

## Wow 551

### Chapter 551: "Brainwashing"

"Academician."

"What is it?" Helen's tone was cool and detached, a lock of curled hair trembling slightly on her cheek, betraying a hint of impatience.

"There's a favor I'd like to ask of you." Weslin said with a smile, looking at the radiant yet aloof woman before him.

Even though he could see the obvious impatience in her eyes, he had no choice but to patiently curry favor.

This was the youngest academician at the Scientific Research Institute, and universally acknowledged as the top candidate to succeed the next directorship.

If he could secure her support, it was as good as claiming half the skies over the city.

"Speak."

"It concerns Captain Bai..." Weslin's voice carried a moment's hesitation, "You're aware of his current situation."

"Hmm..." Helen's eyebrows quirked, a flicker of interest in her eyes, "What are your thoughts?"

"Continuing like this... it's undoubtedly a waste of military force for the city, and for his personal future development, it's not promising. Don't you agree?"

Helen crossed her arms, her gaze icy, "Marshal, if you have any thoughts, I would prefer you speak plainly. We researchers don't appreciate beating around the bush."

"Then I'll be frank... I understand that because of current technological limitations, we can't precisely edit the genetic prohibition imposed on all artificial humans. However, for a limited number of individuals, we should be able to tweak their cognition through postnatal means. What I'm suggesting is, maybe we could try to... brainwash him."

"Brainwash?" Helen squinted her eyes, a dangerous glint flashing through as she stared at Weslin.

The technology of brainwashing varies in sophistication. A basic method involves inundating the subject with a barrage of meaningless information to break their psyche and construct a new mental framework.

But this technique is primitive and unstable, and for the brainwashed, it inflicts tremendous psychological harm. If they can't withstand it, they could end up as imbeciles. Even if successful, it's starting from scratch, akin to a blank slate.

More advanced neural techniques don't cause such severe side effects, but the psychic damage is similarly irreversible, varying only in degree.

Such brutal methods applied to Bai E...

But Marshal Weslin had a point.

With the personality Bai E is showing, if no change is made, neither the military nor any power within the city would make further use of him.

The best outcome would be nothing more than becoming a high-end enforcer.

Did she wish for Bai E to have a future?

The future of the city was already grim, let alone that of an individual.

Yet, for this artificial warrior who exhibited exceptional traits from the start, Helen wished for him to go further...

"I see," Helen murmured softly and turned to leave.

Left without a clear answer, Weslin called out from behind, "What do you mean, Academician?"

"I'll inform you of the outcome."

"Thank you, Academician!"

...

"Tsk~"

The gentle sound of the door opening and closing was heard.

Glancing sideways, one could only see the long legs of Bai E as he "click-clacked" his way in and waited quietly, the rustling noises arising above his head in front of the machines.

The working devices had just stopped.

The city's technology in the field of biology was pretty decent. While Helen was out dealing with matters, the machines had already completed the procedures she had previously set.

All was quiet.

Helen was likely checking the freshly baked reports.

'It doesn't show...' Helen's brow furrowed slightly.

A basic physical examination could only display the three primary attributes of the human body. Bai E's attributes indeed far exceeded the limits of an ordinary human, but they still didn't account for his alarmingly terrifying combat record.

From the tissue samples she had taken from various parts of Bai E's body, she could understand the supporting details behind those attributes, such as cell activity, cardiovascular strength, muscle tenacity, the number of visual cells, and other indicators.

And... the comparison of genetic maps.

Even after one round of genetic optimization, Bai E's current genetic map showed no significant difference from when he first came off Production Line 95.

The changes in the fragments were almost indistinguishable from the soldiers who had undergone genetic optimization, with variations all falling within predictable ranges.

If one were willing to invest the resources, creating a clone of Bai E on a one-to-one basis was entirely feasible.

But such a cloned individual would not be significantly different from the mass-produced artificial warrior clones from Production Line 95.

From any perspective, it was difficult to pinpoint the reason for Bai E's uniqueness.

Yet the reality was right before her eyes...

Helen's gaze drifted, finally resting on the steadfast warrior lying before her, eyes fixed on the ceiling, expressionless as ever.

Her normally cool eyes softened slightly as Helen sighed softly and instructed gently.

"Get up, and get dressed."

"Yes."

Watching Bai E dress himself meticulously, Helen, seated in her armchair, suddenly spoke up, "They want me to brainwash you."

Bai E paused in his actions, looking at Helen with confusion, "Brainwash?"

"Yes, brainwash." There was no trace of emotion in Helen's eyes; although she was looking at Bai E, her gaze was unfocused, as if she was looking through his apparition to something far beyond, "Even the most advanced technology would unavoidably cause some damage to your body. To be honest, I don't want to use it. But they fear what you are now and insist you must change."

"..."

Helen blinked, coming back to the present, her eyes finally focused.

Chapter 552: "Brainwashing"\_2

She stared intently at Bai E's expressionless face, "So, can you make a change?"

"What, a change?"

"Become more obedient, stop engaging in those dangerous acts... You should know which of your actions tend to alarm others," Helen said, her tone light but her eyes firmly locked onto Bai E's, "Or perhaps, become more covert, without letting others spot any flaws."

"..."

Was this a negotiation?

Had she discovered something?

Indeed.

In all of Blackwater City, she had the shrewdest mind and the most intimate knowledge of her own body, and it was impossible that she hadn't noticed anything unusual during their several encounters.

Even though he had always provided perfect explanations, when facts and cognition clashed dramatically, rationality would question everything.

Seeing her current attitude, even though she knew he had an ulterior motive, she seemed willing to help him cover it up.

But he wasn't sure if she was just bluffing, ready to have him seized the moment he stepped out—if he admitted to anything...

Should he take a bet?

However, if he continued to hide the truth, he might never have the chance to establish a good relationship with her again.

If he rejected the olive branch, only weapons remained.

But he couldn't simply confess everything either, for then he would lose all initiative.

In a slight pause, Bai E glanced downward, looking at the "shackles" he still wore on his hands.

These were placed on him by a person from the Mechanical Court, and after putting them on, his physical strength and Spiritual Energy were both tremendously suppressed.

Wearing these, Bai E had no leverage to turn hostile.

Bai's subtle movements were not too noticeable, but Helen, who kept a vigilant watch over every move he made, would not miss any detail.

Seeing this almost imperceptible action, Helen, who had kept a stern face, finally revealed a bright smile.

Walking toward Bai with her long elegant legs, her right hand casually swept through the air, and with a slight fluctuation of Spiritual Energy, a silvery-gray metal key suddenly appeared in her hand.

Inserted into the lock, electronic password accepted...

With a "click," the shackles binding Bai sprang open and with a "thud" fell to the ground.

Feeling his body swiftly regaining power, Bai E moved his wrists slightly.

Meeting Helen's eyes, which held a trace of amusement, Bai E's face remained calm, "Thank you, Helen."

Helen raised her right eyebrow slightly, neither confirming nor denying, "I can cover for you."

"I don't quite understand, Helen."

"I don't need you to 'understand' right now," Helen turned away to tidy up the experimental table and documents, "You can go if there's nothing else."

"No need for a mind wipe?"

Helen turned her body halfway, revealing part of her face, "Do you wish for it?"

Bai E fell silent for a moment, gazing into Helen's eyes before slowly replying, "I don't wish for it."

Helen beamed a bright smile, "Then that settles it. Go on, the rest room is next door. Stay there for a couple of days... Also, after a mind wipe, there's a recovery period ranging from a few days to a month, during which we will keep observing you."

This was the downside of current technology.

If Weslin knew about the mind-wiping technology, he wouldn't be unaware of its associated symptoms; deception was pointless.

With that, Helen stopped paying attention to Bai, solely focused on organizing her materials, letting Bai stay or leave at his discretion.

Bai stood still for a moment, then turned and walked toward the door.

"Hiss~"

Upon hearing the sound of the door opening and closing, Helen, who'd been packing away items, paused her movements and relaxed, sinking into her chair and whispering in a voice only she could hear.

"As expected..."

The communication between smart people didn't need to be too explicit; an unspoken understanding left more room for both parties to maneuver.

Bai was gambling; she was gambling too.

Fortunately, Bai was betting correctly, and she probably wouldn't make a wrong bet either.

Rather than risk exposing themselves, they went so far as to do things that raised alarms, all for the sake of saving some unrelated wilderness wanderers.

How dangerous can a person with their own awakened will be, even if such a person exists?

Starting today, you will put on a new mask, but also tear off the old one.

Bai E...

Let me see, once the mask is removed, what you truly look like.

I just hope, you won't disappoint me.

...

Weslin immediately gathered the senior officers, including Hamilton, who had just dispersed, upon receiving news from Helen.

"Helen has successfully brainwashed Bai, a big success!"

Upon hearing this news, both Hamilton and Carlos's faces lit up with pleasure.

"That's great!"

"However..." Weslin pondered slightly, "The recovery period for brainwashing surgery can range from several days to a month. This time is an observation period to confirm the results and the recovery of the mental state. So, we still need to consider it a bit longer."

"Then let's stick to the plan we agreed upon earlier, let him serve as a 'mech servant' for me for a month. We can't afford to have him completely lose his familiarity with mechas because of a wasted month."

As long as the defects of Bai E as an artificially created person disappeared, this combat power, capable of single-handedly annihilating an entire Intelligence Machinery Group Army through mecha combat, could not be wasted no matter what.

"Just do as you say..." Weslin waved his hand dismissively, unconcerned with these minor details.

In Hamilton's eyes, the armored battalion was his private territory.

But in his own eyes, the entire military camp belonged to him.

As long as Bai E could perform well subsequently, how he should be promoted was entirely up to his discretion. After all, wasn't he the one with the greatest say in shaping Bai E's future?

This kid knew gratitude, and nurturing him would surely yield an obedient and promising talent.

"What about the general offensive that was scheduled for five days from now?" Dewa was the only senior officer called in who thought about matters other than Bai E.

"It remains unchanged." Weslin said nonchalantly, making the decision with a casual wave of his hand.

However impressive Bai E's combat power might be, he was still just one person.

However strong an individual is, how much decisive impact can they really have on a battle against the Bug Race?

Keep in mind, the Bug Race, humanity's greatest adversary, is far more challenging than mere mechanical contraptions.

The same achievements, if given to a mech pilot from the Mechanical Court, could be replicated with just a few more added to the mix.

To curry favor with the military camp, in hopes of getting priority allocation of Bai E later on, even the Chief Justice of the Mechanical Court promised to pitch in several excellent mech pilots for the upcoming total offensive against the Bug Race, to help them secure this crucial battle.

With or without Bai E, he didn't see any immediate and absolute impact, and there was no need to hold back the foundation they had already established everywhere, just to wait for his recovery period which could take up to a month.

The recent large-scale troop withdrawals from the barracks for pre-war training were meant not only to enhance the soldiers' combat abilities but also to cut off the "tentacles" the Bug Nests had stretched out.

Five days later would be their planned optimal time for the offensive, and it would not be altered due to any unforeseen event!

"Is there anything else?"

"No."

"Then let's disband. Hamilton... Bai E is in your care. Pay extra attention during this time. The technology of the Scientific Research Institute isn't foolproof; we still need to keep an eye on it ourselves. By the way, Helen said he's quite exhausted from the brainwashing and has gone to rest. Don't disturb him tonight, talk to him again in a couple of days."

"Got it," Hamilton replied cheerily, his departure quickening with a brisk stride.

After everyone had left, a shadow moved slightly in the corner of the meeting room.

A slender figure holding a sword and with hands folded across her chest stepped out from the shadows silently.

Should she wish, she could go anywhere in this military camp that was now defenseless against her—only the so-called scholar's lab was a bit of trouble.

So she had waited here...

"Brainwashing... 'mech servant'?"

A trace of worry flickered across Yue Ying's dark pupils.

The military camp hadn't taken forcible measures against Bai E, so it wasn't fitting for her to make a move directly.

But brainwashing... Could they have damaged the kid's brain?

## Chapter 553 Defend

In the pitch-dark room, Bai E sat cross-legged, hands forming seals before his chest, cultivating his Spiritual Energy.

Although the battle against the intelligent machine army was quick, the consumption of Spiritual Energy was extremely terrifying.

In pursuit of a swift resolution, Bai E had unleashed his Spiritual Energy output at maximum efficiency throughout.

Compared to the last cleaning of the factory, it was not as exhausting, but it still significantly strained his spirit.

From the end of the fight until now, Bai E had been preoccupied with dealing with other characters, only now getting a brief moment to recuperate and catch his breath.

His increasingly mighty Spiritual Energy swelled and contracted with each practice session, becoming more condensed and robust. Being able to actually feel this power, each cultivation session brought about new sensations.

During practice, his "Heavenly Eye" trait constantly monitored all changes within a certain range, as if having countless eyes watching all 360 degrees around him, making it difficult for any minute change to escape Bai E's gaze.

Therefore, the slight squirming shadow in the corner naturally caused Bai E, who was resting with his eyes closed, to frown slightly.

The door was tightly shut, but Bai E still looked coldly toward the darkness in the diagonal corner of the room and asked in a cool voice, "Who's there?"

"You can detect me?" A voice tinged with curiosity, sounding familiar, spoke up as a dim soft orb of light rose from the corner, revealing a slender figure in a black robe with arms crossed, leaning against the wall.

"Sister Yue Ying?" Bai E's voice was slightly surprised.

Since his return, he had not seen Yue Ying, and now knowing that she was still by his side, he felt even more reassured.

While those in the military camp might support and protect him when deceived by his outward appearance, once they realize he has another personality unknown to them, those people might not continue their support.

Even now with Helen... Her attitude was unclear, and their relationship was only maintained by a fragile tacit cooperation.

What decision she would make if he failed to meet her elusive expectations was still an unknown factor.

In the face of all of them, Bai E had to maintain complete camouflage and be constantly vigilant.

Only in front of Yue Ying could he let his guard down a little and drop the pretense.

Feeling Bai E's sincere joy and the affectionate way he addressed her, Yue Ying's lips unconsciously curled into a smile, "Are you alright? I heard they brainwashed you? I didn't intervene because it seemed like they didn't mean to harm you."

"No," Bai E lowered his crossed legs and stepped off the bed onto the floor, "that Scientist from the Scientific Research Institute didn't brainwash me for some reason, and even agreed to cover for me."

"Hmm..." Yue Ying's eyebrows knitted slightly, her expression grave, "Humans indeed have many cunning thoughts; that's something I can't help with. Just be more careful."

"Yeah." Watching Yue Ying in the corner, who didn't seem to want to say more, Bai E hesitated before speaking up, "Sister Yue Ying, can you do me a favor?"

Yue Ying replied cheerfully, "Tell me."

"You should know about the Black Street outside the camp. Usually, I take care of it, but I've been practically under house arrest lately. Also, I'm aware that a power from the outer city has its eye on that area, and I'm afraid they might harm Black Street. I hope that during this time, you could look after it a bit."

The power from outside the city was none other than the doctor from Grey Iron City and his subordinates.

Not to mention that Black Street itself was hardly peaceful; demons found ways to infiltrate everywhere, and the city's other battle gangs were always coveting every profitable territory.

The dangers of this world did not only exist in the wilderness.

Under normal circumstances, with his badge that allowed him to leave the camp, he could run back and forth.

Now... his leave badge had been confiscated upon return to the camp, and for the foreseeable future, it seemed he would be unable to escape the watchful eyes of the surveillance within the camp.

In such a situation, Bai E had to seek help.

As for those players... now that they were on the right track, they would thrive or perish on their own. Without issuing them tasks for a while, he probably wouldn't completely lose their trust.

Bai E believed in the players' creativity; they were the biggest variable in this world.

"Okay," Yue Ying agreed without any hesitation.

She knew of Bai E's deep connection to Black Street and had always harbored a mild curiosity about what he was up to behind the scenes.

But Bai E never spoke of it himself, and she didn't take the initiative to ask.

Now that she had the chance to get involved, she felt quite pleased.

'I'm sorry, sister.'

Normally, she couldn't get involved in human affairs, which was an agreement she had with her sister when leaving the elven settlement. Now that she was entrusted with this task, there was no choice.

"If there's nothing else, I'll be leaving," Yue Ying said calmly, her toes turning slightly.

"Yeah... I'm fine."

"Good."

...

Outside Black Street, several chilly gazes watched the human settlement quietly from afar.

The small town was silent in the early morning, with the sun yet to rise—the darkest time of the day.

"The doctor has waited too many days here; he is usually not this indecisive..."

"Is capturing 'Zero' really that difficult? It's not the first time we've caught her."

Chapter 554 Defend\_2

"Don't you think... The Doctor has a rather particular attitude towards this settlement?"

"Rather than saying he has a particular attitude towards the settlement, it's more accurate to say it's towards Number Zero... This is the first power that can completely suppress Number Zero's 'cannibalistic' desires. It's not hard to guess what the Doctor is thinking."

"We can't let the Doctor waste any more time here; Grey Iron City is still waiting for his leadership. I've heard that quite a few changes have taken place in the city during the time we've been away. Taking advantage of our absence, some people have even started rebelling against the city's rules!"

"How about... we make the decision for the Doctor? It's just a small settlement, right? We can simply snatch Number Zero back. The convoy hiding Number Zero came back, I saw it first thing this morning."

"Are you sure? Their leader is not easy to deal with... I heard from the others that the leader took down an entire Smart Machinery Factory by himself, that small factory on the west side of the city. A brother just glanced at the leader from a distance and almost got his brain shot through. If he hadn't dodged in time, the grass over his grave would be a meter high by now."

"Leader?" One of the figures in black leather snickered, "He's already fallen."

"My brothers and I have been keeping a close watch on the military camp... A Mecha suddenly left the camp on an emergency mission last night, and the military zone immediately sent people to pursue it. When they returned, I had a glimpse; the person who drove the Mecha away from the camp was that so-called leader. That guy's status in the military isn't high; he's probably been executed by now."

"You sure?"

"Even if he hasn't been executed, he must be skinned alive. Wasn't the Doctor here just to assess this guy? Now that he himself is in peril, what's the necessity for assessment? We might as well act first and report afterwards, just kidnap Number Zero and be done with it."

"A real kidnapping, or a fake one?"

"A real kidnapping!"

"Does everyone agree?"

"Agree!"

"Agree!"

"I agree too! Dammit, we can't let the Doctor waste any more time here. The Doctor is humanity's pioneer; how can something like Number Zero deserve so much of the Doctor's attention? Even if I get punished after we return, I'll accept it! Let's do it!"

"Then let's do it!"

The shadows took advantage of the night to stealthily creep towards the human settlement that was still in slumber.

After a long period of observation, they found the human settlement to be riddled with holes from their viewpoint.

Except for their leader and that Arbitration Place girl who occasionally strolled around, the rest were no better than rotten fish.

If they could avoid those two, even if they slaughtered the entire Black Street, it would probably take quite a while before any wind of it was leaked.

On the contrary, kidnapping Number Zero or taking them by force was likely to cause a bigger commotion.

But that didn't matter, for the sake of the Doctor... Such risks were entirely negligible.

What's a little noise, as long as that leader is not around...

"Hey! Are you from Black Street?" The shadows moving through the darkness suddenly heard an emotionless interrogative sentence.

Looking towards the source of the voice, they saw a slender figure cloaked in black standing at a nearby dark corner.

The men in black leather exchanged silent glances, "There are still many of Black Street's sentinels around..."

One of them, a brutish man with a volatile nature, grinned wickedly at the shadow, "Originally we weren't planning to kill anyone, but you're just unlucky, girl."

One of the more cautious black leather clad warriors began to realize something was amiss, "Wait, how come we didn't notice..."

In the corner of his eye, a sword light that seemed to sever the fabric of time itself came slicing through the air, accompanied by a gentle murmur from the woman, "No wonder he said there were quite a few bad guys targeting Black Street..."

"Pfft!"

A sword executed by decapitation.

The only one remaining, a warrior with ribs fused like plate armor across his chest, looked towards Yue Ying's direction with eyes full of horror, "How... How is this possible..."

How could there be such a powerful master hidden in Black Street?

Why had they not detected even the faintest clue of this master's existence?

How could such an inconspicuous gathering place outside Blackwater City harbor so many extraordinary masters?

Unfortunately, nobody could answer his question.

He couldn't even voice it properly.

Yue Ying caressed the hilt of her Longsword, feeling slightly annoyed.

Having not struck for many days, was she now unable to kill a person with a single stroke?

"Swish!"

The Longsword was drawn once more, and another fierce sword light struck precisely on the same wound.

As long as no one could tell she used two strokes, she still counted as having only used one...

...

"Bang! Bang! Bang!"

Several lower halves of bodies, cut in two from the middle, lost control of their own will, and slowly toppled over where they stood, crashing to the ground and kicking up a cloud of dust.

Yue Ying, cradling her longsword, made her way to the highest point in the center of Black Street. There she sat down cross-legged, her breath merging with the natural world.

'I want to see just how many bad guys are keeping an eye on this place.'

With an indifferent glance around, Yue Ying's eyes gently closed.

At the same time, the will of Spiritual Energy enveloped all directions...

...

"Do... Doctor..." a slightly panicked voice woke the doctor who was deep in sleep.

"What's wrong?" the tall doctor asked in a low voice as he sat up from his simple bed, his indifferent eyes turning toward the black-clad warrior who had come to report.

"Xiao Qi... Xiao Qi and the others are dead."

"Dead?" the doctor's eyes sharpened, "Who did they provoke?"

"Don't... don't know." The reporting warrior swallowed, eyes filled with fear, "The bodies were found not far from Black Street, a total of six brothers... someone... someone sliced them with a sword."

"One sword?"

The warrior nodded with difficulty, "One sword... six men."

What kind of power is this?

Unthinkable.

Even if those Demon Princes themselves descended to the world, it would probably look something like this, right?

"..." The doctor furrowed his brows deeply, silent for a long time.

It wasn't that leader he knew well!

There's a master behind that so-called leader?

He couldn't think of any familiar existence with this level of power.

And that muscle-head only knows how to rely on his brute strength to charge blindly; when did he ever learn sword techniques—something he would consider heretical to his style?

Since when did humans have such a level of existence? He was completely unaware... and it was right near that Black Street?

And more importantly...

"Who allowed them to get close to Black Street?!" the doctor's face twisted in anger, like a fearsome beast choosing its prey.

"They... they... Some brothers said they planned to directly snatch Number Zero back..."

"Boom!" The doctor slammed the table, his beard bristling in fury, "Get everyone back here! Send out my orders, don't let anyone get close to Black Street again before we figure out the situation, offenders... execute!"

The reporter bowed deeply, his body trembling slightly, "Yes! Doctor!"

Stepping out of the gloomy sewer entrance, the doctor looked distantly at the human settlement that was just waking up in the early dawn light.

The early morning sunlight spread over the rooftops, reflecting a dazzling golden light.

Vibrant sounds rose from all around Black Street. The doctor rubbed his cheeks, shifting his facial expression from stiff indifference to a deceptively benign one.

Daylight had broken, and it was time for work.

"What a lovely day..."

Hefting his hoe, the doctor walked back into Black Street from outside, warmly greeting the familiar residents he met along the way.

"Good morning, Mr. Wang."

"Good morning, Ms. Wang."

"Is Li Dan'er still not awake?"

During the occasional moments when no one was around, a pair of cold and sinister eyes would scan every dark corner of Black Street, as if some deeply hidden, cunning beast lurked there, waiting for each ignorant soul to fall into the trap of Black Street.

...

"Yawn~" At the military camp's gate, a uniformed officer who had just finished yawning turned to greet the soldiers on guard with a smile, "Hey~ good morning! You haven't changed shifts yet?"

Watching the officer's retreating figure heading towards Black Street, the puzzled gate guard scratched the back of his head, "Since when is Officer Ge Lan so easy to talk to?"

Chapter 555 Leaks

As the early morning came, the guard squads took turns handing over duties in batches.

Looking at Dai Lian standing silently in front of everyone, even these artificial human veterans who had once served in the military, couldn't help but feel respect from the depths of their hearts.

They, as artificial humans, were famously known for not treating themselves as human, yet the captain of the Black Street Guard surpassed them by far.

Ever since these old soldiers had served under the captain, whether day or night, he had always led the team; they had not seen the captain take a moment to rest.

He was truly a superhuman!

So, when faced with Dai Lian's inquiry, they appeared somewhat ill at ease due to their reverence.

"Where's Song?"

"He... he's not feeling well today."

"...Not feeling well?" Dai Lian's eyebrows creased slightly, and his youthful and handsome face took on an unexpectedly imposing air.

These veterans had all been discharged from the battlefield, and to be released by the military, they usually faced extremely severe disabilities.

Even though almost all of these old soldiers had replaced their limbs with mechanical prostheses, pain still often accompanied them.

Minor pains from old injuries had long since honed their nerves, and even slight pains might be subconsciously filtered out by them.

Pain that was unbearable enough to resist... likely wouldn't be endured alone in the camp by anyone.

So, even after so much time had passed, these old soldiers still hadn't entirely opened up to Black Street... or rather, to the boss.

Privately, they still had access to resources only they could control.

Like... prostheses.

Money is one thing; connections are another.

Thanks to several recent transactions in the steel business, Black Street was relatively wealthy, especially with the steel that had just been brought in from the outside two days ago and had been sold, making its current wealth considerable.

But for them to search for the relevant resources on their own was still fraught with difficulties.

And the so-called excuse of not feeling well was probably another private contact with those unknown channels.

'I must take the opportunity to deal with these guys...' Dai Lian's eyes flickered as his gaze swept over the line of veteran guards, and he barked, "Attention!"

"Shh!"

"Lately, under the leadership of the boss, Black Street has become quite rich, and the covetousness of outside forces towards us has become more unrestrained, something I believe you all are aware of. We are one entity; the boss has entrusted the safety of Black Street to me... and to you. Any trouble in Black Street won't please the boss. If the boss isn't happy, none of us can escape."

Dai Lian's cold voice passed slowly over each veteran's face, "Don't be complacent; the boss will get angry, and I will get angry too. Remember, you do not have the opportunity to make mistakes!"

"Yes!"

Despite having been away from the military camp for a long time, the old soldiers still maintained their discipline.

The response was in unison.

After Dai Lian turned away, several old soldiers exchanged glances in silence, conveying the meaning in their eyes.

'What's Song up to? The doctor hasn't contacted us lately, right?'

'Who knows...'

'It could be someone from the military camp, right? It's not a connection that can be cut off just like that. We'll remind Song later.'

As usual, the guard team first had to patrol around the edge of Black Street.

As the guard team approached the closest direction to Black Street from the wilderness, Dai Lian raised an eyebrow at some noise he heard.

In the distance, there was a stir.

"Quiet!" commanded Dai Lian, and the guard team halted.

Dai Lian closed his eyes, listening intently.

"Rumble, rumble, rumble..."

A glimpse of an image flashed by.

Dai Lian opened his eyes, his gaze sharp as lightning.

'A small convoy is coming?'

The Black Street convoy had returned the other day, so who could this be now?

The military? Or other powers from the city?

As the shabby convoy appeared in the morning light before Dai Lian's eyes, several familiar faces also peeked out from the windows of the vehicles.

The loudest among them, Kuang Xin, was the first to stand at the front, vigorously waving his arms, "Hey! Guang! We're back!"

It was Kuang Xin and the others!

Dai Lian felt a surge of joy inside.

As the convoy slowly drove up and came to a stop nearby, Dai Lian finally spoke out, "How come you're back? Weren't you with the boss on a mission?"

"We had to come back..." Kuang Xin was the first to jump off the vehicle and turned to help open the doors of the other cars.

Dai Lian got out of the driver's seat and stretched lazily on the spot, explaining with a smile, "The mission's done, but the brothers are worn out. We've come back for the organization's help..."

Kuang Xin, grinning, slapped the metal car door and shouted loudly, "Brothers, come on out, we're home."

The Grey Iron City players, missing arms and legs, helped each other out of the dark cabin, and facing the line of well-prepared veteran guards, they didn't dare to be noisy at first.

To them, the players, missing limbs was not a big deal; as long as they didn't die, they could explore new game content.

But orderly places, like Grey Iron City, always made them subconsciously a bit fearful.

Not fear of authority, but fear of the boring content under authoritative rule.

"Is this our turf?" a player cautiously approached Kuang Xin to ask.

"Of course... don't be afraid, we're home! This is our real territory." Kuang Xin looked at the distant, orderly fields with a somewhat relieved smile.

## Chapter 556 Leaks\_2

Li Ming town was too far from Blackwater City; even if they sought help at the first sign of trouble, it would take at least an hour for the adults to reach them in their mechas.

Only by the military camp next to Blackwater City could they truly feel the peace of being under the adults' protection.

Looking at the almost entirely injured team, Xu Ruoguang's eyes were full of surprise, "Goodness! What kind of mission did you undertake to end up in such a state?"

"Don't even talk about it; we ran into those vengeful, petty intelligence machines. Luckily, the adult mecha pilots came to support us; otherwise, we would have been completely done for." After the incident, every surviving participant had the right to discuss it casually, "Mecha! It was my first time seeing a real mecha in this game! Damn! It was so cool!"

"Mecha?" Xu Ruoguang's eyes narrowed slightly.

Last night, someone on Black Street said they heard a huge commotion in the direction of the military camp, reportedly having seen a "giant" flash by that was dozens of meters tall.

Following that, an entire convoy drove out from the military camp.

The military camp was in an uproar all night, with blinding laser lights brightly illuminating half of the sky.

Could that commotion have been caused by the adult?

Hearing Xu Ruoguang's feedback, Gu Lan nodded thoughtfully, "Probably, the so-called officers in the camp asked us a barrage of questions. The adult seems to have acted on his own this time and might be in some trouble when we get back. But for the first time, we found out about the adult's real identity in the camp. Who would've thought that besides being the special forces captain, the adult is also a mecha pilot."

With a carefree wave of his hand, he said, "Hey, leave it be, let's hurry and fit them with prosthetics... These are players who followed us from Grey Iron City to fight the revolution, and this time the entire resistance against the intelligence machines has been crippled. We can't let them down."

The adult's identity in the camp wasn't important. No matter what position the adult held in the NPC world, in Gu Lan's eyes, the adult was their leader, possessing such strength that even a low status in the military camp would be akin to a hidden dragon in a well, deliberately concealing its edge.

The attitude of the camp's investigating officers indicated that the adult alone, piloting a mecha, annihilating the entire intelligence machine's army of vengeance, was an unimaginable miracle.

As long as the NPC's in the camp weren't stupid, the adult's exposure of his strength this time would probably result in him being assigned an even more significant position and responsibilities upon his return.

The adult had nothing to worry about; it was they, his player brothers, who should be more concerned.

"Prosthetics, huh..." Xu Ruoguang hesitated.

He had just thought of this, and now it seemed they were immediately getting involved.

The channel for prosthetics lay in the hands of the old veterans behind him; while they treated him with utmost respect on the surface, whenever it came to their private "connections," these veterans were deeply secretive, each more silent than the last.

Seeing Xu Ruoguang's troubled expression, Dai Lian asked curiously, "Is it difficult to handle? Black Street should be quite wealthy now, right?"

"The money is alright, but some things can't be resolved with money..." Xu Ruoguang glanced at the line of old veteran guards behind him and then moved closer to Dai Lian, whispering, "Let's not talk about this now, let's get them settled and rest. For the prosthetics, I'll talk to you guys in private later."

Dai Lian didn't waste words and agreed at once, "Okay."

The convoy entered Black Street, and every player who came from Grey Iron City took in the scenery along the way.

The buildings of Black Street might be old, and the people mostly ordinary.

Yet, that thriving and vibrant vitality was something they had never felt in Grey Iron City.

How fortunate were Kuang Xin and his friends to have been born in such an environment and to have such a boss to watch over them...

Arriving at a new area of prefab buildings, Xu Ruoguang gestured, "This area was originally intended to provide a better living environment for those in poor conditions, but since they're here, let's have them recuperate here for now. Once we figure out a solution, we'll fit them with prosthetics."

As he spoke, Xu Ruoguang turned to look at the guards who had been following him and said, "You go on patrol first, I need to arrange various matters for these newcomers."

The vice-captain at the lead saluted and replied with composure, "Yes, sir!"

Watching the guards jog away, Xu Ruoguang faced the gazes of Kuang Xin and the others, then shook his head with a wry smile, "These veteran soldiers have never fully submitted to me. They alone have access to the channels for installing prosthetics. If we hurry to find our own, it will only result in us being severely overcharged. Even being overcharged isn't the worst; my fear is that even if we spent all of Black Street's spare cash, we still wouldn't be able to provide safe and reliable prosthetics for all these brothers."

"Then what do we do?"

"We did promise these brothers that we'd definitely help them get prosthetic limbs that are stronger and more useful than their original bodies."

With a faint, wry smile, Xu Ruoguang shook his head, "We can't rush it. We must catch them in a compromising situation so they will offer the solution themselves; otherwise, they won't budge."

"Do you have any leads?"

"It's hard to say..." Xu Ruoguang's eyes lost focus, looking into the distance, "Some of them maintain a feeble link with the outside world. I don't know who the other party is yet. If we could find any solid evidence, it wouldn't be impossible to force them into compliance."

With a slight gleam in his eyes, Xu Ruoguang continued, "But now that you've returned, it will be much easier to handle. Before it was just me, and I always had to lead the team in public, so it was easy for them to avoid me. Now that you're back, you can track and investigate secretly; I think there's hope."

"Alright!" Kuang Xin was visibly delighted. As long as there was something to do, he was happy, "We'll go and be your spies!"

...

After a day's work, the sun slowly set behind the distant mountains.

In the twilight of Black Street, everything seemed quite languid, and the veteran guards shifted shifts again.

The old soldiers returning to their barracks couldn't help but feel irritated when they saw the silhouette swaying back and forth on the rocking chair inside the camp.

"Song, you sure are something! Where did you go again today, letting us scold that kid for you?"

"Scold?" The rocking chair paused, and the tall, thin veteran lying on it turned his gaunt face, which was somewhat frightening to look at, but his eyes shone like two bright black gems, "He will soon lose the right to scold us anymore!"

"What!" The soldiers hadn't caught what Song had said, but they were startled by his current, somewhat horrifying appearance, "Song, what happened to you?"

"What happened to me?" Song contorted his neck exaggeratedly to the right, at an almost unbelievable 90-degree angle, "What have I become?"

The eerie tone of his voice, coupled with his strange movements and expressions, made the soldiers watching Song feel a chill.

"Song, are you alright?"

"Alright? What could be wrong with me?" Song's mouth corners stretched into an exaggerated arc, unnaturally stretching to the root of his ear, "The one with problems should be the master of Black Street, that mysterious... sir."

"Sir? What happened to our sir?" asked one of the curious old soldiers.

No matter whether they still harbored their own ulterior motives, they all shared a mutual reverence for the mysterious sir who had completely changed Black Street.

Knowing that the sir also came from a military camp, they had always intended to recruit him into their ultimate plan privately.

Song slightly nodded his head, his voice haunting, "Today... I met with Ge Lan from the military camp. Guess what he told me?"

"What did he tell you?" One of the soldiers responded instinctively, then paused abruptly, realizing the logical connection in Song's words, "You mean... it's related to our sir?"

Chapter 557 comes into action

"Do you all know... what exactly is the identity of our lord in the military camp?"

A single sentence immediately aroused the curiosity of all the veterans, "What identity?"

Such a powerful lord in the military camp must be a high-ranking official, right?

Without the corresponding strength and status, how could he possess such confidence and ability to control the overall situation?

"Just a grunt! Hahahaha!" Song, who had been lying in the rocking chair, suddenly burst into mad laughter, his neck thrown back as he arched up like a snake, his face contorted in insanity, "Just a damn grunt! What the hell has he been pretending to be!"

After learning the true identity of the lord of Black Street from Ge Lan, Song's past beliefs had completely collapsed.

Once, when he first saw the true face of that lord, he only knew that this lord was also a member of the military camp.

The lord treated the ordinary residents of Black Street, who were not seen as people by the city, with kindness—could they, the man-made soldiers who were similarly abandoned and dehumanized by the military, also receive gentle treatment in the eyes of this lord?

Song had once been full of such illusions.

Fantasizing that this lord was a high-ranking official in the military zone.

Fantasizing that this lord was the savior who would bring a glimmer of hope to all the man-made soldiers.

However... he's just a damn man-made soldier!

A man-made soldier... just like themselves!

What use are man-made soldiers? What use are they?

Man-made soldiers will never be accepted by the naturals of this world!

Man-made soldiers will forever struggle to grasp real power.

You, a man-made soldier... do you deserve our deep trust and support?

Ge Lan's words shattered all his illusions, and the so-called "lord" who was just a grunt made a big mistake in last night's impulsive action and is now being thoroughly investigated by the top brass of the military.

He's nothing!

Reality taught him a harsh truth—

Relying on a mountain, the mountain collapses, relying on a person, the person falls.

You can't rely on anything!

You can only rely on yourself!

Song's words also left the expectant group of veterans momentarily stunned.

The lord... just an ordinary grunt?

But still some refused to accept this fact, and with a trembling voice asked, "How do you know what Ge Lan said is true? What evidence do you have?"

"Evidence?" Song looked down and sneered darkly, "It's simple... our 'lord', he's in trouble. The commotion in the military zone last night was caused by him, and now he's been placed under house arrest by the military zone's commanders... He's done for! If you want to know the truth... we just need to make a scene. Our captain alone can't hold us back, unless the lord steps in, otherwise..."

Otherwise... Black Street, which has grown, may change hands.

By completely controlling Black Street, which has already developed, they can have more resources to win hearts, ally with other powers, and add a bit more to the odds of success for the man-made soldier revolution!

"What do you say? Dare to do it? We give him time, we just want to see the lord! If the lord doesn't show up..."

Song's voice floated ethereally, as if coming from the far horizon, making people feel as if they were in the clouds.

The group of veterans, slightly confused, hesitated and then, as if possessed, nodded, "Alright! Let's try!"

"Right! After all, we just want to see the lord! Just to see him once..."

"Then let's go... while there are still plenty of people around," Song took the lead toward the camp entrance, his skinny silhouette staggering as if ghostly shadows flickered within.

By evening, everyone had finished a whole day of labor.

There was still some time before the rest period, and everyone was scattered lazily around Black Street, either eating or chatting in small groups, each taking a stroll.

The collective movement of the veterans naturally attracted the attention of some, and looking at Song, who was leading them, someone asked with warm curiosity, "Hey! Song, what are you guys up to?"

"We need to ask the lord for some justice!" Song waved his hand as he spoke.

Some immediately picked up on the key point, "Justice? Aren't you guys the ones maintaining order in the street? Why do you need to ask the lord for justice now?"

"..." Song, suppressing a dark sneer, remained silent; the veterans' procession could only keep quiet, silently saying nothing.

They themselves didn't know what kind of justice they were supposed to ask the lord for—it was just a spur-of-the-moment excuse from Song, and the more he said, the more mistakes he might make.

Better to keep silent.

Just to leave.

However, Song's words undoubtedly opened up a vast space of imagination for the residents of Black Street—

Who else could cause indignation for the veteran guards, who themselves represented Black Street's order?

Ji Lande, the lord managing Black Street, seemed kind and approachable, everything he did seemed to consider everyone on Black Street, but beneath that bright and luminous exterior, could there be some degrading, ignoble secrets hidden?

Pulling those high and mighty down into the mire was a hidden dark desire in many people's hearts.

Perhaps they were not even aware of this thought themselves, but driven by the excitement of the spectacle, they still followed behind the veterans, squeezing toward the center of Black Street, the administration office and residence of Lord Ji Lande.

"Bang! Bang! Bang!"

"Bang! Bang! Bang!"

The violent knocking sounded on the old wooden door, and hearing the commotion, Gilder got up as quickly as he could with the help of a Mouse Person and scampered to the door.

Chapter 558 comes into action\_2

With a creak, the timid rat-people pushed open the great door, and a sea of faces flooded into their field of vision, causing them instinctively to retreat a few steps before hiding back in the shadows inside the house.

Gilder adjusted his clothes and stepped over the threshold, his gaze slowly sweeping around before he asked in a deep voice, "What has happened?"

"We want to see the lord!"

"Yes! We want to see the lord!"

Looking at the group of old soldiers causing the commotion, Gilder frowned and asked, "Why do you seek the lord if there is no issue?"

"No issue?" An old soldier sneered sharply, "We are here to demand justice from the lord!"

"Justice? What justice? Tell me what's the matter, and if I can't solve it, then I'll report it to the lord."

"You can solve it?" Song shoved his way to the front, stepping forward a pace, "We are here to accuse you! Recently, you've been covertly importing a large quantity of steel, which you then trade with another group of people we don't recognize! From start to finish, none of these dealings have been disclosed to us. Where did the fairness and transparency you initially promised go? And the money you've made from these transactions? The steel business should be very profitable; why are we still eating mantou and wild vegetables all day?"

Song turned around to face the others, his back to Gilder, "You won't be able to explain this, and I don't trust your explanation. Only the lord can give us a satisfactory answer! You all agree, don't you?"

"Yes, we do!"

"Exactly!"

"Can't believe you've been doing such things behind our backs..."

The sound of the crowd's footsteps approached quickly from afar, and Xu Ruoguang's voice sounded from the distance, "What's everyone doing here? What's everyone doing here? Don't you know that unauthorized assembly is prohibited?"

Black Street was small, and even the slightest commotion could trigger a chain reaction.

Xu Ruoguang, who was leading a patrol, had come at the first news of the disturbance.

The crowd scattered in fear, and Xu Ruoguang, now joined by another group of soldiers on shift change, appeared within the circle.

Song fearlessly glared back at him with a sinister smile, "We've merely come to demand an explanation, and we will not rest until we get one!"

Xu Ruoguang glanced at Gilder, who looked somewhat troubled, realizing the old soldier's question was probably a delicate issue not fit for public sharing. Thus, he decided to suppress it with authority, "What explanation? What explanation!"

In the process of maintaining the order of Black Street, many specific incidents would arise. Even the gentlest sheep will occasionally butt heads with humans, how much more so people each with their own demands?

In facing these individuals, sometimes one must learn to be a bit more forceful.

Pushing residents aside, Xu Ruoguang darkened his face and bluffed, "What are you all doing here? All full and idle, is it? If there's nothing, don't stand here and gawk, go home!"

While saying this, he turned and glared at the old soldiers in his own guard, "What are you all standing there for? Why aren't you maintaining order?!"

However, those old soldiers didn't budge, neither daring to meet Xu Ruoguang's gaze nor making any move.

Seeing this, Xu Ruoguang instantly understood, "Fine! Fine, fine! As law enforcement, you know the law yet you break it!"

"My lord!" Song bellowed, "You don't need to threaten us. Our demand is simple—we want to meet the lord! As long as the lord comes forward with an explanation, whatever punishment you give us, we will willingly accept. We only trust the lord!"

Immediately, echoes of agreement rose, "Yes! We only trust the lord!"

"That's right! Let the lord give us an explanation!"

Their intention was quite clear...

'They've come for the lord!'

A realization struck Xu Ruoguang, and his gaze shifted toward the crowd lurking in the dark—

Kuang Xin and others were also hiding among them.

Seeing the current situation, they had roughly guessed the true motive behind the ruckus caused by the old soldiers.

Could it be that they had guessed... or rather confirmed the fact that the lord was deeply trapped in the military camp and definitely couldn't come out for the time being?

Last night's misconduct by the lord had consequences that extended way beyond the military camp's internal affairs.

'What should be done?'

Before they could collect evidence of weaknesses from these old soldiers, they were instead blatantly accused by them.

Song, not intending to give Xu Ruoguang a chance to breathe, immediately initiated a power play, "Lord Ji Lande, we all know you have a way to contact the lord directly. Please call the lord over... Otherwise, my brothers, they won't be appeased."

Ji Lande squinted his eyes, his brain rapidly calculating.

Of course, the lord would support his actions. Yet these people were blatantly demanding to see the lord?

No! Seeing the lord was not their goal. 'Not being able to see the lord,' that was their true aim!

Observing the anxious look on the faces of Xu Ruoguang, Kuang Xin, and other acquaintances of the lord, even Ji Lande, who hadn't received the message, could roughly guess the core conflict of this incident.

"The lord is busy with many affairs..."

"But this is a bright future the lord personally promised us!" Song cut Gilder off again before he could speak, blocking all his avenues of retreat, "Whether the lord comes or not is up to him, whether you call him is up to you. Just give us a definite time, and we can wait."

"..." Gilder fell silent for a moment, knowing he couldn't give in to their demands.

In the face of the silence, a smile spread across Song's face, growing wider until it turned frenzied.

He looked at his fellow old soldiers, his grin menacing, "Do you see now? Do you see? He doesn't dare, because the lord can't come out."

Chapter 559: comes into action\_3

Song turned around and scanned every Black Street resident staring his way, "Our respected lord is nothing but a dog in the military! A mere common soldier! He committed a crime last night and he won't be coming out again! The person we revered as sacred, is just a man-made being born a few months ago in the barracks!"

"Whoa!"

The revelation of the true identity caused a huge uproar.

In everyone's eyes, the image of the lord had always been that of a high and lofty leader, a person who should be the absolute top of a power hierarchy, no matter where he was.

However... the fact that Song had suddenly exposed undoubtedly created a huge disparity in their hearts.

A crisis of faith was, after all, inevitable.

Song turned to face Gilder, a crazed, bloodthirsty smile spreading across his face, "Ji Lande! Your backer is down!"

With a chilling sweep of his hand, he commanded, "Brothers, what are you waiting for? Black Street needs a new lord!"

Song's actions apparently exceeded what his comrades had planned. At the critical moment, some began to waver, "Maybe... we should wait and see?"

"Yeah... we agreed just to come over and meet the lord, didn't we? Isn't this too hasty?"

"Maybe the lord is genuinely busy with important affairs; waiting a bit longer isn't a problem..."

Even if the so-called "facts" from Song's mouth were convincing, the lord's towering image had long been entrenched in their hearts, and they dared not act rashly.

What if the lord was actually fine? Wouldn't they be the ones to suffer?

"A bunch of useless cretins!" Song's eyes darkened as they swept over his comrades, his mocking tone merciless, "Fortunately, I never counted on you..."

Mid-sentence, Song reached into his bosom and pulled out an object, pressing it fiercely toward the sky.

"Whizz!"

"Pop!"

A flare shot from the signal gun traced a bright arc across the sky.

Everyone's heart nearly stopped—

'This is bad!'

Something big had happened! Although no one knew precisely what, they all felt that tonight, they had witnessed an extraordinary event.

"Kikikiki~," Song, having launched the signal flare, jerked uncontrollably in place, emitting a strange and inhuman laughter.

Yet as the seconds and minutes ticked by, the surroundings remained unchanged.

Even the utterly bizarre Song returned to a semblance of normalcy for a moment.

His gaze turned toward the distance, a hint of confusion in his heart—

'Where are my people?'

"tap, tap,"

A slender figure in a black cloak appeared at the edge of a nearby rooftop, throwing a round object. With a cold and indifferent tone, the figure asked, "Are you waiting for them?"

"Gurgle, gurgle,"

The round object rolled around the circle of people before coming to a stop.

"A corpse!"

"A head!" A cry of alarm rose.

Some recognized the identity of the target, "It's the boss of the Black Axe Gang!"

Song suddenly turned toward the shadowy figure, his tone thunderous, "You!"

Yue Ying remained silent, her fingers subtly rubbing together beneath the cloak, feeling somewhat relieved in her heart—

Fortunately, she had not killed the wrong person.

Bai E had only entrusted her to keep an eye on people outside of Black Street; she dared not interfere with the disputes within it.

She couldn't intervene in the ruckus caused by that group of old soldiers, but the gang that came from outside armed with weapons... they were definitely bad guys!

Chapter 560: "Conspiracy

Gazing at the head that had died with eyes wide open on the ground, Song's gaze was dark and eerie.

How is this possible?

How is this possible!

With so many people in the Black Axe Gang, how could they all have been killed without any noise?

Even if that person of high status were here, he probably couldn't have carried out such a swift and clean slaughter, right?

It must be fake! It must be fake!

"Dead people... so many dead people..." Far down the street, someone's panicked cries could be heard.

With a gust of wind, the thick scent of blood wafted over, and now everyone could smell that sweet, yet metallic rusty scent in the air.

Seeing all eyes focused on her, Yue Ying, who disliked being in the spotlight, felt uncomfortable and shuffled her toes, ready to bolt.

She didn't understand the internal affairs of Black Street. Ensuring the safety of Black Street's main body was her sole responsibility.

"I didn't expect him to have a contingency plan..." A low, contemplative murmur came from Song, accompanied by a chilling laugh that made one's skin crawl, "Giggle giggle giggle giggle~ This makes it fun... this makes it real fun!"

A ghostly purple aura rose from him within the visual spectrum of Spiritual Energy, and people with the ability to see such energy, including Gong Yan and Gu Lan, immediately noticed this sinister change.

"Spiritual Energy!"

'No...' Yue Ying, who had intended to leave straight away, stood still, her eyes slightly narrowed, and inwardly sighed, 'It's a demon.'

Such a concealed demonic blessing, she hadn't even noticed it.

The few times she encountered demonic blessings or their true presence before, even from afar, she could smell that distinct "scent" of demons. It was only because it didn't concern her that she was reluctant to take action.

And this time... despite being almost face-to-face, she hadn't caught any scent related to demons from him.

Only now, as he voluntarily exposed himself, did that unique, sinister, and strange demonic scent begin to spread.

Conspiracies and schemes are always buried deep.

Yue Ying had a rough idea of where this blessing demon came from.

However, Song's actions on the field did not halt—

Since you've prepared a contingency, I'll just have to destroy it.

Taking advantage of Bai E's absence, he had already made the most impactful plan in the shortest amount of time.

He knew that someone as powerful as Bai E would always be able to find another opportunity to rise again as long as he wasn't dead. The Military's suppression would only be temporary.

He also knew that the residents of Black Street were just momentarily shocked and panicked, even feeling a sense of betrayal upon suddenly learning that their lord was just a little soldier in the barracks. Given some time, these people would remember their lord's kindness and wouldn't forget his strength and demeanor.

He knew everything.

Those who plot schemes must know the opponent's attributes better than any arbiter.

This sudden aggression had to be swiftly executed amidst the confusion of misinformation.

The situation had reached this point, and in the end, it still depended on oneself to complete the last part of the plan!

"Buzz~"

As Song's hands moved rapidly to form seals, the fluctuations of Spiritual Energy caused spatial tremors. Behind Song, in the vision of Spiritual Energy, a circle of Array light drawn by ghostly purple lines began to emerge.

In the center of the Array, the light gradually formed a pattern resembling a sinister eye, and as the Array gradually took shape, that sinister eye seemed to come to life...

"What kind of Spiritual Energy is this?"

"We must stop him!"

"Go!"

Gong Yan, Gu Lan, and the other players instantly reached a consensus.

They didn't know what exactly Song was trying to do, nor did they know the consequences of the never-before-seen Spiritual Energy Array once it was complete.

The one thing they did know—whatever the opponent wanted to do, they must resolutely prevent it from happening.

Gong Yan pulled out her gun directly, her bullets enhanced with Spiritual Energy. With a muffled "bang," the dim weapon launched a bullet, striking in an instant.

Dai Lian also drew the bowstring from within the crowd. The arrow, full of force, took off towards Song, who was forming seals, under the boost of the skill—Power Shot.

The players reacted incredibly swiftly, almost taking action the moment Song began his incantation.

However, the incoming attacks from different directions passed through Song's body like ripples on calm water, causing nothing more than ripple-like distortions on the surface of his flesh, with no further feedback.

[Your attack has successfully hit the target. Physical impact is ineffective, only the added impact of Spiritual Energy caused a slight hit on the target.]

[More impacts will have a higher chance of interrupting the target's casting. The current probability of Spiritual Energy impact interrupting the casting is 0.49%...]

[...Failed to interrupt.]

"It's no use! We can't hit him!"

"Only Spiritual Energy attacks work!"

"I know!" Gu Lan clenched her teeth in response.

Kuang Xin and Dai Lian's mastery of Spiritual Energy was not mighty. They had merely learned to use Spiritual Energy like a mana pool from their lord.

Indeed, they could deploy skills by consuming Spiritual Energy, but when it came to a straightforward Spiritual Energy strike, of course, it couldn't compare to Gong Yan and Gu Lan, who had talent in Spiritual Energy since the creation of their characters.

While Gong Yan's Spiritual Energy was more functional, Gu Lan's leaned more towards combat.

Gu Lan lifted her skirt slightly, pulling out a small silver Spiritual Energy pistol from the strap around her thigh. Her eyes focused intently on that figure emitting a ghostly purple glow, the silver aura deepening within her eyes.