

Wow 691

Chapter 691: try again

When Bai E arrived, the town was shrouded in gloom.

"When is the leader coming?"

"If he doesn't come soon, we'll all starve to death..."

It was not a lack of trees or rocks in the wilderness, but creating a city from scratch was still an insurmountable task for them.

The most important things—water and food—were difficult to ensure.

"Stop complaining, hasn't the leader taken care of us?"

"But even with the supplies from those who claim to be from Black Street, it's still not enough..."

"What about the mushrooms we planted in the back? They're enormous, you won't starve."

"Yue~ Don't mention those mushrooms! I've been dreaming of them for days, I feel like I'm growing mushrooms on my own head."

"Didn't the leader bring us some game meat last time? We're far from starving."

"How many good days have we had? Are you starting to pick and choose? Isn't being human here better than being a dog in that hellhole we came from?"

"Heh~ That's true, but our leader is awesome, isn't he? It's been a while since we've seen Sheng Yan and the rest... I wonder what big things they're busy with, following the leader."

"Someone's coming!"

The watchful guards on the outermost periphery of the city ruins immediately spotted a fast-moving line of dust in the distance.

It was like a shark in the desert, its dorsal fin breaking through the sea of sand.

"Is it the people from Black Street again?"

"They left just yesterday, they couldn't possibly be back already, could they?"

The leader, holding binoculars in his hand and standing on a high place, looked far into the distance, "Not a large group, at most one or two people."

"Let's initiate a level-one alert and see what happens."

"Yes!"

As the dust line approached, the guard leader with the binoculars could finally see clearly who was stirring up the dust.

The newcomer hadn't thought of hiding.

His military uniform was starkly conspicuous.

The leader leaped up excitedly in an instant, "It's the leader!"

"The leader has come!"

"The leader has arrived!"

The news instantly spread among the entire population of the small town of over a thousand residents.

"Leader, we've been waiting for you, longing as we watched the stars and the moon!" Yafei, in charge of the town's logistics, looked at Bai E with a moved face, "During your absence, we were nearly driven to ruin."

"Yes, leader. We only have the supplies we had before. The last time those smart machines attacked and smashed everything, even though we tried our best to recover, there's barely anything left that can be used. Recently, we've come to a complete standstill. Not to mention the steel you wanted us to produce..."

The words of the players were as lively as ever, and Bai E looked at them with a chuckle, "I know... you've all worked hard during this time."

With that, he waved his hand grandly, "I've come this time to solve these problems."

To resolve the food issue, there was a porridge maker.

By strictly mixing various inedible raw materials together, they transformed into a food that could barely satisfy hunger over a long period and provided enough nutrition.

In any era, food is always fundamental to survival.

Then there was energy... They dared not tamper with the nuclear reactor technology by themselves, waiting until Bai E returned to restart it.

The town also possessed many creations from the smart machines. Aside from forcefully disassembling them for parts, the townspeople had almost no way to make use of them.

Now with Bai E's arrival, those creations could be modified into models suitable for human use.

"It looks like I'll need to figure out how to make another trip to the Smart Machinery Factory," Bai E mumbled to himself as he busied himself with work.

...

Previously, there wasn't the time or the ability to haul all those smart machine creations back, but now that there's mature technology to modify smart machine creations for human use, there's the opportunity to source more stock from the smart machines.

After all, there's no better target for a heist than these smart machines.

The gadgets are not only practical but also don't belong to the human faction.

Gathering the key personnel of the town before him, Bai E spoke with a grave tone, "Build these basic things as quickly as possible; moreover, I will entrust you with even more critical matters later on."

From the Energy Gathering Rifle to the Dynamic Source Sword and including the artificial human production line and biochemical modifications for the human body, I can begin to try and develop them myself.

If you want to have the power to overturn the city's structure, first you must possess the power to confront the city itself.

"...So before that, you must have a force capable enough to protect yourselves. Choose the personnel yourselves; those responsible for training them will be Gong Yan and his team, whom I've already asked to be on their way here."

"Understood, my lord," the key personnel all watched Bai E with eyes full of curiosity and admiration.

"If there's nothing else to say, you can all go back to your duties. Yafei and the Wang brothers, stay back for a moment."

Teaching NPCs about various production and transformation technologies and science is too troublesome; NPCs definitely need talent and time to excel in a certain field.

But players don't need it.

With experience, they can become experts in any trade at any time.

Moreover, during the process of teaching them, I can also gain quite a bit of experience feedback, truly killing two birds with one stone, a win-win!

["Teaching" finished, you have acquired a total of 8,000 universal experience points through the "teaching" feedback.]

The few players staying in the town didn't have much opportunity to fight; their experience mostly came from daily interactions with NPCs.

A game that was compatible with numerous development paths was played by them as a construction-type "My World," addicted to building and unable to extricate themselves.

These life and construction skills turned out to be their favorite; otherwise, they wouldn't be the ones to stay. The other players, who were less patient with solitude, had already followed Kuang Xin to the city, using Black Street as a springboard to gradually infiltrate every corner of Blackwater City.

After setting the future development tone for Li Ming Town, Bai E mounted his motorbike and swiftly headed back.

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Under the cover of night, conspiracy permeated the shadows.

In the dim light, a secret meeting in the battle gang avoided most of its members.

Wen Jie was dragged into the corner by Langxie who whispered a warning, "You are in charge of the technical side; don't meddle in the matters of the big shots, understand?"

Pressed against the wall corner, Wen Jie glanced at the towering figure before him and nodded blankly in response, "I understand."

"Also, warn your companions; I know they are very curious. But... don't pry into things you shouldn't," Langxie's face showed a rare glimpse of genuine ferocity, "I don't want to end up having to take out your companions."

Ever since the last time their "doctor" made contact with "Black Street," a group of odd characters from Black Street had joined their organization.

Although their organization always had strict criteria for recruiting, those guys would agree to any demand; they would sign their lives away without hesitation.

And though these people hadn't shown any warmth towards Wen Jie, Langxie still instinctively knew they were essentially the same.

They surely had some strange, hidden connections.

Wen Jie's face showed a touch of difficulty, "That... I can't guarantee."

Everyone is a player; forbidding other players from exploring game content would be too overbearing. He couldn't do it, and besides, others wouldn't listen to him either...

"Don't you care about their wellbeing?"

"It's not that I don't care... it's that they don't care about themselves."

...

...

Chì chú.

"I'm done with you all!" Langxie turned and left angrily.

Before Langxie had exchanged these words with Wen Jie, one of her own had already captured someone eavesdropping in the corner.

Langxie, rushing straight to the dungeon, receives an inquiry from her subordinates, "Langxie, he eavesdropped on the boss's conversation with... that person. What should we do?"

Chapter 692: "Ultimate Weapon"

What should we do?

Their battle gang had always been reluctant to kill, but in times like these, when faced with such a fundamental issue of right and wrong, they had to kill even if they did not want to.

But... these guys were acquaintances of Wen Jie, after all. If they really killed them, Wen Jie might appear indifferent on the surface, but would he actually be heartbroken?

"Ah!"

With a light sigh of resignation, Wolf Scorpion waved her hand weakly, "Just keep them locked up."

Lock them up until their operation succeeded... or failed. Then, the information these people possessed would no longer have any use. By that time, whether they leaked secrets or not would be irrelevant.

"Understood, my lord!"

As soon as she had issued the orders, a subordinate approached, "My lord, the leader has sent for you."

"Hmm." Wolf Scorpion's eyes narrowed slightly, knowing that things had come to the final step.

After all... it wasn't the first time that person had come to look for them.

The first two times, they could use the excuse that the "final weapon" wasn't ready yet to ask for more time. But when the other side's attitude became really tough, they no longer had any possibility to refuse.

Meeting an elderly man in the secret room, who wore an eyepatch and was clad in tight-fitting clothes that outlined his muscular frame with white hair, Wolf Scorpion nodded in greeting, "Leader..."

"Hmm..." The voice of the elderly man with a full head of white hair was full of vigor, as he merely stated the core issue, "They have come to us for the third time, their patience has reached its limit."

"But isn't the 'final weapon' still not ready?" Wolf Scorpion could not help but ask.

This was not only an excuse for stalling but also a fact.

The old man shook his head somewhat disheartenedly, "They don't care whether our 'final weapon' is ready or not, they just want us to make some trouble."

Their sponsor had funded their development, naturally expecting them to do certain shady tasks that they couldn't do openly at critical times.

To ensure this control, of course, they had something in their possession that could destroy their entire battle gang at any moment.

Beyond obedience, they had no room at all to resist.

And this time, the other side made their intentions very clear; they didn't care how significant the battle gang's achievements could be. They wanted only "a little noise".

In other words, the battle gang might very well be annihilated in this operation.

Only those who could survive the "noise" and then evade the subsequent pursuit by the hounds could gain true freedom afterward.

This was a trial by fire; to pass through it was to be reborn.

The leader had a complete understanding of all this, but when he initially accepted the other side's support, he naturally had his own plans.

The other side wanted just "a little noise," but he wanted to use the chicken to lay eggs, aiming to create his own "bigger noise."

The "final weapon" was what he hoped to use to fulfill his ambition.

But now... it still wasn't completed before the predestined moment arrived.

"I'm not willing to see years of development buried at this moment..." the leader's aged eyes were somewhat distracted, "In the last few days, I still want to try."

"Try what?" Wolf Scorpion asked immediately.

She was an orphan girl raised by the leader, and to her, the leader was like her father.

The scar over her eye was left from a fight with a group of bullying older kids before the leader took her in.

A 6-year-old girl was no match for six fourteen or fifteen-year-old boys; it was only by fighting desperately with biting and scratching that...

Back then, the leader's hair was not so white, and he was using the crudest prosthetics, saving her from those boys while simply smiling and saying to the disheveled child, "You're like a little wolf cub. How about following me from now on?"

In the Undercity, it was already quite difficult to survive.

She had heard that many girls only a few years older than she had to learn to put on heavy makeup and cater to clients to make a living.

She didn't want that, so she followed the leader.

And followed him... for over twenty years.

Whatever the leader wanted to do, she would do her utmost to help him accomplish it.

"I need Zhou Wenjie."

The old man spoke calmly; his wise and elderly eyes quietly gazing at Wolf Scorpion, "I know he's someone very special to you... But we've cultivated him for so long, perhaps only he can complete the final technical breakthrough."

He knew Wolf Scorpion didn't want that kid called "Zhou Wenjie" to get involved with anything related to the "final weapon;" that way, even if their battle gang was broken up in the end, those hounds wouldn't bother to chase such unimportant peripheral personnel.

But once he touched that stuff, even if he didn't die in the "noise," he wouldn't escape the pursuit that followed.

Did she really think "technology is innocent"?

Many things, once known, become a threat.

If there had been any other way, he wouldn't have wanted to resort to this final step.

But over the years, they had tried everything possible.

His researchers, who had been studying the same thing with him from their youth to their current age, always spoke of new progress, always saying that they were close to conducting practical tests.

However... the "final weapon" never really started operating.

Even if these old friends had recently been working themselves to death trying to overcome the final hurdle, it all ended without result.

Chapter 693: "Ultimate Weapon"_2

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Perhaps only that little guy, who is said to be an absolute genius in these technological fields, could complete the final piece of the puzzle.

He would never have been so naive as to pin his hopes on one person before, but in the current situation... if he didn't believe in miracles, what else could he believe in?

"..." The Scorpion bit her lower lip, not uttering a word.

After about three to five minutes of silence, The Scorpion finally let out a wry smile, raising her head, "I'll go call him over..."

"..." The old man sighed softly, "You've had it tough these years."

"Not tough..." The Scorpion gazed at the wrinkles on the old man's face, each one... she remembered when they had appeared, "This is the life I want!"

As she walked Wen Jie down the path toward the secret chamber, The Scorpion's palm gently stroked the back of Wen Jie's head. She, walking beside him, looked at his soft hair with a shimmering tenderness in her eyes, 'Without me, you wouldn't survive in this city. After all, it's a dog-eat-dog world. If there's a next life, don't come back. Now, let me take you... to die together.'

Zhou Wenjie saw the real boss of the combat gang for the first time.

He was a formidable-looking old man with a rather kindly face.

"I've heard about your deeds..." The old man said to Zhou Wenjie with a chuckle, "Now, there's one last technical challenge left in the organization that needs to be overcome, and we need a genius like you to try to unravel it. Time is short, the task is heavy, but I won't force you."

The speaking old man glanced at The Scorpion standing beside Zhou Wenjie.

When it came to the crunch, it was he who seemed a bit weak.

On one hand were his promises to his old brothers; on the other, his "daughter's" future happiness.

If those old brothers could still speak, he really wanted to have a chat with them... about what he should do.

But now no one could give him advice, and he could only look at the little fellow his "daughter" had taken a liking to... What kind of person was he, really?

"I'll be honest with you, this technology isn't anything good. Once you touch it, you will be hunted by the city in the future. I'm not sure how it'll end up. And even though we've been researching this technology for decades without complete success, even if you join us... there still might not be any results. You have to understand all this."

Listening to these words on the side, The Scorpion's lips moved as she wanted to speak up, but she was stopped by the old man's wave of his hand. His gaze remained quietly fixed on Zhou Wenjie's face, "So I want to ask you, are you willing to join? If not... I will have The Scorpion take you away. Leave, to the outskirts of the city. And never come back!"

The resources outside the city might be limited compared to inside, and life could be a little dull, but as long as one is cautious, there's no need to fear losing one's life.

With the skills The Scorpion had developed over the years, the two of them should be able to live well on the outside.

And it was said that the old brothers outside the city were doing rather well recently. If things really got tough, they could seek refuge with them as a last resort.

The Scorpion couldn't bear to listen any longer and was about to retort, but then she heard another voice precede her, "Of course I'll join!"

Wen Jie raised his hand, full of eagerness.

There was new technology to learn!

He had almost completed the task issued by the adult, and had yet to fulfill the last piece of knowledge/technology. Now that he finally had the opportunity to encounter something new, how could he miss it?

Feeling the silence after he spoke, Wen Jie cautiously glanced at The Scorpion's expression.

Did he say something wrong?

Why aren't you two talking?

'Are you really that happy?' The boss wondered, feeling bewildered, 'Did I not make myself clear? This could get someone killed...'

People can't be fearless of death, can they?

Even if they're living lives that hardly seem human, everyone in the lower city is still trying their hardest to survive.

But, upon seeing the little guy glance at his "daughter," the boss understood.

This must be love!

...

The daughter took a liking to him, and he liked the daughter as well.

For his daughter, he was willing to do anything.

Even if it meant going to their deaths together.

"Alright, alright, alright!" The leader laughed heartily, an unusual occurrence, "Then it's settled. Wolf-Scorpion, you take him to find Old Seven and the others. I'm giving you three days. After three days, before the 'action' starts, take him and leave the city, never to return! And don't bother finding out what eventually happened to us. After three days, we have no relation to each other!"

Whether it would work out or not was up to fate.

As for whether the daughter and this young man would manage to evade the hunting dogs' pursuit... it was up to their own destiny.

Wolf-Scorpion frowned and glanced at Zhou Wenjie, her eyes filled with both joy and concern.

If "Father" hadn't brought up anything and directly asked her to join, perhaps her thoughts wouldn't have wavered.

And if Wen Jie firmly refused, maybe she wouldn't have insisted.

But now...

Wolf-Scorpion extended her right hand and grasped Wen Jie's nape in a half-affectionate, half-annoyed grip, pushing him outside, "Let's go! Time to see your research!"

Wolf-Scorpion's hand was cold, and Wen Jie just shrank his neck, protesting quietly, "If we're going, then let's go, why do you have to clutch my neck..."

"Disagree?!"

"Agree, agree~" Wen Jie looked up and smiled apologetically, "Sis, I'll do as you say, your word is law."

...

The feedback information that had been silent for a long while was transmitted back, and Bai E received an alert from the panel with some delight.

In fact, after issuing some missions to the players recently, he had received quite a few feedback alerts, and he was now summarizing them all together.

[From the commission's feedback, your Insight +0.7, Stamina +0.9, Reflex +1.1, Mystery +0.3, Light Weapon Mastery Experience +350, Light Firearms Mastery Experience +105, Ranged Weapons Mastery Experience +437, Combat Mastery Experience +115, Knowledge - Bio-brain Theory Experience +50.]

This time, however, there was an additional experience related to "Bio-brain Theory," which surprised Bai E.

This was knowledge essential to his Mecha modification plan 2.0 blueprint, something he hadn't even managed to find out from Helen, so how come it suddenly appeared in the mission feedback?

"..."

The attributes in the mission feedback, of course, came from the players who carried out the missions, and among those players, only one was associated with technology—

Wen Jie!

Awesome!

"What's up?" Seeing the change in Bai E's expression, Helen asked with some curiosity.

"It's nothing..." Bai E shook his head, directly stating his purpose, "I've come to ask you when I can get the second injection of the Gene Optimization Solution?"

"The second Gene Optimization Solution?" Helen's eyes slightly arched as she looked at Bai E, with a somewhat strange look, "If I remember correctly, it hasn't been more than half a year since you injected the first dose, right?"

"Yes..." Bai E nodded, "I just wanted to ask what conditions I need to meet to get the second injection of the Gene Optimization Solution?"

"To inject the second dose of the Gene Optimization Solution, it's generally necessary for the effects of the first dose to be completely absorbed and processed, and for the gene enhancement and modification to be fully stabilized. This process does not take less than six months. In fact, in past operations, only those whose time since the last injection of the optimization fluid surpassed one year were we concerned with monitoring their optimized physical indicators. Not to mention that even elevating one's actual physical attributes to the upper limit of the optimized body is not a simple matter, as it signifies that one's familiarity with their body has reached an extreme level. Although this is not a stringent criterion, it is also an important reference in our clinical practice."

As Helen spoke, her gaze glanced at Bai E's body, taking in the vigorous vitality emanating from his frame, her eyes also held a hint of curiosity, "However... if it's you, I too am curious to see just what level you've reached now."

This artificial human named Bai E had already created so many miracles, so perhaps breaking the usual conventions regarding the use of Gene Optimization Solution wasn't such an unacceptable thing, was it?

Chapter 694: training

The scan results for the body were quickly presented:

[Physical Strength]: 19.2/24

[Insight]: 16.3/24

[Reflex]: 17.6/24

While still a good distance from the full attribute limit of 24 points after optimization, such an increase was remarkably rapid, even explosive, one might say.

Since Bai E had mentioned the intention to inject the Gene Optimization Solution a second time, Helen's medical indicators were certainly not limited to these.

Beyond the basic physical attributes, there were various indicators of gene stability to consider.

Attributes were not everything; gene stability was the most critical aspect to consider during gene optimization.

Of course, cities that were not as advanced in this area often strove for perfection in every aspect before attempting the next step.

And now... Helen stared at the medical report in front of her, a bit entranced behind her gold-rimmed glasses, murmuring to herself, "How is that possible?"

His genes had stabilized within less than half a year after injection.

Every target who had received the Gene Optimization Solution injection had their pre and post-injection bodily indicators strictly recorded for comparison purposes for the next injection.

The data Helen now held showed that this individual's body had fully stabilized, all genetic indicators had returned to calm, displaying a completely natural state of stability.

This meant... he really did qualify for the next gene optimization injection.

As for the allocation of Optimization fluid resources... For Bai E, who had become the actual controller of the military region and a member of the Elder Council, this was not a matter of concern.

"Based on your current body's indicators, you indeed meet the basic requirements for the second Gene Optimization Solution injection, but..." Helen looked at Bai E, a hint of inquisitiveness in her seductive pupils, "You're still quite far from maxing out all attributes, and in our practical operations, we don't recommend injecting when there's still a significant gap from the limit. Although this situation may not affect the success rate of the Optimization fluid injection or increase your rate of genetic breakdown, it's highly likely that it will result in a suboptimal second injection, where the increase in gene optimization isn't significant."

Simply put, assuming gene stability is achieved, a second injection after reaching the attribute limits could add maybe three points of optimization, but an injection before reaching the limits might only add one or two points.

Every injection of the Gene Optimization Solution is a gamble, and the smaller the growth, the more injections of Gene Optimization Solution are needed, and the more risks are taken.

Who always gambles and always wins?

Not to mention, the higher the degree of Gene Optimization Solution, the rarer it is.

Therefore, maximizing the efficacy of each Gene Optimization Solution is the mainstream practice in cities nowadays.

"However... if you insist on trying, it's not impossible."

"Then... let's give it a try."

Bai E said solemnly.

"Alright," Helen agreed readily.

She would not refuse any of Bai E's requests; a firm belief in one's physical abilities and confidence were also crucial elements during the injection process.

In reality, Bai E just wanted an opportunity to get closer to the Gene Optimization Solution again.

The last time the Optimization fluid was injected entirely by someone else; he didn't have the slightest opportunity to touch it.

Now, as his status had risen, he should have no problem observing the substance for a bit before the injection process, right?

Accidentally damaging it under the pretense of research would seem quite reasonable, wouldn't it?

Destroying one vial of Gene Optimization Solution in exchange for thousands upon thousands, what a perfect choice?

Having decided on the injection, Helen went off to prepare.

The Gene Optimization Solution was incredibly precious; it was difficult to produce and even harder to store. Very rarely did cities have a large amount of the solution ready-made. It was generally produced a few days in advance, according to the need to ensure the stability of the ingredients.

Now that Bai E required it, she would prepare the most suitable Optimization fluid specification for him.

After saying goodbye to Helen, Bai E returned to the barracks.

Three days of basic training had passed, and the various understandings of the battlefield, ingrained in the instincts of all the artificial beings, were sufficient for them to master the most basic combat knowledge.

The remaining time was to gradually hone the skills of every soldier through endless practice in the future so that they could all become elite troops capable of standing on their own.

And after three days of basic training, it meant... they were ready to receive various commands from the military district and carry out missions in the wilderness.

This first mission... Bai E wanted to lead them himself.

The news quickly spread throughout the barracks. Even the high-ranking officers, who no longer had any objections to Bai E's current status, were once again puzzled by his sudden decision.

"What? He wants to lead the troops himself for the drilling exercise?"

"He doesn't want a single mid-level officer, just relying on himself to lead 2,000 soldiers?"

"No matter how capable he is, can he really act as a babysitter for 2,000 people at the same time?"

Military operations and small team commands, or even individual combat, are completely different concepts.

If there are few people and you are highly capable, putting in more effort would mean that the mission gets done.

But when the numbers increase, if commands are not delivered completely or promptly, without the detail-oriented direction of mid-level officers, just relying on these green artificial recruits who've just been out of the oven for three days... believe it or not, they'd probably get lost just walking?

Chapter 695: training_2

"I want to see what kind of spectacle he'll come up with this time?"

Bai E's position was as stable as Mount Tai, and even the generals who harbored continual resentment towards his origins as a man-made person no longer hoped to use such matters to pull him down from power. At most, they could only hope that after encountering difficulties, he would recognize the role of the original generals, so as to grant them a bit of actual authority.

In the military district, generals needed to have control over troops in order to have a say.

"Or how about we give him a suggestion? We say, let the soldiers who have completed his training exercise face off against our previous soldiers in a mock military exercise, and we won't bully him—we'll have one thousand of our men against his two thousand. If he can still bring those two thousand recruits back in one piece... how about that?"

"Good!"

"That's settled then!"

"We must make him realize that we are useful too!"

A general suddenly remembered a key point and added, "But the commander isn't allowed to take part personally when the time comes."

"Right, right, right! The commander can only be in charge of commanding."

...

More than two thousand troops marched out of the military base with great momentum, heading straight for the wilderness.

Bai E told everyone that it was just a training exercise to experience the wilderness of the age, and if they encountered beastmen or creatures like alien species, they could consider clearing them out as well.

It was essentially an extermination force, sweeping a certain range around the city completely.

And that's exactly what he did.

Not long after leaving the base, Bai E allowed these man-made new recruits to elect some junior non-commissioned officers amongst themselves.

Even if he didn't plan to conceal his moves by sending the new recruits to Li Ming Town for training, he didn't want to bring along the original non-commissioned officers from the military base.

A troop completely his own, of course, had every detail belonging to himself from top to bottom.

The original non-commissioned officers carried a background that could not change the base's original colors. However, this newly formed army had to be entirely obedient to him. Therefore, the non-commissioned officers responsible for grassroots coordination also had to be selected from their own ranks.

Only in this way could he ensure that at the necessary moment in the future, they could execute his orders without hesitation.

And these new recruits did not disappoint Bai E.

They were different from the previous new recruits.

Now that the gene ban had been lifted, their minds were far more flexible than those of the past man-made soldiers. In fact, the instructors training them had already noticed this unprecedented trait.

But "a bit smarter" isn't something that can be quantified, and since no one as extreme as Bai E emerged from their ranks, no one spoke up.

It was only in such situations, requiring them to make decisions on their own, that this bit of "wisdom" and the changes it brought became apparent.

The junior non-commissioned officers needed by Bai E were soon elected by the recruits themselves, with the overall structure maintaining the style of the original military base.

Calling those elected junior non-commissioned officers before him, Bai E stood with his hands behind his back, calmly looking over them all, "I believe you all still remember me."

The newly elected non-commissioned officers stared at Bai E with a hint of excitement. They vividly remembered this commander who had made a profound impression on them at their birth, serving the same purpose as Weslin had initially, "Yes, Commander!"

"Over the next few days, I will lead you in a sweep around the city. Everyone but our kind is the enemy. I have only one demand of you—when I walk the paths you've cleared behind you, I must not see any moving creature! Can it be done?!"

"No problem, Commander!"

Bai E waved his hand coolly, "Then let's move out!"

The two thousand man-made new soldiers didn't carry any heavy weapons or drive any vehicles.

Apart from the weapons, ammunition, and food supplies they carried on themselves, Bai E didn't ask them to prepare anything else.

According to this plan, resources would undoubtedly run out by the week's end... but that didn't matter. Resources were scarce in this era, but not that scarce.

With appropriate execution standards, many things in the wild... could be eaten and used.

As for running out of bullets? Didn't they still have knives?

Bai E didn't plan on having them fight from beginning to end.

And he was only preparing to lead them to Li Ming Town for advanced training when the damage reached an opportune moment.

Only when faced with challenges that indeed exceeded their abilities did opportunities for growth become more precious to people.

This common problem applied not just to natural humans, but to artificial humans as well.

They were loyal, but they also had an inclination toward laziness.

Bai E emptied his mind and happily followed behind the large army.

From time to time, he would teach some clever rookies who came to him for advice a few useful skills—

Such as long-neglected "firearm maintenance," "bandaging," "dissection," "cooking," and so on.

Picking any one of these skills would amaze these naïve young men who had seen little of the world, leading them to exclaim in admiration, "Sir, you are so skilled!"

"Sir, how do you know everything?"

The exclamations from these pure-hearted children were far more pleasant to hear than those from the distracted, and of course, the most important thing was the accompanying increase in their charge values.

["Lucky Strike" charge +112.](Cumulative)

After several days of intense training, having encountered a herd of mutated wild buffalo and a small band of roaming orc assailants, most of the soldiers in the two-thousand-strong army showed signs of exhaustion on their faces.

But beneath that surface fatigue, there was an even brighter excitement in the depths of their pupils.

They could feel the significant progress their bodies had made during this process.

The first three days of basic training were indeed the period of most rapid enhancement for these artificial humans, but this continuous pushing of limits during the intense training also had an excellent effect on their development.

However, real combat training was not without accidents, and a single-digit number of casualties still occurred within the two-thousand-strong force.

"Take their dog tags!"

Bai E stood in the center of the crowd, listening to the non-commissioned officers who had been elected discussing their experiences after yet another encounter.

These artificial human recruits were newly manufactured and had not yet established rigid rules among themselves.

They had no concept of command hierarchy such as "non-commissioned officers," feeling instead that everyone should give their full effort.

The capable advance, the weak retreat.

All for the sake of accomplishing their goals.

The ranks of the non-commissioned officers were also adjusted many times after their internal discussions.

And at every rest, it was their own habit to hold a small meeting among the non-commissioned officers for a debrief.

Bai E just listened quietly, until the final moment when after several seconds of silence with no one speaking, he softly said, "Take their dog tags, death is not the end. It is this ever-growing list of the fallen that has forever changed the future of us humans!"

"Yes, Sir!"

["Lucky Strike" charge +50.]

Bai E looked up at the gradually sinking twilight in the sky.

Under his deliberate guidance, the army's route had reached the closest tangent to Li Ming Town.

The days of combat and fresh experiences had left all the soldiers utterly exhausted; perhaps a brief rest would allow them to have a better attitude for the next phase of intense training.

After all, circling the city was no small feat.

"After resting tonight, we will set out toward that direction in the morning." Bai E took command of the entire army for the first time, setting their direction for when they awoke the next day.

The loyal artificial human soldiers never asked why, simply responding in unison, "Received, Sir!"

...

With a smile on his lips after leaving the circle of artificial human non-commissioned officers, Bai E took out his communicator used to contact Kuang Xin and the other players, "The army is almost here, are you guys ready on your end?"

Chapter 696: May 19th, Storm is Coming

"I'm ready, my lord!" Kuang Xin's reply came quickly, along with another sentence, "I also have important matters to report to you!"

...

"This is intolerable!" The trapped player sat in the pitch-dark dungeon, growing angrier the more he thought, and the more he thought, the angrier he got.

Being caught for misconduct meant he was outplayed and had no complaints.

Failure is normal, even if it means death, he wouldn't frown!

But now that you've caught me, can't you just kill me quickly with a single stab? Are you still part of the ruthless Underground Fighting Gang?

Players aren't afraid of dying; they're afraid of boredom.

Trapped in a tiny dark cell less than three square meters, logging in just meant staring blankly—it was pure and hard-core imprisonment without a glimpse of hope.

"Alright, alright, alright!"

If you won't grant me a swift end, then don't blame me for discarding the codes of the rivers and lakes.

Normally, it's a tacit understanding that things happening in the game are not to be discussed in the real world.

But since you started by keeping me captive without killing me and disregarded the code of conduct, don't blame me for taking offline measures!

Shake things up!

I can't beat you, but I have many more brothers who can.

I'm going to release all the intelligence I've heard! Let every player in Blackwater City know your conspiracy, reveal your schemes, and then have the city authorities arrest you all!

By then, whether I am treated as an accomplice or a victim... However I'm dealt with is better than being locked up here without a shred of hope for the future.

Thus, it was the players expelled from Grey Iron City who first learned of this unfortunate fellow's plight, and people like Kuang Xin, who maintained close contact with those players, naturally came to know of this news as well.

The organization known as "Doctor," they were all too familiar with it.

And a Fighting Gang aiming to "rebel"? That must be big news in Blackwater City, right?

Of course, they didn't have a clear understanding of the power balance between the Fighting Gang and the city and didn't know the extent of damage such a Gang could cause to the city if it decided to rebel.

All they knew was that with their own strength, it would be like throwing an egg against a rock, and neither party involved was within their current capacity to challenge.

If they wanted to successfully interfere... or perhaps aid their actions, they could only rely on the lord.

The lord would first determine the course of action, then give them a hint of a task, a win-win!

"...My lord, that's the basic situation," Kuang Xin said eagerly with a gleam in his eyes, seeking guidance from Bai E, "What should we do?"

Whether it's aiding or battling, the decision must be made by the lord.

If the lord says they're bad, then wipe them out!

...Following behind the lord.

If the lord says they're good, then help them!

Overturn this rotten city!

They are the dawn! They should have come to this world long ago!

With a slight frown, Bai E asked, "Are you sure this piece of intelligence is reliable?"

"Of course! Our brother's staked his life for it!" boasted Kuang Xin proudly, thumb pointing over his shoulder.

"Fine."

Bai E knew the strength of the players' intelligence networks and had no reason to doubt his followers, who had been with him for so long.

"Your brother, is he certain that the action is set to take place in ten days?"

"Of course!"

The plan was moving much faster than anticipated. His great army had not yet completed its training, and he only had two thousand men from the first draft.

He hadn't expected the nobles to be so impetuous, initiating disturbances so soon after signing the agreement that followed the castle incident.

Of course... it might just be an appetizer they had planned.

This Fighting Gang named "Doctor" might only be the pawn to kick off the proceedings.

In that case...

"Return to the city in advance to get ready for cooperation when the time comes. I will give instructions at the crucial moment. You must be careful," Bai E instructed, then handed each of them a mission.

[Mission description generating automatically...]

[Side mission—The Storm Approaches (combat commission): Blackwater City is a metropolis built from countless ambitions interwoven into a desire haven, where big figures use living beings as pawns in their plans for their own interests. Those targets that surface first are often but disposable soldiers. Bite into them! To discover the true forces behind the scenes!

Mission requirements: Arrive in the inner city of Blackwater City before the designated time and approach the vicinity of "Doctor" Fighting Gang, and gather more relevant information, completion of preparations 0/1.

Mission rewards: Generic experience points 50~450 (adjustable), item rewards (TBD).]

(Note: "Autocomplete" is allowed; upon confirmation of commission release, "permissions" and "expenses" will be deducted and locked.)

[Do you wish to release this commission?]

After a quick glance and seeing no issues, Bai E confirmed the release.

...

Upon hearing the alert, Kuang Xin, Dai Lian, and others were visibly taken aback—they had heard momentous news.

[Triggered a large-scale faction war precursor mission—The Storm Approaches.]

[This mission will be crucial to all players' subsequent experiences within "Blackwater City." Your choices are pivotal!]

As expected, whether it's support or opposition, both lead to a path of development.

At first glance of the mission, Dai Lian, Gong Yan, and others realized the true value behind the intelligence they had stumbled upon.

An event with the potential to alter the entire structure of Blackwater City was bound to involve many parties.

Their clue was probably just an entry point into the incident. Elsewhere, there might be other similar clues.

What else was there to say? Accept, accept!

...

As soon as Bai E received the notification that the mission had been accepted, he gestured for the players to go about their own activities.

With only ten days left, that might just be enough time for the artificial soldiers to undergo special training and continue the unfinished task of clearing around the city.

He was responsible for the people he led, so naturally, he had to bring them back.

As for the mission he had issued, it should not be abandoned halfway.

When they arrived at this small town, he told the two thousand artificial soldiers that there was a field camp for refugees known to exist here.

He knew the men were short on supplies and feeling weary, so he had them come here for rest and rearmament before setting out again.

As to what might happen during the time of rest and rearmament, that wasn't his concern.

Considering that he and his warriors were officially part of Blackwater City's armed forces and that these warriors had not yet fully pledged their loyalty to him over others in Blackwater City, Bai E naturally could not be too overt about his intentions. He had to leave it to the new soldiers to "understand" for themselves.

If you encounter someone formidable, someone you can't beat, but who is still willing to teach you...
How can you not learn?

Chapter 697 provocation

Crouched in the corner, watching the regular army who had entered the town and become restless, swiftly throwing themselves into work, even actively helping with the construction, a few players huddled together, whispering, "The lord told us to find a way to get their attention so they would take the initiative to come and learn skills... What method should we use?"

"They're so enthusiastic... They all seem like good people. Are all the soldiers in the Blackwater City barracks so easygoing?"

"But actually, they seem to have a sense of pride toward the people in the town, right? Even when they encounter something they don't understand, they just study it on their own."

"After all, they are regular soldiers from the city, feeling naturally superior to the 'displaced persons' living in the wilderness couldn't be more normal, could it?"

"But how are we supposed to get their attention this way? We don't have much time given by the lord..."

"Pah!" Kuang Xin spat out the grass root he had been chewing and stood up, brushing off his buttocks as he strode forward, "Watch me!"

"Hey! Xin, don't do anything stupid!" Gu Lan called after him, chuckling, somewhat curious about what this guy could possibly do.

...

"Captain, this town is weird... They're not afraid of us at all, are they? Didn't those elders say that the displaced people in the wilderness are most afraid of us, the regular army from the city?"

"Nonsense, this is a town of displaced people who've dealt with our superior; of course, they're not showing resistance to our arrival out of respect for our superior's face."

"That's true... The boss is really awesome, heh heh~"

["Lucky Strike" charge +1.]

"However, the boss didn't say how long we can rest here... And didn't issue us any combat orders either, so boring, what should I do?"

"If you have nothing to do, go help carry cement. These displaced folks say they're going to build a town of their own. Their eighth company has already gone, working on it like there's no tomorrow."

"Or go help with farming, I think their farming looks pretty fun."

"Farming is fun +1."

"I want to farm, too."

"But I want to fight..." Xiaoqi hugged his battle saber, murmuring discontentedly to his companion.

During the previous encounters with wild beasts and wandering orcs' attacks, he was always the first one to charge with his battle saber.

Only in battle did he feel a kind of instinctive pleasure.

It was as if he was born for fighting.

Especially when the wandering orcs charged with roars like "waaaaagh," he too felt his blood boil in the fervent noise.

Life should be like this! If not fighting, then on the way to a fight!

His companion glanced at him, "Want to fight? That's perfect, someone from their second company accidentally stepped on and killed someone's pet just now, and they've been apologizing nonstop. But the other side still won't let it go. I think we shouldn't be too nice to them either."

Xiaoqi hesitated, looking at his companion, "But didn't the chief say we should be polite to these displaced people?"

"And the result of being polite is letting them walk all over us? I think we need to teach them a little lesson. The people from their second company are a bunch of softies, getting yelled at like that and still apologizing, it makes my blood boil. You want to fight so much, why not stand up for them? Just don't go too hard on them, a bit of a lesson to teach them some respect is enough, so they don't think we're pushovers."

"I think that's a good idea!"

"Yeah Xiaoqi, go for it! We support you!"

"Their second company still has that bomb girl, right? You're always making eyes at her, what a perfect time for a dramatic hero to the rescue, aren't you going to seize the opportunity? If you don't go, I will!"

Xiaoqi, alarmed, hugged his battle saber and ran in the direction his companion had indicated, "I'm going, I'm going! No one is allowed to steal this from me!"

They hadn't been running for long when a deep, throaty "greeting" reached their ears from afar.

"Apologies? If apologies actually worked, what would we need the security team for? You stepped on my little Xiaoqiang, so either someone comes out and lets me beat them up to vent, or give me a pet to step on! Quit apologizing over and over; it's annoying!"

The gentle female voice stood at the forefront, facing the saliva flying from Kuang Xin's mouth, "I'm truly sorry, sir, but we have orders not to engage in any conflict with you. If there's anything you need help with, we're more than willing to assist."

"Help with what? I don't need any help! I just want to beat you up and vent; if you're a man, step forward!"

Watching his beloved Bomb Girl apologizing humbly in front of others, Xiaoqi, who was observing from a distance, couldn't help but feel his emotions surging, "I'll do it!"

Kuang Xin instantly glanced over, a hint of a smile on his face, "Good! Finally, a man shows up!"

"Xiaoqi!" Bomb Girl looked over immediately, her eyes filled with joy and yet a bit of reproach, "The officer ordered us not to fight with them."

Kuang Xin, rubbing his hands together as if itching to fight, glanced at her sideways, "What fight? Can't it just be a friendly sparring session?"

"Right, right, right!" Xiaoqi's eyes lit up, "It's just friendly sparring! We're just exchanging feelings; no matter who wins or loses, nobody will get mad or cause even bigger conflicts! Right?"

"Right!" Kuang Xin grinned, "Exactly my point!"

With that, he clenched his fist and beckoned Xiaoqi with a finger, "Come on! Either you beat me up or I beat you up, and we'll call it even! We'll still be brothers."

"Fine!" Just the sight of the other guy's handsome face was infuriating.

Xiaoqi felt himself harden!

His fists... hardened!

Having only undergone basic training and boasting roughly a level 1 proficiency in combat, he charged at Kuang Xin with his bare fists aimed at his face.

"Bang, bang!"

Seeing stars.

Two punches to the eye sockets sent Xiaoqi reeling.

So strong...

The opponent was... so strong...

Lying flat on his back, Xiaoqi could think of nothing else.

No wonder he could survive in this wilderness as a displaced person.

Such great strength, and so fast too.

Xiaoqi hadn't even seen how he had made his move.

He was so skilled...

However, virtually the moment Xiaoqi had lain on the cold ground for half a second, a fierce flame rapidly ignited in his heart, 'I still want to fight!'

The stronger the enemy, the more he wanted to overcome them.

Xiaoqi flipped over with an agile somersault, standing up with eyes as dark as a panda's glaring at Kuang Xin, "Again!"

"That's perfect." Kuang Xin smirked, clenching his fist, "I was worried you wouldn't last long enough for me to vent..."

[The target has actively requested interaction, side mission—Dawn! Is in progress...]

Chapter 698: I Love You" Teaching

"Xiao Qi got blasted away."

"Xiao Qi got blasted away again."

"Xiao Qi got blasted away yet again."

"Xiao Qi..."

"I saw it!" Bomb Girl snapped at the chitchatting voices around her, irritated by the constant muttering in her ears.

Watching Xiao Qi get punched and sent flying with a swollen face and bruised nose once more, Bomb Girl quickly sprang into action. She pressed down on Xiao Qi, who was trying to rise and fight back, and

asked with concern in her eyes, "Are you okay? Don't fight if you can't win. He's thrown so many punches at you, he must have vented his anger by now."

"I'm fine." Xiao Qi wiped the blood from his nose, his face filled with excitement and his eyes blazing with fanatical light, "He's teaching me! He's actually teaching me! I can feel myself improving a lot, I can't miss this opportunity!"

Saying this, Xiao Qi performed an energetic kip-up from Bomb Girl's embrace and charged at Kuang Xin once more.

"Smack smack smack!" The sound of flesh colliding was unceasing.

The sparring between the two made the onlookers' heads spin, a stark contrast to the straightforward strikes of their initial bouts.

This obvious change was clear for all to see, and the newbie humanoid soldiers grasped their chins in curiosity, speculating, "How come Xiao Qi seems much more formidable?"

"Rather than him being formidable, isn't this drifter the impressive one..."

"But in their duel, Xiao Qi has obviously changed from before."

"Hey! Bomb Girl, what did that kid just say to you? I don't think he's just fighting continuously because he's outraged, right?"

"..." Bomb Girl was momentarily spellbound, her eyes fixed on every move of the combatants, trying to discern something. She slowly replied, "Xiao Qi said, the opponent is teaching him."

"Teaching him?"

"This drifter is actually teaching him?"

"Bang!"

The noise of Xiao Qi being punched and sent flying again jolted the momentarily dazed new humanoid soldiers.

Lying spreadeagled on the ground, Xiao Qi lifted his arm but ultimately let it fall weakly.

Having been sent flying so many times, even if his spirit was still vigorous, his body could no longer support him in battle.

However, it was precisely this behavior that verified the fact that the opponent was indeed not being harsh.

Claiming it was "just a beating to vent anger", in reality, after so many blows, there was no substantial harm.

If he really wanted to vent, Xiao Qi would have been unable to get up after just a couple of hits, let alone persist for so many rounds?

Yet, seeing the battered and bruised Xiao Qi struggling to move, Bomb Girl looked down to check his injuries, a flame of unspeakable ire brewing in her eyes.

She didn't know where this emotion came from, nor what to call it, but she did know... she felt a bit angry.

Even though her main role in the squad was to take aim with various cannons and she was learning to make makeshift bombs, at this moment, she too wanted to communicate with her fists.

"Haven't gotten it out of your system yet?" Bomb Girl stood up, her expression as calm as an ancient well, showing no emotion.

As she spoke, she wrapped a protective bandage around her hands, "I'll have a round with you, too."

Kuang Xin's face broke into a clear smile, "Delighted!"

"Bang!"

"Bang!"

"Bang!"

The sounds of fists meeting flesh carried far, as several players squatting behind to watch the action chuckled with delight, "Xin's pretty clever, huh?"

"But he's still too gentle with girls."

Although the female soldier's melee skills were obviously inferior to the male soldier's from before, she lasted longer against Kuang Xin.

Clearly, Kuang Xin was pulling his punches, not daring to beat her up as badly as he did the boy.

Even so, the training effect for the new soldiers was visibly improved.

At the same time, rumors flared up.

"I heard that our Second Company got into a conflict with some drifters, and now they're fighting like cats and dogs!"

"I heard it's more like Second Company built a deep friendship with the drifters, civilian and military as one, and now they are having a friendly exchange of skills."

"No way... I heard Second Company went straight for their weapons and now it's an all-out brawl over there!"

"Second Company can expect discipline now!"

"But I heard our guys took a beating, with a drifter pinning everyone to the ground."

"Hey! You guys have it all wrong. What pinning? Actually, it's one of the skilled drifters who, honoring our leader's face, is giving us tips on close combat techniques. Second Company did get pinned down, but they've also gained a lot."

"But I heard they've already started using weapons?"

"Because that expert happens to be a master of heavy weaponry, as well. No matter how they fight, they don't hurt each other. If you don't believe it, go check for yourself. If any of you doubt it, you can try your luck against the expert, and I bet you won't make a peep."

"Then why don't you go?"

"Me?" The tall, thin soldier scoffed with disdain, "I play with guns."

Could he relate to those who played with knives and were just brute muscleheads?

Listening in, a few players envied the soldiers.

"Xin has made it."

"Just hope Xin doesn't get drained too quickly..."

"He's about to advance to taking on ten at a time. We should worry about ourselves."

"Us... it's actually simple."

Thinking of what the tall soldier had said, Dai Lian had already devised his own way to attract (show off) attention (act tough).

Chapter 699: I Love You" Teaching 2

...

"Look! What's that refugee doing?!"

"Seems like he's shooting a coconut..."

"But that coconut has never fallen down, huh~"

"This marksmanship... It's incredible."

"Average, doesn't feel as good as..."

"Pap pap pap pap pap!"

The watched refugee, dual pistols in hand, spun gracefully in a coconut grove brimming with fruit. Amidst the dense gunshots, coconuts nearly drowned out the spectators as they rained down, chaotically blocking the sightline of the onlookers and making the male refugee amongst them appear faint to the soldiers' eyes.

Dai Lian glanced at the soldiers who were watching from afar and laughed, speaking to the Logistics Department head who seemed to be ready to catch anything,

"..."

"So cool..."

"Can guns even be used like that?"

"I always heard that our General Bai E had this move. I saw him use it in the insect swarm before, didn't expect this refugee could do it too!"

"General Bai E is so busy, why don't you go ask him how he does it?"

Although these artificial human recruits had been indoctrinated by the accounts of other veterans that refugees were bad and despicable and to never show them mercy upon encounter,

Such convictions were not deeply ingrained; after getting over their initial prejudices, all it took was a little display of something that impressed them, and they would immediately drop all preconceptions and humbly seek guidance.

...

Gu Lan's smile was sweet, yet she mercilessly manipulated the soldiers' psyches with her Spiritual Energy over and over.

Gong Yan led a group of refugees, cheerfully addressing the noncommissioned officer they had inadvertently ensnared, "Honorable soldier, we don't have luxuries like alcohol here. If you'd like a drink, you might have to wait until we hit today's task targets before we can spare the time to brew a few cups for you."

"What's your task target for today? Go ahead, tell us." The officer mesmerized by the charming woman before him just patted his chest, "We might not have much else, but we do have strength."

He was young and only knew that he wanted to approach what he liked, trying to please with the crude language taught by the older soldiers.

However, this was exactly what Gong Yan wanted.

She turned her head toward the distant cliff, "Our meat reserves are almost depleted, and I've heard that you need to replenish your own rations as well. Our town's mayor said, considering the grace of your superior officers, we'd like to supplement your supplies a bit. So he asked us to hunt more wild animals in the next few days to boost our inventory. There's a large group of wild goats living in that mountainous area, and we can hardly catch a few every time we go. With you guys, I bet you could catch lots more, right?"

The officer looked toward the distance, where tiny black dots were flickering against the dusky rock walls at the edge of view.

Though he couldn't see the targets clearly and had never participated in such an activity, if these refugees, who seemed as disorganized as a mob, could catch some, couldn't they, a formal military force, do even better?

Not to mention, the other side was hunting wild game to help them with food supplies for the upcoming clearing task as a favor to their commanding officer. How could they let down such thoughtfulness?

Especially since the girl's admiring gaze made him feel as if he were on cloud nine, floating in the air. Hence, he overpromised, slapping his chest, "That's easy, we'll help you catch them! We guarantee to clean out all the movable creatures in that mountainous area for you!"

"Better if they're alive, huh~ We were thinking of raising them to ensure a steady supply of meat," Gong Yan added with a sly smile, "These animals are very vigilant and quick on the mountains. Without some special strategy, it's tough to catch even a few alive~"

"If you can catch them, then we can definitely do better!" the young artificial human recruit boasted naively, "Our company commander said, all the creatures on the mountain that can move, he guarantees to tie them all up in front of you!"

The talking soldier glanced at his own company commander and gave a smug look.

Brothers in arms! In the heart!

The company commander patted the soldier's shoulder with an expression of deep satisfaction.

It really takes someone else's praise to pump you up.

"We're going!"

"Let's go with you," Gong Yan caught up with a light jog, "We have some experience at least. If you encounter any problems, you can ask me~ Plus, catching them together will be more efficient~"

"Okay~okay~" The company commander's face bloomed into a wide grin, anything Gong Yan said was fine by him.

But as soon as he turned his head and they were a little apart, another subordinate sidled up to the company commander, glancing at the "bad woman" with disdain, "Commander, I think that woman looks down on us! Are we really going to learn from them? How many of those mutated creatures and Orcs have we killed on this trip? Can't we take down these little goats?!"

"Exactly, exactly! Commander, we'll definitely show that woman the might of the regular army!"

"I've heard that these refugees left the city because they wouldn't submit to its rules. We need to perform well in front of them and show them the glory of the city. If we could persuade them to defect, wouldn't that reflect well on General Bai E who led us out here?"

The company commander and the regular soldiers hadn't yet established a clear boundary within this troop of artificial new recruits, speaking to each other as if they were on equal footing, like buddies.

A group of men clustered together, chuckling and joking, united in their disregard for the refugees.

However, it didn't take long before none of them could muster a laugh anymore.

Looking at that band of raggedy-looking refugees who, under the command of that girl speaking softly with a smile like water, tied one goat after another, all of them lively and full of vigor; while they ran all over the mountains, falling over themselves in such an undignified way that the final result was just a wild goat—one they managed to capture only after a soldier, in desperation, shot it in the leg.

Were they supposed to shoot them all in the legs?

That would then require a whole lot of effort for treatment afterward, and how would they raise and breed the next generation if the goats weren't well-nurtured?

Let alone the fact that they wouldn't always be lucky enough to hit the leg—if it hit somewhere else and killed it... wouldn't that be a huge embarrassment?!

They had promised to capture all the lively goats and present them, but in the end, all they could offer was a bloody mess.

The soldiers were accustomed to bloodshed, but what about these refugee girls who were unaccustomed to such scenes?

Looking at the girl who had captured a goat and was gently stroking and calming it within her arms—even the toughest man felt his heart soften.

"No shooting allowed!" the company commander ordered through gritted teeth, his feet involuntarily moving towards the refugee's capturing team.

"Um... my brothers asked me to come over and ask how you catch them?"

Gong Yan smiled, gently touching the goat's head in her arms, her tone mild as she spoke, "It's indeed not easy to catch these little fellows for the first time. We need a bit of cooperation..."

The girl's gentle tone made one feel not the slightest hint of condescension.

Instead, one could only feel pride in their own sharp understanding, even impressing the girl to the point where she might exclaim in surprise, "Ah? Why didn't I think of that... I'm so dumb! If I had realized sooner, our town wouldn't have gone so long without meat..."

"No problem, no problem! Leave the rest to us! We are here to help you!" The company commander patted his chest and left satisfied.

[You have completed a perfect tactical instruction, Management Skills +2.]

[Management Skills +2: You can now take on more commissions, increasing your commission acceptance qualifications by +2; also, you gain unique advantages in force management and certain technological research.]

"..."

So that's how it was. "..."

So that's how it was. "..."

So that's how it was.

Chapter 700 military exercise

...

[Feedback from the task you delegated, your Technology - Management Studies +1.]

[Management Studies +1: Now you can govern a larger population, and you have gained one additional delegation qualification.]

The special feedback amidst the substantial amount of feedback information immediately caught Bai E's attention.

This was the second time he had encountered such an improvement since the previous one.

How he obtained it was irrelevant.

What was important was that with this improvement, he could have one additional permanent qualification to delegate tasks, meaning he could nurture one more capable player.

The target had actually been decided long ago: Xu Ruoguang.

Aside from this most special feedback, the rest of the feedback was actually too numerous to count—

[Feedback from the task you delegated, your Insight +0.5, Physique +0.2, Reflex +0.4, Mystique +0.1, Mastery Experience in Light Weapons +750, Mastery Experience in Light Firearms +1005, Mastery Experience in Heavy Weapons +995, Mastery Experience in Combat Arts +850, Knowledge - Bio-brain Theory Experience +400.]

The improvements to basic attributes didn't seem significant, but considering the short time, the enhancements were particularly noticeable.

Then, the various mastery abilities... the growth from feedback far exceeded previous occasions.

It was clear that allowing players to teach the native residents resulted in the most growth for the players themselves.

And the improvement of the players would feed back to oneself... it was a win-win indeed!

Muttering this to himself, he saw several familiar faces approaching.

"My lord!"

"My lord!"

Excitement shone in the eyes of Kuang Xin, Dai Lian, and others.

With a corps of two thousand artificial soldiers, even if not every one of them came looking, their capabilities were pushed to the limit.

Even though their spirits didn't tire, their bodies in the "game" were still subject to various physical limitations.

When their energy and action reserves were completely drained, replenishment from food required time to take effect.

In short, after the vigorous exercise of teaching new soldiers various techniques, they needed a bit of time to rest and recover.

And wasting time waiting was not an option during this rest period.

In the process of teaching these new soldiers, Dai Lian and the others found some areas where they were lacking.

For instance, Dai Lian only knew the Gun Fighting Skill under the light firearms skill tree, while the other skills, Fire Suppression and Precision Shooting, corresponded to the roles of a heavy fire support gunner and a sniper, respectively.

Warriors inclined towards these aspects found it hard to learn relevant techniques from him, and so naturally, they were disinclined to come to them to learn these skills.

However, these few players had already tasted the sweet benefits.

While teaching those soldier NPCs, they discovered that their experience in the corresponding mastery abilities increased rapidly, which was much more efficient than practicing on their own or directly using experience points to level up.

After all, for them, the experience required for each level increase in these mastery abilities was the same at higher levels, and the experience needed to level up was a significant cost they could not ignore.

They didn't have the luxury of experimenting at will, so their main mastery abilities often lingered around levels four or five. Therefore, having a task that could quickly improve their mastery was a rare opportunity for them.

So, investing a relatively small amount of experience to learn more all-around skills from the lord and, in turn, teaching the soldiers to gain more mastery experience in return was the method they had figured out.

As for faction contribution—

"Dawn!" This task doesn't provide much else, but it does give a lot of faction contribution points, and it's settled in phases.

For every artificial soldier they taught to achieve a certain level of growth, they would receive a certain amount of faction contribution reward; they would then use the freshly earned points to learn skills from the lord.

It formed a closed loop!

...

["Teaching" concluded, through the feedback from "teaching", you have obtained a total of 16,000 combat experience points and 5,000 universal experience points.]

Watching the players leave high-spiritedly, Bai E silently nodded his head...

It was a win-win-win.

It's just a pity that the days when the military and civilians were as close as family were always brief; if not for the ticking time bomb that was sure to cause chaos in the city called "doctor" battle help, Bai E wouldn't mind giving these soldiers more time to learn.

But considering the clean-up operations in the second half, there wasn't much time left for their training.

Fortunately, Bai E hadn't really expected to train everyone perfectly in one go.

Training soldiers was a matter that needed perseverance. With no pressing matters later on, letting the new soldiers come and go as they pleased would naturally lead to their training.

Now, by making an initial contact and leaving a good first impression, he considered his intention of personally leading the troops this time fulfilled.

"It's time to go."

Bai E looked at the dim morning light and ordered the non-commissioned officers he had summoned: "We have rested for four days; everyone should be in good spirits. So, let's continue with the clean-up operation as originally planned!"

"Roger that!" Kuang Xin

...

Time flew by, and after spending more than ten days in the wilderness without basic amenities, a group of soldiers emerged looking as if dug out of a mud pit, utterly disheveled.

The extreme training drained almost every ounce of strength from their bodies; the moment they returned to the military camp, the last bit of reserve that sustained their forced march finally dissipated.

However, at Bai E's command of "Attention," these soldiers still mustered their last bit of energy to maintain formation and stood at attention.