz~"

A flash of light passed, and the video went out.

The Minister of the Legal Affairs Department looked at Bai E again with a smile, "Captain Bai E, it seems that this isn't the only time you have committed a breach of discipline tonight. No one would blame you for saving those refugees in the wilderness. But encountering large groups of refugees and choosing to conceal that fact, how would you explain yourself?"

"No explanation..." Bai E looked directly at him, his gaze calm, "I didn't want to see people who had been harmed by 'the city' get agitated again."

"..." The man smiled with a touch of coyness, "Then, how would you explain the communicator? The wireless communicators developed by the Information Department shouldn't be equipped by every special squad, not even if they were given to you privately by Helen. It was meant for you to test, as an asset of the city. Your unauthorized transfer to an outsider is a grave offense."

Bai E stared straight ahead, expressionless, "The main parts of the communicator were exchanged for with my military merits, and I modified its functions myself. Theoretically, it is a private asset."

"..." The man fell conspicuously silent, having not expected such an answer.

He turned to look at Helen, only to find a visible surprise on her face.

It wasn't given to him privately by Helen?

A warrior of such formidable strength also capable of such technical work?

This kind of assertion couldn't be faked. The devices were in the hands of the military district's commissioner, a quick check upon their return would reveal whose work it was. As long as this warrior wasn't foolish, he wouldn't lie about this.

"Fine," the man moved on from the topic.

The more exceptional the warrior, the harder it was for him to take action against him.

The more he focused on these trifles, the more he inadvertently revealed this soldier's superior qualities, making those people more frenzied. It would then become even harder to deal with... In fact, he could almost do nothing about the soldier himself now.

Being able to slightly extend the influence of the Legal Affairs Department through this incident was already the limit of his abilities.

"So, your reason is...for a group of refugees in the wilderness, you chose to blatantly defy military discipline, unauthorized piloting a critical armed mecha of the military district out of the camp at night to provide assistance?"

Bai E truly looked up, eyeing the man's gaze with a pair of pupils filled with resolute strength, so steadfast, "Refugees are also human beings."

"Yes! Refugees are also human beings." Helen, who had been listening silently, had her eyes light up, as she finally found a point to interject, "The first clause in the genetic prohibitions implanted in synthetics is that 'humanity' is the supreme asset to be protected. Before his duty as a soldier in a military camp, and above it, making every effort possible to protect every human being he encounters is his highest mission since birth. Being a guardian of humanity comes before being a 'soldier'! Choosing to conceal the existence of the refugees is also a form of protection for 'humanity.' If there is any wrongdoing in this incident, it only lies in the conflict and confrontation between the synthetic human genetic prohibitions and the current practical regulations. As an individual bearing contradictions, Captain Bai E is blameless."

There was no disciplinary breach, only technical limitations.

Looking at the resolute Bai E, Helen's eyes were filled with visible admiration.

Just as when she first met him, every action of this soldier was as clear as a mirror.

He had no selfish desires, no compromise, everything... was solely for the sake of humanity as a group.

Perhaps the city institutions that used such soldiers occasionally found this "rigidity" bothersome, but until their grasp of technology allowed for more delicate editing of the gene ban, he was perfect!

"..." The man from the Legal Affairs Department stared intently at Bai E's face, unable to find the slightest flaw in this resolute warrior.

Even with Spiritual Energy detection, it couldn't bring the slightest useful flaw to light for him.

Not a violation of discipline... not a violation of discipline...

An artificial human stood upon the great justice of "humanity," with all actions originating from the most noble and primitive starting point.

No one could blame an artificial human for not being "smooth," nor could they demand that he abandon the human stance for "flexible action."

It was not about disciplinary violations.

...Only the sincere heart of an artificial human.

"But you should have reported in advance before piloting the Mecha and leaving the camp, instead of making up lies!" The initial investigator from the Legal Affairs Department couldn't help but speak up and question.

"Time was pressing, the cumbersome procedures were foreseeable, I had no time," was the retort.

"..."

Impregnable!

With a light sigh, the Minister of the Legal Affairs Department showed a clear look of dejection, "I have nothing to say."

Turning to Weslin, he continued, "But the fact that something everyone didn't want to see happened, and it can easily be misunderstood and lead to crises, suggests that we should learn a lesson. Whether such 'rigid' individuals are capable of bearing heavy responsibilities, whether their choices at critical moments align more with the city's needs, we cannot predict. Whether we should be more cautious in the future in dealing with this group, ensuring enough monitoring angles and a rapid feedback

mechanism, is something we should give more thought to. Of course, these are just my personal opinions, as for the specific operations, it's up to you... Marshal Weslin."

"Yes..." was the response.

"Those outside the city, can they even be called humans?"

The faint voice spread among the officers below.

Successfully driving out the people from the Legal Affairs Department was undoubtedly a fortunate occurrence, yet the Minister's words were not without reason.

In future incidents like this, would these artificial humans act against the interests of Blackwater City?

Within the military district, there had always been opposition to granting artificial humans the same treatment as natural persons, and this sudden incident undoubtedly provided more evidence for their viewpoint.

Even Hamilton, who was very optimistic about Bai E personally, didn't dare to forcibly silence the murmurs of other officers from his own faction.

His position stemmed from the support of the entire faction, and being chosen as a leader wasn't entirely about power.

Weslin obviously disliked such unstable factors even more, "Captain Bai really isn't suitable for such an important position in the barracks..."

"Then perfect, come to the Mechanical Court, we don't mind," the person from the Mechanical Court escorting Bai E back seemed excited at the prospect.

Franca naturally didn't want to give up, "If it's for humanity, if it's just to fight against demons, we are the better choice!"

"No need for such trouble... I can still be the cornerstone," Bai E calmly voiced his own thoughts, his gaze sweeping around the circle.

Chapter 548: Doubt

No matter what, the military district is always the best starting point for one's development.

Having spent so much time here, neither the fame nor the well-established network of relationships he had built within the military district could be matched by starting anew elsewhere.

Moreover, the military district's vast scale was unlike elite institutions such as the Arbitration Place and Mechanical Court, which tended to focus more on individual combat.

From the laxity of management to the convenience of gaining fame for increasing recharging after completing certain events, both make the barracks more advantageous.

As his own strength grew increasingly formidable, so-called military regulations? For him, they were nothing but empty talk.

And opportunities for transfer were always available, there was no need to rush the moment.

Bai E's words undoubtedly placed the choice entirely in Weslin's hands.

Powerful, rigid in perception, yet incredibly sincere.

No matter how annoying Bai E's flaws appeared, the virtues of this soldier were sufficient to cover them all.

In the military camp, even if there was no need to bear crucial responsibilities, he could still be used as an excellent pioneering force.

And instead of letting him go today, it would be better to keep him on hand as a bargaining chip. If institutions like the Arbitration Place and the Mechanical Court truly wanted this warrior, a deal could be struck, provided they were willing to offer enough in return.

Looking at the soldier with an unruffled face, Weslin was filled with admiration.

"Good! Then let him..."

"Cough cough~" An elderly voice suddenly interrupted Weslin, the chief examiner who had been present during Bai E's shooting test spoke up, giving everyone present an inexplicable explanation, "This is an internal arrangement of our military district, so let's not take up any more of your esteemed time."

The old man exchanged a brief look with Weslin's incoming gaze and shook his head calmly.

The military district's status was not below that of any faction leader present, and if a leader did not have overwhelming strength, at the very least they should possess foresight and decisiveness.

As a marshal of the military district, there was no need to report everything to other institutions.

"..."

Weslin fell into a brief silence, realizing he had indeed panicked for a moment, "Yes! This is an internal personnel arrangement of our military district, so let's not delay any further. Now that the cause and investigation of the recent incident have been clarified, we can conclude the meeting."

After giving Bai E at the center of the incident a deep look, the jovial Legal Affairs Department chief patted his shoulder without uttering a word and turned to leave.

The crowd gradually dispersed, and Helen approached Bai E, staring into his eyes and said with a gentle smile, "Follow me."

She had rushed over to the barracks specifically to test Bai E's current physical data to see if there could be any new discoveries.

As she said, the initial intent of the artificial human project was to create the ultimate warrior by collecting experimental data.

Bai E represented the strongest individual produced since the beginning of the artificial human manufacturing, growing rapidly with almost no weaknesses.

If such an exception could be replicated...

Life is, of course, filled with wonders, but even a little bit of experience that could be referenced was invaluable.

No one dared to stop Bai E as Helen led him away.

And apart from outsiders and most of the junior officers leaving, several high-ranking officers at the core of the military district clearly had their own opinions on the matter. They were like stones in the sea, and only after the meeting hall had almost completely emptied and quieted down did the ever-silent Hamilton, Carlos, and others approach Weslin, who was also waiting in silence.

The real decision on what to do with Bai E still had to be made among them.

"What does the marshal plan to do?" Carlos was the first to ask.

If Bai E could just return to his original status, he would accept that.

As long as Bai E was within the control of his own regimen, rank, and such were merely superficial titles.

Artificial humans might have their rigidities and restrictions, but Bai E, being the first to perform so outstandingly, still held the potential to carve out a future for artificial humans.

"His current status as a Mech Pilot and special forces team leader certainly can't be continued," said Weslin with a stern expression, simply stating the current facts without giving his own opinion.

Which meant he was kicking the ball back to the high-ranking officers before him.

"How about... we make him a Mech Servant?" Hamilton was not yet ready to give up.

An invincible Mech Pilot who could eradicate an entire Intelligence Machinery Group Army with a single alloy blade, to completely strip him of the possibility of being a pilot again for such a minor risk was undoubtedly a huge loss for their armored regiment.

Perhaps...

"We can think of something?"

"Oh?" Weslin raised an eyebrow curiously, "What's the plan?"

"The ban on artificial human genes is not absolute, is it?" Hamilton's eyes flashed with confidence.

As the leader of the faction opposed to the heavy reliance on artificial humans, he had a thorough understanding of the characteristics of such beings.

"The prohibitions in the genes and the realities encountered after birth combine to twist everything in the prohibition into rules fitting for reality. Even those artificial human warriors most loyal to humanity would, under the pangs of hunger, kill a thoroughly evil person for food, a fact attested by past events. So the rules that Bai E firmly believes in now could potentially be changed. Couldn't they?"

Chapter 549: Doubt

...

As long as Bai E could be made to understand that anyone beyond Blackwater City was not part of the "humanity" he was required to protect, then the artificial human warrior known as Bai E would no longer have any flaws.

Even without the unstable factors, Bai E could still become the sharpest blade in their Mech Armored Corps!

"So... what do you want to do?"

"Commission Helen to help us brainwash him. Detailing programming against the general human genetic ban might be difficult, but deep brainwashing for one or two individuals shouldn't be too challenging for the Scientific Research Institute... right?"

Carlos frowned slightly but, after hesitating for a long time, did not voice any objection.

Brainwashing could cause some damage to an already developed personality and might even harm one's sanity.

But Bai E, in his current state, could not be trusted by the military district. There would be resistance to his promotion in the future. If they wanted Bai E to go further, they had to take the risk that came with brainwashing.

If successful, a perfect Bai E would undoubtedly become a rising star in their military district!

"This..." Weslin hesitated slightly, somewhat tempted, "I'll think about it."

"Then, before Bai E undergoes any changes..." Hamilton looked at Weslin with some expectation.

"Just as you say..." Weslin waved his hand nonchalantly and turned to leave.

As for Hamilton's suggestion... of course, he gladly accepted it!

A goal that could make the Mechanical Court, Arbitration Place, and even the Scientific Department all vie for it was, of course, better to keep in his own hands.

A commander does not envy the strengths of his officers, as long as they pose no threat to his position as marshal. The stronger they are, the better.

Moreover, as an artificial human, Bai E naturally had a huge drawback; as long as the city's fundamental policies remained, artificial humans would always be considered inferior to humans.

What better candidate could there be for support?

And he hadn't forgotten about the recent "palace coup" instigated by these so-called senior officers. If he could promote Bai E, the artificial human, to become his confidant and replace Hamilton and Carlos... then the military district would truly fall completely under his control!

It would also become his most important political capital in the city!

Weslin strode away, the flicker in his eyes betraying his clarity about the future direction like never before.

...

It was still the familiar white surgery room.

Helen looked kindly at Bai E before her, seeing his beautifully streamlined body as the most perfect art in the world.

It was hard to imagine how out of millions of repetitive products, the development chamber could create such an outstanding individual.

Helen's fingers trailed over the unobstructed flesh, her gaze filled with intoxicated obsession.

"Same as usual, I need to check your current physical condition."

"Understood," Bai E nodded calmly, not showing any unusual emotions despite not wearing a thread on his body.

In the presence of Helen, "self-restraint" was always monitoring all unusual hormones within him, trying not to let any of his reactions reveal even the slightest flaw.

As Bai E lay down on the instrument bed, Helen withdrew her gaze and, at an angle Bai E could not see, patted her own cheeks.

She felt her cheeks warming up, her ears heating, her vision becoming dizzy as if she were floating on clouds.

She had seen countless test subjects' bodies, but she had never experienced this before.

"What am I thinking about?"

Muttering to herself, she shook her head as if to fling away those romantic thoughts, not until her mind was clear again did Helen seriously look at the instrument screen in front of her.

She lightly pressed a few buttons, and the device started...

With a soft beep, the machine's subtle movements gradually ceased, and the results appeared before Helen's eyes—

[Physical Ability]: 18.2

[Insight]: 15.6

[Reflex]: 16.5

"..."

All exceeded the 15-point limit of an ordinary human!

Yes! Bai E had once been injected with the Gene Optimization Solution, and his body's upper limit had long surpassed 15 points. Being able to raise his actual abilities to this level in just a few short months, Bai E's rate of improvement was still terrifying, not at all inferior to those initial days right after his creation.

Of course, attributes were secondary.

To achieve the military exploits that Bai E had accomplished, relying solely on these basic attributes was already insufficient. Those personal capabilities that could only be mastered through extensive training and actual combat were the key.

And the ability to train those capabilities was known as talent.

And that was what Helen truly wanted.

"Next, I need to draw some of your blood and take some tissue samples. It won't threaten your health. Some unusual sensations, including stinging, pressure, and so on, are normal. Don't mind them."

"Understood."

Operating the machine again, Helen casually asked, "Your Mecha, it has a spirit now, doesn't it?"

This was common knowledge among all somewhat knowledgeable figures in the city upon hearing this news.

Without the aid of a spirit, relying on a standard Mecha equipped with only an ordinary alloy sword, even the ace Mech Pilot from the Mechanical Court would not be able to accomplish everything.

Not to mention that Bai E had done it solo, without the help of another Mech Pilot.

Chapter 550: Doubt

"I don't know what a 'mecha soul' is..."

Bai E's eyes glazed over as he stared at the white exterior of the mecha, as if he were sinking into memories, "But I can hear it talking to me, whispering incessantly. I can't make out the words; it's like a hallucination, yet it also feels as if someone is really speaking into my ear."

A gentle hum rose by his ear, accompanied by a warm breeze carrying a faint scent, brushing past Bai E's earlobe, "Is that so?"

"...Similar." Bai E's heart skipped a beat, but he immediately suppressed the fleeting tumult, "However, it's not clear, and as for the ideas I am about to have, it always seems to anticipate them. Since then, piloting a mecha has become easier for me. They say it's hard for a person to drive a mecha, but it seems I can do it."

"Really?" Helen's fingers brushed over the resolute face before her, tracing the jawline upwards, gliding over his facial features, and lightly touching his eyelids.

Her gaze was focused and cold.

"Pop~"

Completely unexpected.

A moist imprint landed on his cheek, and Bai E's heart quivered, instantly suppressed by his self-control.

He turned his head belatedly to look at Helen, who was retracting her charming face, with an innocent expression and a puzzled tone, "Professor?"

A meaningless smile flickered at the corner of Helen's mouth, "It's nothing, don't overthink it."

After speaking, she glanced to the side.

In her heart, there had always been doubts about the true nature of this artificial human warrior.

Bai E's performance was flawless, but there was an undeniable discordance with those tasks that required quick, witty responses.

She always felt that beneath this expressionless face, there should be another face, one that was cleverly crafted, hence... she conducted a little test.

But... there was no fluctuation on the instruments' display.

Was this artificial human warrior really so innocent all along?

Although artificial humans were bound by 'thought dulling', how long had he been in existence?

In such a long time, he should have developed a basic understanding of this world.

Was he truly ignorant? Or... did he have some special method to control his emotions?

Mechanics could only detect physical data, those special personal abilities were difficult to represent in data form.

"Ding ding ding~" The room's doorbell suddenly rang.

The assistant's voice came from the door, "Teacher, Marshal Weslin is here to see you."

"..." After glancing at Bai E, who wore an expressionless face, busy with the instrumental sampling, Helen replied loudly, "Got it."

The moment she stood up, Spiritual Energy released the brief suppression of her emotions, and a rush of crimson swiftly spread from her fair neck to her cheeks.

Testing Bai E was also a challenge to her own heart.

She was convinced that the brief stirring she had just felt was merely a primal urge of her body, but unfortunately... she had lost.

An admiration for the strong, pity for the weak, awe of the ability to adapt in a crisis, and reverence for the upholding of human values, miraculously merged all within the same individual.

'Should I hope that he has another face? Or should I hope that he is just a simple artificial human warrior?'

An entity that was mysterious, dangerous, yet irresistibly attractive.

Someone powerful, serene, and sufficiently reliable.

Can such individuals truly be deconstructed by science and then mass-produced?

A tinge of doubt crossed her mind as Helen stepped towards the door.