

Wow 59

Chapter 59: Insect Tide Incoming!

"One day? Two days?" Bai E turned his head and smiled wryly, "No one can say for sure, I might not even return."

Today, the military camp's oddities kept a shadow clinging to Bai E's heart; he didn't know what had happened, so he was uneasy.

Death... seemed as though it could descend at any moment.

But then again, there didn't seem to be much to fear... Was it because he had gradually become accustomed to the tone of this world, or was it because the genes of dedication in his artificial human body were controlling his thoughts?

Who knows?

"But you guys don't have to worry..."

Bai E said with a smile: "While I'm away, you can still work hard for our shared dream. Even if I don't come back, you can certainly find more companions in the city. Since you've joined Li Ming, I only hope you remember one thing..."

The wind brushed through Bai E's hair; he seemed like a gentle elder recounting tender tales of the past.

"If a person lives only for himself, he might become a famous warrior, philosopher, physicist, but he will never become a flawless, great figure.

Our history acknowledges those who strive for the entirety of humanity and become noble as great figures; experience praises those who bring happiness to the masses as the happiest people; faith teaches us that ideal figures revered by all have sacrificed themselves for humankind.

If we choose the path that strives most for human life, then the burden cannot crush us, because it's a sacrifice made for everyone. What we will feel then is not pitiful, limited, selfish pleasure. Our aim will belong to millions, our cause will exist silently but eternally, and in the face of our ashes, noble people will shed hot tears."

"..."

Watching the steady fading figure of Bai E, a mist seemed to shimmer in the eyes of the three people.

Indeed, most players seldom delve deeply into the loves and hates within the game world's narrative; after all, even the deepest hatred seems fleeting compared to grabbing a couple of fries at the dock...

However, after being forcibly injected into their world through regular task lines with game characters of strong personal colors, they could also love certain characters deeply.

At this moment, they realized that the leader of the Li Ming organization... seemed to be one such character with some charm.

"Stop gawking! Get to work!"

Dai Lian tossed his shovel aside, sick of digging holes.

Repetitive simple tasks also wore on their patience; it was challenges within a certain limit they yearned for.

"First, let's decide which task to do..."

"For burning lime, first we need a furnace, right? We'll also need limestone, clay, iron slag..."

"Doesn't sound too hard..."

After all, you could mooch it all for free.

"What about the investigation task?"

"That Arbitration Place has got it all wrong; they stand too tall and won't bow down. We can sneak around quietly. If we draw all the rats out in the open, no one can beat them."

"You're right."

"Let's do this, we'll split into two groups..."

"I'll find the materials needed for making cement." Gong Yan volunteered eagerly.

Yesterday's help with rescuing and treating the injured wasn't without its benefits; at the very least, it had opened up connections for her in the neighborhood, and when she needed something for free, people were quite willing to lend a hand or provide some information.

Dai Lian and Kuang Xin exchanged a glance.

Great, they were splitting up again.

"Then the two of us will go explore the sewers."

Let's go!

...

Upon returning to the military camp, it was still eerily quiet.

At the time of assembly, Bai E and others from three different groups were taken to a slightly gloomy... screening room?

"This is the last afternoon before going into battle, and there won't be any training tasks scheduled this afternoon, allowing everyone to take a look at the opponent we're about to face, to familiarize ourselves with the opponent's characteristics and attack methods, so as to avoid messy and blind combat on the battlefield."

The instructor's coarse language elicited a round of laughter.

As the door closed, heavy curtains blocked out the sunlight and the projector emitted a beam of light, projecting a film with the texture of an old movie onto the white screen.

A well-modulated male voice calmly followed the progress of the film with an introduction—

"The Bug Race is a sinister species with intelligence akin to that of lower life forms. Their will is similar to a hive mind, and most individual bugs only possess a bloodthirsty and murderous instinct, lacking the ability to respond complexly to environmental changes. They are devoid of communication capabilities, existing solely to devour and kill.

Each hive has but one Brain Bug, the queen that rules them all. Yet below it, there still exist various types of bugs responsible for different aspects."

"The Mantis Bug."

A bug resembling the build of a human appeared on the screen, moving swiftly through the chaotic battlefield, its scythe-like, serrated forearms acting as deadly tools for harvesting the lives of soldiers.

Their bodies stand and run like humans, with a bent spine causing a slight forward center of gravity, and heads long and thin like mantises, covered with bony carapaces; they are about twice as tall as an average human and possess unimaginable agility.

"From our observations, this type of bug is similar to a squad officer within the Bug Race. The lower-ranking bugs nearby follow the Mantis Bug's direction of attack to coordinate their assaults. In certain special instances, they are even capable of assessing the battlefield situation to make decisions on transferring positions or even retreating."

"They possess a thick chitinous exoskeleton, and attacks with power levels below 15 struggle to inflict damage upon their carapaces. The claws of the Mantis Bug are also grown from chitin and attached to the body by highly elastic muscles, which can project the blades at supersonic speed when rapidly extended."

"Furthermore, they possess a type of ranged symbiotic weapon known as the 'Corrupting Gun'..."

The image showed a Mantis Bug retracting its bone blades, with a conical red swollen mass at the connection with the muscles, where numerous black, mucus-covered flesh worms writhed and twisted.

"When the Mantis Bugs stimulate these symbiotic worms with bioelectricity, they are then catapulted by powerful muscle contractions. If hit successfully by these worms, they will rapidly burrow under your skin and muscle, gnawing along your nerves all the way to your brain. This process lasts for several minutes, and the excruciating pain is enough to break down even the most strong-willed soldier.

If you do not wish to lose control due to pain and harm your teammates, the best solution is to give yourself a quick end."

Besides...

A dark red, large figure appeared on the screen. It seemed quite distant, and the image could only present a blurry outline, with four muscular blade arms particularly noticeable.

Ability characteristics: Unknown!

"This type of bug rarely appears, suspected to be a subspecies or mutant of the Mantis Bug, with unknown abilities at present..."

[Acquired Pictorial Information: Mantis Bug.]

"Worker Bug/Bee Bug."

Two small bugs, approximately half the size of a normal human and varying slightly in size as if small dinosaurs, appeared together on the screen.

"These two are the most common lower-ranking bugs and will be the most numerous enemies we're going to face. They are almost devoid of intelligence. Without the control of the Queen or Mantis Bugs, these lower-ranking bugs will solely follow their innate violent desires to kill and feed, attacking the nearest target. When they are extremely hungry, we have even observed them killing each other."

"Of course, the Bee Bugs are a bit more intelligent. They use a weapon for melee combat that we call the 'Spiked Short Spear.' It is a bone organ lined with muscle, studded with sharp harpoon-like barbs that can easily tear through our flesh and blood vessels.

Moreover, the surface of the barbs is covered with acid glands and poison sacs, so even a slight scratch can be life-threatening if not treated promptly."

"Worker Bugs, on the other hand, are even more primitive. These bugs lack the intelligence to even use symbiotic weapons, but they come in many subspecies, capable of advancing like heavily armored defenses, or rapidly penetrating and disorganizing our lines..."

[Acquired Pictorial Information: Worker Bug/Bee Bug.]

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[Acquired Pictorial Information: Artillery Bug.]

...

The film ended, and the lights came on.

As the door opened, the already darkening sky filled Bai E's pupils, along with the blood-red sunset.

Blood, like tiny snakes, wound its way from the doorway inside.

Shattered flesh was scattered all over the entrance.

Bai E's pupils abruptly contracted as the hair on his body stood on end.

"Bugs!"

[Triggered a time-limited side quest—The Onslaught of Bugs.]

[The Onslaught of Bugs: During the main troop's exercise camping trip, the Bug Race attacked your military camp. Quest requirements: Eradicate the attacking Bug Race 0/100%. Quest completion rewards: Universal Experience *??? (Calculated based on the number of surviving recruits 2000/2000). (Countdown: 1 hour 59 minutes 59 seconds)]

