

Another World 341

Chapter 341 - Fight! Wipe them out!

People on the continent always knew that Beastmen Cavalry were the strongest cavalry. Although Zhao Hai was sure that his undead cavalry was better than actual beastmen cavalry, he still wanted to see how they fare in an actual cavalry battle.

At this time, Shue also spotted the other party, so he had the carriage stop. Ruyen's carriage also halted, but her guards looked with despair at the enemy cavalry.

These guards were veterans who had fought in many battles. With their eyes, they could see that the cavalry on the hillsides number approximately 5,000 people. For 5,000 cavalry to deal with them was a huge respect, but this also meant that the chances of their escape had reached zero.

In the eyes of the guards, although Zhao Hai was fierce, he was only a single 7th rank mage. Believing that he could face these 5,000 cavalry would be an idiotic move.

Zhao Hai got out of his carriage and gazed towards Ruyen. He was a bit hesitant because Ruyen would be able to see his undead when he releases them. To let Ruyen see the undead would be the same as revealing his secret.

After thinking for a moment, Zhao Hai turned to Shue and said, "Shue, you go tell Ruyen's guards to protect Ruyen. Tell them to not worry as long as they stay with the carriage"

Hearing Zhao Hai's instructions, Shue understood what Zhao Hai was planning. He nodded then turned to inform Ruyen's group. Ruyen's group didn't have any better ideas since the enemy was too strong, so they immediately followed along with Zhao Hai's words.

Shun just joined the group, so he didn't have any idea about Zhao Hai's undead army. This made him completely clueless about Zhao Hai's plan. At this time, seeing that Ruyen's group had followed his orders, Zhao Hai immediately had them covered by his dark mist, making them unable to see or hear what's happening outside.

Shun looked puzzled at Zhao Hai, he didn't know what Zhao Hai wanted to do. But when he looked at Shue, Blockhead, and Rockhead's anticipating expressions, he didn't say anything. He looked curiously at Zhao Hai, wondering what the young master intends to do.

Zhao Hai looked at Shue's excited face, he smiled faintly and said, "Shue, what are you getting excited for? It still hadn't begun."

Shue smiled and said, "To be able to watch a cavalry battle at this distance is very exciting. Young master, hurry up. We need to deal with them quickly so we could be on the move soon."

Zhao Hai laughed, then he turned to the other party and said very loudly, "All of you! What are you waiting for? Still not ready? Or are you waiting for lunch?"

Shue and Blockhead laughed. The cavalry knights were enraged, they didn't attack because Zhao Hai didn't reach their optimum attack distance. In their minds, since Zhao Hai couldn't escape anyway, why not wait until he reached their best attacking spot? As long as Zhao Hai enters their attacking zone, they would smash him flat with their charge and immediately head back to the fortress.

Hearing what Zhao Hai said, the knights couldn't wait any longer. Their leaders issued several loud cries, then they prepared to hoist their spears and get ready for their charge.

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, he waved his hand and 5,000 undead Fighting Bull cavalry immediately appeared in front of him. They were arranged in a neat square formation, with no unnecessary movements and no sound. They just stood there, dispersing death energy to the surroundings.

Shun was speechless when he saw the Fighting Bull Cavalry. The knights on the hillsides also stared blankly at the undead cavalry. Their heads couldn't help but tilt.

Zhao Hai gave a smile and said, "If you won't charge, then I will." He waved his hand, then the 5,000 undead Fighting Bull cavalry began to divide themselves into two square formations, one for each cavalry unit on each side of the road.

Zhao Hai used the formation management function to lead the undead cavalry. The two squares were finely formed, devoid of chaos. Seeing the two orderly square formations advancing, the knights on the hills couldn't help but take a step back.

Shun was speechless when he saw the undead cavalry, but he was more speechless about Zhao Hai's ability to lead the undead.

Shun had been wandering for many years, he also had contacts with numerous mercenaries. Large mercenary groups would have a cavalry unit under their employ. And their cavalries weren't much worse than regular cavalry. One should know that training cavalry was very difficult, a qualified cavalry unit would need about 2 years worth of training. And even elite cavalry would still have troubles maintaining their formations during an assault. People could be trained to do so, but magic beasts cannot.

But Zhao Hai's charging cavalry didn't have any trouble with formation during their charge. This was definitely not the undead's doing, it could only result on Zhao Hai's control of the undead. Being able to control such number of undead with such precision, Shun had developed a new understanding of Zhao Hai's might.

The cavalry on the hillsides were also startled, they saw that the unit charging at them were undead, but they couldn't believe that they were all zombie undead.

They were well aware that Zombie undead were harder to deal with than other undead creatures. They also knew the difficulty of producing them.

They now understood that Zhao Hai wasn't a tri-element mage at all. He was a quad-element mage, and was likely to have majored in dark element magic.

But they didn't think too much of it. They were still confident that they would be able to beat those undead. So the leaders quickly stabilized their lines and like the undead Fighting Bull cavalry, also began their charge.

Shun looked at the Undead Cavalry with worry. In his mind, controlling these undead meticulously would be very difficult for Zhao Hai, and the level of undead couldn't have been too high. In this case, these 5,000 undead cavalry wouldn't be able to stop the assault of 5,000 heavy armored cavalry.

A heavy cavalry unit was in itself a very difficult unit to deal with. But their cost for upkeep was too high, so general forces couldn't afford them. The cavalry on the hillsides were also charging downhill, giving their power a huge boost compared to the uphill charging undead. The heavy cavalry believed that they will win the engagement and completely flatten the enemy.

When the four units of cavalry clashed, the heavy cavalry immediately realized their mistake. They didn't expect that each and every one of these undead were terrifyingly fierce. Their striking force surprisingly reached 7th rank. Adding on to the fact that they weren't afraid of getting hurt or dying, these undead proved to be very difficult to deal with.

The charge managed to cut away 3,000 of the heavy cavalry, a loss of more than half of their number. For these heavy cavalry soldiers, this loss was unimaginable. But what made them more sullen was the fact that their undead opponents barely managed to lose as much as they had. Although the knight's spears were inserted onto the undead's bodies, they could still function, and thus continue on to wave their maces around.

What hit them the most was the fact that even though the undead's heads were smashed, they still managed to recover. They didn't imagine that fighting undead was this hard until they had fought with real undead today.

This almost made the cavalry line collapse, but they were experienced soldiers who cannot be easily defeated. After they exchanged positions with the undead cavalry, they saw that they weren't too far away from Zhao Hai's carriage. The leaders of the heavy cavalry immediately issued a few cries. They didn't stop their charge and continued on towards Zhao Hai's carriage. They knew that as long as Zhao Hai gets eliminated, these undead would automatically disappear.

However, the moment they resumed their charge, another group of undead appeared in front of them. These group were the same as the previous group, 5,000 Fighting Bull cavalry. The heavy cavalrymen immediately collapsed, they didn't imagine that another undead cavalry unit would arrive, when they saw the unit appear, they saw that their lives were in extreme peril.

And at this moment, the initial group of undead cavalry behind them turned around. Now they were sandwiched both at the back and at the front.

Looking dazed at the side of Zhao Hai, Shun didn't know what to say. He recovered himself and then turned to Zhao Hai, "Young Master, how many undead do you have? You can control these many undead?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Be assured, I can control as much. And how many? I didn't count them but from what I think, I should probably have about seven hundred thousand undead."

Shun stared at Zhao Hai, while stuttering, he said, "Young Master, yo-you, di-did you just say seven hundred thousand?"

Zhao Hai didn't speak but only showed a faint smile. Shue patted Shun's shoulder and said, "Shun, later as you stand by young master's side, you'll get to know that the young master has many secrets."

Blockhead and Rockhead laughed, they were already used to the Space's magical abilities. Only Shun who was a new addition would get surprised. At this time, the enemy cavalry were already eliminated. However, their mounts were kept alive at the orders of Zhao Hai. These heavy cavalry had a lot of Magic Beasts that Zhao Hai's Space Ranch didn't have.

These were horse type magic beasts, the lowest being 4th rank. Only 4th rank and above were the suitable mounts for heavy cavalry units. Because their armors were too heavy, lower ranked beasts like the flame horses couldn't support their weight, and even if they could, they wouldn't have the endurance to travel long distances.

So the magic beasts that heavy cavalry units generally select were either 4th or 5th rank magic beasts. And since horse type magic beasts were mostly docile, they were the most suited ones to become mounts. Moreover, their carrying capacity was also fairly high. Even though they couldn't compare with bull type magic beasts in strength, their temperaments were much better. These qualities made it so that the majority of heavy cavalry units in the continent would use horse type magic beasts.

Zhao Hai took these magic beasts, upgrading his Ranch to level 9 making Zhao Hai very excited. Now he needs to find more beasts so that his Ranch would reach level 10, he wondered what changes the Ranch would undergo once it reaches that level.

Then, Zhao Hai turned the 5,000 heavy cavalry into undead and stored them inside the Space. After sweeping the battlefield, Zhao Hai undid the dark mist surrounding Ruyen's convoy.

Ruyen was very anxious while inside the dark mist, they didn't dare exit in fear of offending Zhao Hai. Moreover, they also knew that their fate was now closely tied with him. If Zhao Hai lives, they live, if he dies, then they die. They were very afraid that they wouldn't survive inside Rosen Empire, so they chose to just stay put and wait.

Inside the dark mist, they felt that years had come by, every minute was extremely long. Zhao Hai's fog wasn't any ordinary fog, not only could it block vision, it could also block sounds from entering in. Now the group was completely blind and deaf to the outside, it made them even more anxious.

Just as Ruyen was about to completely lose her patience, the dark mist suddenly vanished. Now, the group could see the outside again. Completely out of their expectations, there was nothing there except from Zhao Hai's convoy. Not even a drop of blood could be seen on the ground.

Zhao Hai wasn't in the mood to explain everything, so he had Shue inform them that they could proceed. Then he went back to his carriage and took the lead. Ruyen, although confused and full of doubts, couldn't do anything aside from following behind.

When evening came, they rested inside a small town. Zhao Hai's group had their dinner and then rested inside the Space. On the other hand, Ruyen couldn't fall asleep, she called Jill and Gonza, the head guard, over to her room. Now that she couldn't sleep, she decided to have a discussion with the two.

Ruyen looked at the two and said, "What do you think about today's matter?"

Gonza and Jill looked at each other, Jill opened his mouth first, "Your highness, I reckon that a battle had taken place outside the mist. Although the place was cleaned up, the heavy smell of blood was still present. What's strange is that there was no trace of magic being used outside, very strange."

Gonza also nodded, "Very strange indeed, moreover, the magic that covered us should be the dark element magic 'Dark Mist', and an advanced level at that. Wales is a fire, wind, and earth element mage. So how can he use dark magic?"

Chapter 342 - Correctly Guessing the Identity

Ruyen frowned and murmured, "Dark magic, Wales, Prairie, what do these three have to do with each other?"

Jill's heart jumped, he looked at Ruyen and said, "Your highness, there's a relation! It's possible that they have a connection with each other, Zhao Hai!"

Ruyen froze, she was startled, she turned to Jill and said, "You're talking about Zhao Hai of Stony Mountain? I heard that he's a Dark Mage, and he likes to turn people into undead."

Jill nodded, "Correct. Think about it, your highness, Wales knows Dark element magic, and he wasn't well known before he came from the prairie. Initially, I heard that when Zhao Hai and Laura withdrew, they bought a lot of things that beastmen may need, so they must have went to the prairie to do business. Moreover, after our conflict, the Grand Duke welcomed them inside the mansion as well as gave them a title. This explains that the Grand Duke already knew him from before. So wouldn't it be likely that Wales is actually Zhao Hai?"

When Ruyen heard Jill's words, her complexion immediately paled. Zhao Hai's reputation was quite infamous inside Purcell Duchy. Since she also resides inside the Duchy, Ruyen knew that Zhao Hai had killed no less than a thousand people and also turned them into undead. She couldn't help but get afraid.

Ruyen suddenly thought about the fairly tall woman on Zhao Hai's side who always gave her a familiar feeling. Adding on to the fact that Zhao Hai treated the women on his side quite differently than what other aristocrats would do, Ruyen was almost certain that the tall maid was Laura.

Ruyen stood up and murmured while walking around, "So it turns out to be them. No wonder, no wonder they weren't afraid of the 5,000 heavy cavalry. This Zhao Hai is too tyrannical, why would father want me to travel together with him?"

Jill looked at Ruyen and said, "Your highness, I think that the Grand Duke knew that Zhao hai wanted to Rosen Empire for business to he asked him to take care of us along the way. Your highness wouldn't need to worry."

Jill and Ruyen were quite different in their view of Zhao Hai. Unlike Ruyen, Jill wasn't afraid of him, this was because he heard that Zhao Hai wouldn't just kill anyone indiscriminately. The people he killed were only those who wanted to kill him. And when the Purcell Duchy experienced food shortage, he provided them with help. Such person was unlikely to be a bad human being.

He also knew why Ruyen was afraid, Ruyen previously caused Zhao Hai no small amount of trouble and was afraid that the other party would retaliate against her. Jill wasn't worried, Zhao Hai honored Grand Duke Evans face, so nothing would happen. But if Ruyen offends him again, it would be difficult to say. Dark Mages were notoriously moody, which explains Ruyen's current fear of offending Zhao Hai.

Ruyen stopped her footsteps and said, "Seems like father really wanted me to travel with this devil, what was he thinking. We need to arrive at Carson City as soon as possible, I don't want to become an undead. You go rest, tomorrow we need to hurry along." Jill and Gonza complied, then turned around to leave.

Ruyen was just lying down without sleep until morning came. To be honest, she was absolutely terrified of Zhao Hai. Although she didn't believe all the rumors inside Purcell Duchy, she knew that it was possible that the family once wanted to deal with Zhao Hai. At that time, it was her grandfather who still held power, and she was clear about Zhao Hai's matters. She knew that whoever crosses Zhao Hai wouldn't come back alive. She knew how Zhao Hai deals with his enemies.

Just like what Jill thought, Ruyen was afraid of Zhao Hai's retaliation. She knew that she caused quite the trouble for Zhao Hai before.

Originally, Ruyen wanted to wait until she arrived at Carson City to deal with Zhao Hai. She wasn't stupid, she knew that it was her first time outside, so she decided to just cooperate with Zhao Hai. But now it was different, now that she knew who this Mister Wales really was, she immediately decided to head out.

Ruyen didn't think of exposing Zhao Hai's identity. It may have been useful inside Aksu Empire, because she knew that Zhao Hai retreated because he had offended Southern King. But they were currently inside Rosen Empire, even though Southern King had a good grip inside Aksu Empire, he wouldn't be able to make his moves inside Rosen Empire. If she exposes Zhao Hai's identity now, not only would it be useless, it would also prompt Zhao Hai to deal with her.

Zhao Hai didn't feel anything about what happened today. Although they had eliminated 5,000 armored cavalry, such scenes were already quite familiar to him. It may lead to Lionheart's family wanting to take

revenge, but they were not afraid of Lionheart. After all, after the 5,000 cavalry were eliminated, there were no bodies left behind. Zhao Hai believed that the other party couldn't use official means to deal with them. Thus, Zhao Hai wasn't worrying.

The next morning, Zhao Hai's convoy began moving along after they had breakfast. Today was very different than yesterday, the road wasn't empty like before, they could actually see other people as they pass by. This made them feel relieved.

While Zhao Hai's group was calm, Hundred Battles Fortress wasn't. Although Hundred Battles Fortress wasn't under Lionheart's control. With his status as a noble with huge potential, people inside the fortress would be more than willing to lend him a hand and deal with the people inside Shelley Hotel. Moreover, Grand Duke Lionheart wasn't stingy with those who helped him. For the garrison troops inside Hundred Battles Fortress, helping the Grand Duke was the same as having him owing them a favor. With such a situation, the garrison would find various reasons to mess with Shelley Hotel.

However, they didn't expect to annoy a 7th rank tri-element mage this time. This was not any small matter.

But later on, they heard that Zhao Hai seemed to be very familiar with Shelley Hotel's staff, which made the garrison furious. Just like what Zhao Hai hypothesized, the garrison troops thought that Zhao Hai was specially invited by the hotel to slap their faces. After further inquiry, they found out that Zhao Hai was leaving Hundred Battles Fortress tomorrow and will head towards Carson City. So the troops decided to attack Zhao Hai midway.

However, evening had already passed and the cavalry still didn't return. When they sent some scouts to investigate, they saw that even though they could see some tracks, the cavalry seemed to suddenly vanish.

Five thousand heavy cavalry wasn't a small number. Even the garrison lord of Hundred Battles Fortress didn't have the authority to move 5,000 cavalry during wartime. But this time a unit actually disappeared, it was a disaster.

The garrison troops inside the fortress panicked. It would be possible for 5,000 troops for any other place to get transferred, but what was this place? This was Hundred Battles Fortress, the empire's forefront against Aksu Empire. Rosen Empire already commanded that if someone dared transfer even ten troops outside this fortress, they would be beheaded!

If you were beheaded when you transfer ten troops, then what would happen if you managed to make 5,000 cavalry disappear? How would you manage it? The garrison lord of Hundred Battles Fortress could already see his tragic ending.

The matter of 5,000 soldiers suddenly disappearing couldn't be hidden. Even if some people were to conceal the truth, there were still people with methods of finding out. The first to do so was Shelley Family.

This matter will certainly be used by Shelley Family against Grand Duke Lionheart. Since the garrison lord knew that it wouldn't be possible for him to survive, he wrote a letter to Grand Duke Lionheart so that he could better prepare, he also requested the Grand Duke to help him take care of his family.

Hundred Battles Fortress' garrison lord was currently alone, so after completing the letter, he had it sent away to the capital, then he committed suicide inside the Lord's Mansion.

The family members of the garrison lord were currently residing inside Carson City. It was a rule made by the empire that every garrison lord of Hundred Battles Fortress must leave his family inside Carson City. This was so that the garrison lords wouldn't even think about revolt and allying with Aksu Empire.

Shelley Family naturally didn't let go of this opportunity, after Fuin heard about the matter, he immediately wrote a letter informing the family, but they were already a step too late. Because of the garrison lord's letter claiming all of the faults, as well as Grand Duke Lionheart's influence inside Rosen Empire, the matter didn't nudge the Grand Duke's power.

Still, Shelley Family was very grateful to Zhao Hai. They knew that the missing 5,000 cavalry was related to him. Although they didn't believe that Zhao Hai could deal with 5,000 cavalry, they knew where the 5,000 was headed, which was towards Zhao Hai. So Shelley Family began preparing to send people to protect him.

Zhao Hai didn't know about any of these. The convoy was still moving slowly on the road and stopped to rest during the evenings, there wasn't any point of peculiarity.

However, Zhao Hai noticed an issue with Ruyen's convoy. Although the two departed at the same time, the other party seemed to put a lot more distance between the two of them. Zhao Hai was very confused as to what Ruyen was doing.

During the evening, Ruyen appeared very solemn. And she surprisingly chose not to eat at the dining hall but instead she had the hotel deliver her meals to her suite. She looked like she was hiding from Zhao Hai.

After Zhao Hai and his group had eaten their meals, he looked at Laura and asked, "If you say that Ruyen was still angry, then why did she seem to be running away from us?"

Laura coldly snorted, "Maybe it's because she didn't want to be implicated. After all, people wanted to deal with us because of our connection with Shelley Family. She might be afraid being associated with us, so she just hid."

Zhao Hai said, "Will it? Grand Duke Lionheart surely knows that she traveled with us. Wouldn't her efforts to hide be futile?"

Laura sneered, "Who knows, maybe the young lady thinks like that."

Chapter 343 - Mercenaries

Ruyen became even more alienated to Zhao Hai these past days, but she was actually happy with it. She didn't want to associate with Zhao Hai, he was too scary

At this time, Zhao Hai was somewhat surprised these past few days. It had been seven days since they were attacked outside Hundred Battles Fortress. But they didn't encounter any other ones in the seven days that had passed, this was beyond his expectation.

Naturally, he didn't know that Hundred Battles Fortress' garrison lord's body had already gone cold. This absence has created a power vacuum inside Hundred Battles Fortress that a lot of people inside Rosen Empire wanted to fill. Because of this, there simply wasn't any time to consider Zhao Hai.

The position of Hundred Battles Fortress' garrison lord actually didn't have that huge of an authority inside the fortress. Although there were civilians living there, the majority of its inhabitants were still the garrison troops. And only during wartime did the garrison lord have jurisdiction over these soldiers.

However, Hundred Battles Fortress was placed in a very lucrative position. This was one of Rosen Empire's entrances, so everyday tons of merchants would pass through here. The tariffs as well as the loot they receive from the bandits would add up to be a lot of money. Because of this, the position of garrison lord would be changed every five years. But, even with this time restriction, there were still a lot of nobles who were crazily trying to take on the position.

But this situation wouldn't likely to last long because Hundred Battles Fortress was after all the empire's shield. So the position of garrison lord had already been decided during these few days.

This unusual situation was caused by the garrison lord's suicide. Otherwise, the position wouldn't be vacant for such a long time.

Now that the matter has passed, the implicated Grand Duke Lionheart naturally hated Zhao Hai. Although the garrison lord wasn't his direct subordinate, they two of them had a good relationship. It was an unexpected event that Zhao Hai managed to compel the garrison lord to kill himself. The Grand Duke not only failed to solve his problem, he also suffered no small amount of loss, eventually benefitting Shelley Family. At this moment, how could Lionheart resign? So he naturally had to think up ways to deal with Zhao Hai.

Although Zhao Hai didn't know that Grand Duke Lionheart had pulled back in order to prepare, he didn't reduce his vigilance. He was very clear that offending the Grand Duke inside Rosen Empire was just like offending Southern King inside Aksu Empire.

The reason they had such slow journey these past few days was because Zhao Hai needed to inquire about Lionheart's affairs. Grand Duke Lionheart really did have a large power and influence inside Rosen Empire.

He found out that although Lionheart was titled a Grand Duke, he wasn't always inside his duchy but instead handled matters inside Carson City. This was because he was a trusted subordinate of the current monarch, handling the job of the empire's Head Lord of the Treasury. It was a position carrying a large weight, this was also the reason why he had the gall to face against Shelley Family.

After knowing these information, Zhao Hai became more careful, he knew that because he managed to annoy such a character, his future days wouldn't be any peaceful.

At the eight day, they arrived at a small city called Wright. These days, Zhao Hai avoided Large Cities as much as possible. He knew that the Grand Duke would surely have some people stationed there. If there was danger inside large cities, he might as well stay in small ones. So if there were trouble, there wouldn't be too much disturbance

Such a small city naturally didn't have a Shelley Hotel. So Zhao Hai and the others went to a hotel in the city named Shri Hotel.

The hotel could only be considered as a medium grade hotel. Although not the largest, its services were quite good, and the place was fairly clean. So Zhao Hai chose this place to stay for the night.

Such hotel was considered low-class in Laura's eyes. Even though Zhao Hai's group rented the best rooms, they weren't comparable to normal rooms at Shelley Hotel. But the place was clean and the facilities inside were also quite adequate.

However, such details weren't important to Zhao Hai. They could just enter the Space and rest there for the night. They didn't need to care about the rooms they stayed in.

Although Ruyen thought that the rooms were very bad, she didn't dare say anything. After guessing Zhao Hai's identity, Ruyen's plots basically vanished, she was afraid of offending Zhao Hai any further.

It was already quite late when the group checked in. So they settled their things and then headed to the hotel's dining hall.

The dining hall was also quite simple. It was on the hotel's first floor, and it's size wasn't that small, it was enough to house a hundred guests dining together.

As soon as Zhao Hai's group entered the hall, the hubbub of the guests quieted down. On these medium grade hotels, mercenaries were the common customers. They didn't only live here, they also receive tasks while in the hotel, making the hotel's profits quite good.

But these mercenaries were mostly quite rowdy, they drink while blabbering their mouths, take huge chunks of meat per bite. And adding on to the fact that it was the end of the day, and they had nothing else to do, they would congregate inside the hotel's dining hall.

Zhao Hai was acting as a Nobleman. When looking at his clothes, one would think of those young masters. Their appearance was quite unusual inside the hotel, there were no such young masters willing to stay at these kinds of establishments. Especially in hotels where mercenaries were staying.

Thus, when Zhao Hai and the others entered the dining hall, everyone immediately quieted down. They looked at Zhao Hai, and when they saw Laura's eyes, their gazes immediately turned green.

Zhao Hai looked at the mercenaries then had Laura and the others sit down. They ordered a bunch of dishes for the hotel staff to prepare. At this time, the mercenaries resumed their ruckus, returning the hall's atmosphere to the bustling scene it was before.

But Zhao Hai felt that these mercenaries were paying attention to them, making him feel uncomfortable. At this time, a drunk stood up from their table and drunkenly headed towards Zhao Hai's. He reached out his hand towards Laura's veil and said, "Beautiful Young Lady, why must you hide your face? Come show me, there's nothing good about that boy, why don't you come with me?"

How could Laura possibly allow the man to touch her? She immediately moved to the side but she didn't think that the drunk would have fast hands. Although she reacted quickly, the hand already reached her.

Naturally, this action cannot be ignored, so Shue who was sitting close by immediately took his axe and immediately chopped towards the mercenary's hand.

The mercenary was fast, he immediately dodged the huge ax. As he fell to the ground, he loudly shouted, "Murder! Murder! These nobles wants to kill me!". After he shouted, the mercenaries inside the dining hall immediately stood up one by one, took their weapons, and surrounded Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai immediately understood that these weren't ordinary mercenaries. They were prepared and was specifically targeting him.

Zhao Hai sat there and gazed at the surrounding mercenaries and coldly said, "All 6th and 7th rank experts. How could there be these many mercenaries at this place?"

Shun and Shue also just realized, there were about a hundred mercenaries here, it was very unusual to have 6th and 7th ranks but not a single 5th rank or below among them.

Shue went to Zhao Hai's side, Laura and the others also did the same. The 'drunk' mercenary now stood up and yelled to Zhao Hai, "Even if you are Nobles, it doesn't mean that you can just kill anyone you like! Fortunately, this grandfather was fast, otherwise I'd have left my arm here. Pretty boy, you need to offer this grandpa some explanation!"

Zhao Hai looked at the person and said, "Evoking such huge ruckus, So if I provide an explanation, everything will be alright? What kind of explanation do you want?"

Zhao Hai turned his head to Shun and said, "Shun, go see Ruyen and see if she already ate."

Upon hearing Zhao Hai, the mercenary's face changed. They didn't expect Zhao Hai to be this meticulous, even thinking about this point.

Just like what Zhao Hai thought, these mercenaries had two parts of their plan. They need to keep Zhao Hai here, and have another team capture Ruyen. As long as they have Ruyen as their hostage, Zhao Hai wouldn't have the guts to retaliate.

However, they didn't think that Zhao Hai would make Shun go to see Ruyen. The mercenaries now hope that their companions have accomplished their part.

Still, they need to give their companions time. So the mercenary, upon seeing that Shun was getting ready to leave, immediately commanded, "Brothers, we cannot let him leave!" Then the mercenary took his weapon and attacked Zhao Hai.

The man's weapon was a short handled broad axe. In a small place such as this dining hall, this was the most suitable weapon. But when he moved, Shun immediately threw his hidden weapons while Shue produced shadows to surround the group.

To the two, Zhao Hai's security was the most important. As for Ruyen? Did she have any significance to them?

Zhao Hai just stood there quietly looking at the mercenaries. But in his mind, he was in contact with Cai'er. He wanted to have Cai'er see Ruyen's situation.

The information he received made him startled. Ruyen was already captured by the mercenaries. All of her escort guards were killed. Only Ruyen, Jill, and the two maids were kept alive. The mercenary's methods were quite ruthless. Zhao Hai's expression sank, it seems like this group was not simple. They weren't stingy in their methods of attaining their goals. Such people were very hard to deal with.

Chapter 344 - Keeping Count

But Zhao Hai didn't go and save Ruyen right away. He didn't want to expose his true capabilities this early. These people wanted to use Ruyen to threaten him, so she shouldn't be in immediate danger.

The attacks of the mercenaries were very fierce, moreover you can see that they coordinate with each other pretty well. What's more important is that from their movements it seems like they were true mercenaries, not disguised soldiers.

Regular soldiers and mercenaries were on two different sides. Soldiers generally fight in a battlefield during wars, so their combat methods were very specific. They generally would use their weapons to kill the enemy as soon as possible.

Mercenaries were somewhat different. The enemies mercenaries meet were most often not other humans, therefore they would use all means to deal with the enemy. And even if they couldn't kill them, they would at most wound them heavily.

Zhao Hai looked at the situation in front of him and couldn't help but feel anxious. He didn't want to get tangled with these mercenaries for a long time, so he and Meg immediately began to attack with magic.

This time, Zhao Hai decided to use wind element magic. Wind spells were quick, and was very effective inside a small space like this. Meg also happens to be a wind element mage, so naturally she would use spells of this element. Since Shun couldn't go out and see Ruyen, he decided to fight as well.

At this moment, Zhao Hai also came to know how fierce Shun was. Just like what Shue said, Shun really lived up to his name of Eight-Armed Demon. One after another, an uncountable number of hidden weapons were thrown out. And these hidden weapons were doused in poison, giving these mercenaries a lot of difficulties.

With the help of Zhao Hai and Meg's magic, these mercenaries slowly got taken out one after another. When the 'drunk' mercenary saw this, he immediately called out, "Retreat!". Then he ran away along with the other men.

In a blink of an eye, all the mercenaries in the dining hall vanished. There was nothing else left but shattered chairs and tables as well as Shun's hidden weapons lain across the ground.

At this time, the manager who was hiding behind a door approached while trembling, he looked at the situation at the dining hall. He stared at the dining hall blankly and went to see Ruyen's situation. Zhao Hai stopped him and said, "No need to see them. The guards are gone, all of them are dead. Go tidy up here, don't worry I'll compensate you for the damages done. Also, please remember to bury the guards. I'll pay you later."

The man's expression turned better when he heard Zhao Hai's words. He immediately nodded and began to clean the hall, but before he could do so, Shun stopped him. He first needed to retrieve all of his hidden weapons, otherwise the manager and his attendants would get unnecessarily injured.

It was the first time that Zhao Hai saw Shun retrieving his hidden weapons. He became curious when he saw Shun take out a few stones and placed them all on the ground a few steps away from each other. Then those hidden weapons were immediately collected and stored.

Zhao Hai understood what Shun was doing, The stones that Shun used were certainly magnetized, therefore he could easily collect his hidden weapons. Moreover, Zhao Hai also noted the unnoticeable gloves that Shun wore which were tight fitted to his hands.

It was only noticed this time when Shun was retrieving the weapons. No wonder Shun didn't get affected by his own poisons, it turns out that it was because of this glove.

After his task, Shun wasn't asked by Zhao Hai to help tidy the place up. Then the group immediately went to their rooms. Zhao Hai also asked the manager to deliver their ordered dishes to their room as he gave a hefty tip, making the manager very happy,

Zhao Hai looked at the escort guards who were killed. Their injuries were very simple, it looked like they were killed without resistance. They were all killed with a single slash, it also seemed that they were eating when they were ended.

Looking at the situation, Shun paused for a moment before he said, "Young Master, they seemed to be poisoned before they were killed."

Shue nodded and said, "Killing all these guards with a single slash isn't a simple thing to do.

Zhao Hai also nodded, then he turned his head to Shun and said, "Go and see whether what they ate was poisoned."

Shun agreed and took a quick look at the dishes that were still present. Then after a while he shook his head and said, "Young master, the food was not poisoned. It should have been administered through other means. The poison used was something that could knock them out for a short period of time. It may be because of this short time that the mercenaries chose to kill all of them."

Zhao Hai nodded, then he asked Cai'er about Ruyen's situation. But Cai'er told him that the mercenaries have already left the monitoring range. This made Zhao Hai quite disappointed.

After the group returned to their suite, Laura asked Zhao Hai with a calm face, "Brother Hai, do you think Grand Duke Lionheart may have a hand in this?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "Definitely, we didn't have any enmity with any other person inside Rosen Empire. So it could only be Grand Duke Lionheart. I just didn't expect him to resort to such methods."

Shue seriously responded, “Young Master, this is not strange. Grand Dukes tend to control a few mercenary groups. Even though these groups do ordinary mercenary work, when tasked with a certain order, they would immediately execute it. The group this time seems to belong to Grand Duke Lionheart.”

Zhao Hai nodded, at this time it was Meg who worryingly said, “Young Master, we should go look for young lady Ruyen, for her to fall to their hands, who knows when an accident might happen.”

Zhao Hai felt that what she said made sense, so he immediately had a Blood Hawk carry the Ghost Staff and go search for Ruyen. The city wasn't that big, if they couldn't find Ruyen then the mercenaries could only have gone out of town.

The hawk flew out the city and followed the road towards Carson City. Zhao Hai believed that the mercenaries would certainly bring Ruyen to Carson City, Moreover, they had quite a few wounded among them so they should be moving slowly.

What Zhao Hai didn't expect was the amount of preparation that went to this operation. The mercenaries have already prepared ten large carriages to carry them and were fast approaching Carson City's direction. Zhao Hai immediately had Laura and the others enter the Space as he went towards the Ghost Staff's location. He appeared in front of the mercenaries' route, then waited for them.

The mercenaries also knew that the task was quite hard, so they decided that the faster they could move, the soon they would be able to ask for reinforcements.

As they were hurrying along, the road in front was suddenly blocked by two giant Stone Golems. The two were taller than seven meters, and completely blocked the whole width of the road, giving the mercenary convoy quite a bit of pressure.

When the mercenaries saw the two golems, they knew that Zhao Hai had certainly come. They already received Intel about Zhao Hai so they knew that their opponent was a tri-element mage. The convoy immediately stopped as some men fetched Ruyen to come over.

The mercenary who tried to touch Laura's face back then looked at Zhao Hai who was standing behind the stone golems and said, “Wales, be obedient and stay put, otherwise don't blame me for being

impolite. Do you know who this is? It's Purcell Family's young lady, being a man of the Purcell Duchy, if something happened to the young lady, what would you do?"

Zhao Hai looked at the mercenary and showed a faint smile, "It seems like you really looked into my affairs. But did you find out that I don't have any relatives inside Purcell Duchy? This time, I came to Rosen Empire in order to settle here and not go back to Purcell Duchy. Even if you kill the young lady, it wouldn't have anything to do with me. Purcell Duchy is only a mere territory, it couldn't reach its arms toward Rosen Empire. And now you're using the Duchy's young lady to threaten me? You're being too laughable."

The mercenary's complexion sank. He didn't think Zhao Hai to be so uncaring about Ruyen's life and death. The mercenary also didn't know whether Zhao Hai's words were true or not. So he immediately retorted, "You're just deceiving me, come with us without a fight, or else I'll kill them right now."

Zhao Hai calmly replied, "Go on, kill them, I won't block you. These past few days, the young lady had been quite bothersome anyway. If you kill her, I would be relieved. But since I still have an obligation to the Purcell Duchy's Grand Duke, if you kill her, then it wouldn't have been good for my reputation to break my commitment with the Purcell Grand Duke. So I won't forgive the people who made me break my promise, thus you have to die. Not only would I kill you, I will look for a Dark Mage and turn you into an Advanced Undead to ask about all of your people's families. Then I would have the fates of your families compensate for my loss."

Upon hearing Zhao Hai's words, the mercenaries couldn't help but shiver. They didn't expect such words to come out of Zhao Hai's mouth. But they didn't doubt him, there were some people who would actually do those things, and they never wanted to cross those people. Such people were the least likely persons that the mercenaries would offend, because such people were much more devious than mercenaries.

The mercenaries looked at each other, they knew that using a hostage wasn't enough to deal with Zhao Hai. What they didn't know was at this time, Zhao Hai suddenly made his move. Four vines appeared under Ruyen and attacked the mercenary holding her. The mercenary fell to the ground letting go of Ruyen.

When the other mercenaries managed to respond, Ruyen's body was already wrapped by the vines. When the mercenaries rushed in, the Stone Golems also attacked. At the same time, Zhao Hai's magic fell on the opposing group. The mercenaries had no chance to escape and were immediately killed by the spells. Then Zhao Hai waved his hand as the ground below the four captives fluctuated, dragging their bodies underground.

As the other mercenaries were absent-minded, Zhao Hai immediately executed his plans, first he had Cai'er attack the mercenaries with vines then had Ruyan and the others dragged underground using earth element magic with little to no injuries.

Regarding the hundred or so mercenaries, Zhao Hai turned them into undead. With what these mercenaries did, killing them would be too cheap of a punishment, so he turned them into his eternal servants.

After killing the mercenaries, Zhao Hai didn't care about their carriages and instead went straight back to the hotel and then placed Ruyen and the others to their rooms.

Ruyen's group suffered the same fate as her escort guards, poisoned to faint. And since the other three were of some status, the mercenaries didn't kill them but instead had them captured too.

Just as Zhao Hai's group returned to their rooms, a knock could be heard from the door. Shue immediately went and prepared his axe as he asked, "Who is it?"

Outside, the manager's voice could be heard speaking. "Guest, were here to deliver your meals to you. It has already been prepared."

Shue looked at Zhao Hai, Zhao Hai nodded. Then Shue opened the door for the manager. The manager bowed to Shue and walked in, behind him were a group of people lifting tables, chairs and also some dining cars with covered dishes on them.

The people immediately went busy as they entered the room. Looking at their movements, it seemed like they very well trained, they moved like clockwork. They place the tables and chairs, arranged the tablewares then the dishes. When they were finished, Zhao Hai had Shue give them a tip, then the group sat down to have their meals.

Zhao Hai looked at the people at the table and said, "Let's eat, just wanting to eat isn't easy nowadays, there would always be some bothersome things happening."

Laura and the others smiled, to be honest, they were already expecting an attack. But they didn't think that the enemy would go too far as to kill the escort guards.

Because of this, the group seemed quite sad. Zhao Hai also saw this, so he cracked a few jokes and after a few moments, the mood became very cheerful.

Just as Zhao Hai had forked some vegetables to his mouth, the Space prompted, "Toxic substances have entered the host. Weak toxin, can make people faint for a short time. Host is already immune to such toxins due to long-term consumption of space water. No need for detoxification."

Zhao Hai was surprised then his expression sank. He looked up and said, "Stop! Don't eat anything. These things are poisoned. It seems like there's some problem with this hotel."

Laura and the others froze, they didn't think that even the hotel was a problem. The group immediately placed their utensils down. Laura looked confused at Zhao Hai, "How can this hotel also be trouble? Even if Grand Duke Lionheart knew that we would be staying at this city, he certainly wouldn't be able to know that we would stay at this hotel. What's happening?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "It seems like we underestimated Grand Duke Lionheart's strength. Our attention had totally been consumed by those mercenaries."

Shue nodded, "It seems to be like this. The mercenaries attracted our attention so we didn't consider the hotel staff to be any threat. Ruyen's group might have drunk the hotel's poisoned water. While we checked the food as well as the tea and wine when we first came here. It seems like an insider managed to swap these beverages with poisoned ones."

Chapter 345 - Intent to Incriminate

Zhao Hai nodded, "This is Rosen Empire, and Lionheart is the empire's First Lord of the Treasury, completely in command of money. There should be a lot of nobles who want to flatter him inside the empire. So these nobles would certainly want to deal with us. We really did underestimate Lionheart's influence"

Shue said, "What does young master want to do? Kill them?"

Zhao Hai shook his head, "We can't. I suspect the other party has a backer to support them. Think about it, if we kill them, then the city lord would surely send some troops and catch us. We cannot just kill anybody here, this is not Aksu Empire, using the nation's power would be disadvantageous to us. Anyway, let's just leave these dishes and head back to the Space. I want to see who would come and enter the room to check on us."

Shue understood that they didn't have any authority inside Rosen Empire. This set-up made it as though their hands and feet were tied. Rosen Empire was different than Aksu Empire. If you were a foreigner inside Aksu Empire, you would just be treated normally. But a foreigner inside Rosen Empire was basically looked down on. Putting it in the words of Zhao Hai's earth, it was discrimination.

After interacting with various Rosen Empire citizens these past few days, Zhao Hai's belief on this solidified even more. Even if he held a viscount status in Aksu Empire, it was useless inside Rosen Empire.

Shue and the others agreed, so while they left their meals on the table, they went to the Space with Zhao Hai. Ruyen was also brought into the Space, but Zhao Hai had Cai'er continually administer some toxic gas towards them to keep them unconscious.

The group was sitting inside the Space and looking at their room's situation. After about an hour, a knock could be heard from the door as a manager's voice was heard, "Guests, were here to tidy up the tableware."

Naturally, there was no response since there wasn't anybody left in the room. The manager asked for a few more times, but after seeing that there really wasn't any response, the manager said, "Good, now go get them." Then some sounds came from the door as it was opened from the outside.

When the manager saw the scene after he opened the door, he froze. The plates were neatly laid out on the table, while the dishes were returned to their containers. There was no leaves left on the plates to see, and like the plates, there was nobody inside the room either.

The other people who were with the manager were also shocked. Then they immediately searched the room but to their dismay, they didn't see anyone. This made the manager fluster, so they immediately

went to find the boss. Before long, the boss ran outside and asked a few guys to check for Zhao Hai's carriage and see whether it was still there.

Zhao Hai's carriage was still there, but their owners had disappeared. Just after delivering the dishes, there were guys assigned to keep watch on the room and they didn't notice anybody going out. But the people inside the room still mysteriously disappeared, missing.

From this situation, they immediately had the City Mage come and investigate. However, the mage couldn't find any magical fluctuations inside the room. The inhabitants really did vanish into thin air.

The people in the hotel panicked and immediately reported the situation to the city lord. But after getting busy for the whole night, they still didn't get any result. In the middle of the night, they felt that the room was very creepy so they left.

They didn't know that the whole spectacle was seen by Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai felt like he was watching monkey drama, seeing them getting busy inside the room but retreated with impatience.

Laura looked at the monitor and turned to Zhao Hai, "Brother Hai was right. The city lord did have a hand in the operation. Otherwise, how could the city's defense force arrive so quickly? It seems like they were paying attention to us."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "Looks like they really wanted to deal with us using official means. Now we must be even more careful."

Laura frowned, "To use official means to deal with us will be difficult to do. We're currently inside Rosen Empire after all."

Zhao Hao turned his head to look outside the window. He sighed and said, "Looks like we can only bring the young lady to Sky Water City with us. If we bring her to Carson City, then she'll surely be killed."

Laura nodded, then sighed as she said, "This young lady will certainly be beset with disasters, it seems like she could only travel with us."

Zhao Hai frowned, "It's no problem if she follows us, but it's just very inconvenient. She's really causing us so much headache."

Laura smiled bitterly, she didn't know what to reply. The group talked about other matters, and when they saw that the sky was getting late they had Stonehead keep watch on the monitor as the rest went to sleep.

The next morning, Zhao Hai and the others had their breakfast inside the Space. When they looked at the monitor and sees that there was nobody there, the group immediately went out of the Space and returned to the hotel.

The manager didn't clean up, but Zhao Hai just looked around the room as he said, "Go wake the young lady. We'll be going out."

Meg nodded as she patted Ruyen's and the other's faces while calling out their names. Not knowing what just happened, Ruyen and the others groaned while slowly opening their eyes.

Upon opening her eyes and seeing Zhao Hai at the side, Ruyen cannot help but freeze. Then she looked Zhao Hai and said, "Why are you in my room? Who made you come in?"

Zhao Hai frowned, then he turned to Laura and said, "Explain everything to her."

Laura complied, then she explained to Ruyen the current situation. Ruyen also somewhat recovered and discovered that she was not insider her original room.

Jill and the other two also woke up, they didn't say anything and just listened to Laura. They also immediately understood the current situation.

When they heard that all of Ruyen's guards were killed, the four people's face couldn't help but turn pale. They didn't think that they would reach this kind of situation.

Until the time Laura finished speaking, the group's face were very pale. They didn't think that such number of lives were lost while they were asleep.

Zhao Hai looked at Ruyen and said, "Young lady, you now have two choices. First, you can follow us. Second, we will deliver you to the nearest large city and Shelley Hotel. They will guarantee your safety while I deliver a letter to the Grand Duke to request for your pick-up. Then you can go home. So, would you rather follow us? Or wait for the Grand Duke to fetch you?"

Zhao Hai preferred the latter choice of leaving Ruyen inside Shelley Hotel then go informing Evan to fetch her. This would mean that his troubles would be reduced by one.

Hearing what Zhao Hai said, Ruyen stared for a moment before saying, "I want to go to the hotel, then go home."

Ruyen herself didn't want to travel far away. Now with the current situation, it was very certain that she wouldn't want to travel with Zhao Hai. She knew that if she manage to annoy Zhao Hai, she would be in immediate danger.

Hearing her decision, Zhao Hai's heart relaxed. He really also feared Ruyen travelling with him.

However, before Evan sends for her return, he still had to take care of her for some time. He thought for a moment before he nodded, "Good, let's wait until the next large city, then we'll have you stay inside a Shelley Hotel there. From there, I would send a letter to Grand Duke Evan, and after receiving his reply I would leave."

Ruyen nodded and didn't say anything more. Zhao Hai looked at the time and said, "Good, let's go." The Shue opened the door to allow them to exit.

When the group reached the door, they managed to see the manager who came from cleaning the room downstairs. Looking at the group coming out of the room, the broom on his hand fell down, then stared blankly at Zhao Hai and the others.

Zhao Hai looked at the manager and said with a faint smile, "Manager, I must thank your services. Last night was very satisfying. Shue, give the manager a gift."

Shue complied and then gave a gold coin to the stunned manager. The manager was still gawking thus making the gold coin slip through his hand, landing on the ground and making a clear sound which awakened him. The man looked at Zhao Hai's group as though he just saw a group of ghosts. After staring at Zhao Hai for a long time, the manager screamed loudly and ran downstairs. He didn't even have the chance to get the gold coin on the ground.

Looking at the manager's reaction, the group couldn't help but laugh. They quickly walked and headed downstairs. When they reached the first floor lobby, they saw the people of the hotel looking very alarmed as they looked at the soldiers standing outside.

Zhao Hai looked at the battle formation and said, "Boss, checkout"

The thin boss told Zhao Hai, "Mister guest, there are a few soldiers looking for you outside."

Zhao Hai looked at the boss' eyes coldly and said, "Really? Then have them come in." Actually, Zhao Hai didn't need to request it since at this time a helmet-wearing heavy armor infantry walked in from outside. The man was so heavily armored that his face could hardly be seen.

Zhao Hai stared at the eyes underneath the armor and said, "I don't know what mister officer is looking to me for?"

The armored man said, "You were attacked by mercenaries yesterday?"

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "The people from the hotel can testify. We were attacked by mercenaries yesterday, the escort guards that we brought all died on their hands."

The armored man replied, "Admitting is good. Now come with me. We suspected that you killed those mercenaries, thus breaking imperial law."

Zhao Hai frowned as he responded, "Captain, I am a victim. Ninety of our escort guards were killed, and those mercenaries ran away. How can you say that I killed them in retaliation?"

The Heavily Armored man coldly snorted and said, "Don't waste your breath, some people already seen that the mercenaries were killed. I suspect that you have killed them, now come with me."

Zhao Hai looked at the man coldly, "Captain, I think that you don't know what you're doing. I'm a noble of the continent, a recognized noble of the continent. You have no right to place unwarranted suspicions on me. Now get the hell out, or else I won't be polite with you."

The Armored man's gaze also turned cold, "So you don't intent to cooperate, then don't blame me for being..." Before he even finished his words, Zhao Hai already sent a fireball down his way. Zhao Hai looked at the soldier as he said, "Wasting too much time talking, I might as well take the first step. Shue go kill them." Shue immediately transformed into multiple shadows and charged towards the group of soldiers outside the hotel.

The soldiers of the Heavy Armor unit didn't think that Zhao Hai would take the first action so they weren't prepared. In fact, these soldiers weren't suited to clashes inside cities. With their heavy armors, moving became very inconvenient. If they needed to chase a person, they wouldn't be able to catch up.

If these Heavy infantry were used in a battlefield, then they would become impenetrable walls, even able to withstand a cavalry charge. But their mobility isn't something they could brag about.

The man who spoke with Zhao Hai was immediately killed by the fireball. Shue transformed into a thousand shadows almost instantaneously and appeared right by the heavy armored soldiers. The soldiers wanted to dodge but their armor became a hindrance to their movements, this made Shue's killing spree very easy.

It may be possible that the city lord knew that fighting would happen here because he imposed martial law on the few blocks nearby, making the residents stay inside their homes so no one could see the battle. Zhao Hai let Shue deal with the soldiers while Shun targeted the people at the hotel.

Yesterday, they wanted to deal with Zhao Hai so naturally nobody inside the hotel was spared. The other people who were in the hotel were those mercenaries, and after the failure of their operation

they withdrew. So there was no other guests in the store other than the attendants and the hotel's boss, who tried escaping.

When Shun managed to finish the boss, Shue was also done with the heavy infantry. Zhao Hai immediately waved his hand and turned all of the soldiers into undead. Then he made Shun prepare the carriage so they could get out of the city fast.

The entire event was witnessed by Ruyen. She was afraid of the thousand or so heavy infantry, as well as the other people inside the hotel. But these 1,000 people were actually killed by Zhao Hai, the shock she received was too large.

The city was very small, so they quickly managed to get outside. The first to come out was Zhao Hai's convoy followed by a single carriage which belonged to Ruyen and driven by Jill.

Zhao Hai didn't say anything to them. Instead, he turned to Shue and said, "Shue, since Ruyen doesn't need to head to Carson City anymore, go change directions and go straight towards Sky Water City."

Shue complied and took a detour. Carson City was Lionheart's playground, if Zhao Hai's group goes to Carson City, they would undoubtedly enter into the lion's den. Zhao Hai couldn't possibly allow that.

He initially thought that Lionheart would respect Ruyen's status and wouldn't touch her. Ruyen was a Grand Duke's daughter, but Zhao Hai didn't expect Lionheart to not care about that fact and immediately made plans involving the young lady. In this case, if Zhao Hai made Ruyen go to Carson City, then he would only be sending her to her death.

Zhao Hai also knew that as long as they were inside Rosen Empire, it was impossible to hide their whereabouts. So he didn't conceal his movements, but he still didn't stay inside any cities and always stayed outside to rest.

On the following days, Zhao Hai's group always took a rest outdoors. It was quite normal inside Rosen Empire to stay outdoors like they did. So to the average person, what Zhao Hai's group were doing wasn't strange.

But Zhao Hai's situation was quite special. Almost every night, some people would go and attack them. Sometimes they were mercenaries, sometimes they were a city's garrison. There was no time for them to stay for a long time.

Zhao Hai became used to this. When they were moving inside their carriages during the, they would sleep. In the evening, they would be fighting against the attackers. Everywhere they go they would get attacked, further terrifying Ruyen.

This routine of travelling and killing went on for seven days, but they still didn't manage to find a city with a Shelly Hotel in it. Moreover, during this seven days, Zhao Hai had managed to surprisingly kill 5,000 people.

Looking at the amount of undead Zhao Hai had amassed, Ruyen felt her hairs stiffen. To her Zhao Hai's name became synonymous with the devil.

Zhao Hai also became very impatient. He didn't dare enter a city in order for Lionheart to be unable to use official means to deal with them. He didn't want to face against the judicial system of Rosen Empire. If that happens, they wouldn't fare well.

Now that Zhao Hai was targeted by Lionheart, the other City Lords also got involved. The Rosen Empire didn't issue a proper command, this matter was very beneficial to Zhao Hai.

As long as he wasn't issued an arresting order, he will not become an enemy of the whole Rosen Empire. Even if the Grand Duke was powerful and influential, he also had enemies. For him to crazily pursue Zhao Hai was nothing but making a statement. He wants other people who wanted his power to know that it wasn't easy to mess with him.

But Grand Duke Lionheart didn't expect even in his dreams that Zhao Hai would become a hard bone to chew. He sent a lot of people as well as have the city lords help him but he still couldn't eliminate Zhao Hai. Now Zhao Hai has become a thorn on his side, as long as Zhao Hai lived, Grand Duke Lionheart wouldn't be able to rest well. The other people around him looked at him with ridiculing looks for being unable to deal with a single person.

Grand Duke Lionheart had been favored these past few years. This made him arrogant, walking around impudently, and offending a lot of people. These people were looking forward to the day the Grand Duke would make a fool of himself.

The Grand Duke also had another slight issue, which was Rosen Empire's Emperor. He and the Emperor were good friends even before the Emperor became crowned. Moreover, the Emperor being crowned had a lot to do with Lionheart. Without his help, the Emperor possibly couldn't have a smooth coronation.

Because of this, after the Emperor had ascended to the throne, he gave Lionheart his extreme favor and trust, giving him the lucrative position of First Lord of the Treasury. Because of this backing, Lionheart became more and more arrogant and overbearing as time passed by.

This was where Lionheart forgot something. He forgot that he was only an official, while the Emperor was the sole master of the nation. No matter whether he helped the Emperor ascend to his throne, was his best friend, say good things to him, but if Lionheart begins to threaten the crown's position, the Emperor wouldn't be polite.

This time, when Lionheart was going after Zhao Hai, he only released a message but there were a lot of city lords who answered. It showed how much influence he had. And the greater influence he had, the more the Emperor was dissatisfied with him. This point didn't strike Lionheart, since he was fully absorbed in dealing with Zhao Hai.

However, the Grand Duke's enemies wouldn't let go of this opportunity. From time to time, these people would report Lionheart's activities to the emperor. At the same time, they also reported about his attitude. Although these points eventually convinced the Emperor, he stood back and didn't reprimand Lionheart. But these people already knew that the Emperor now placed his sights on Lionheart.

Zhao Hai naturally didn't know of these. He was still very annoyed by Lionheart's daily attacks. These days, the attacks had become more and more fierce. This gave Zhao Hai a very difficult time because it was impossible for him to release hundreds of thousands of undead inside Rosen Empire. If he really did that, it would make the Rosen Empire issue an order to chase him.

Zhao Hai was resting outside tonight and waited for Lionheart's attack. He sat outside his tent and ate lamb and mutton soup. Since it was still winter, such food was the best. It was delicious, warm and can stave of hunger.

At this time, Zhao Hai turned to Shun and said, “Shun, go over to Ruyen and invite her here. Tell her that I have a matter to discuss with her.” Shun complied and headed towards Ruyen’s tent.

These days, Ruyen was extremely behaved. When they go and rest every night, her group would always stay inside their tent and only come out during dawn, making Zhao Hai unable to see her face.

But Zhao Hai didn’t care, Ruyen acting like this was better. He was free of worry and he also didn’t like to interact with Ruyen.

Before long, Ruyen’s group was seen following Shun and heading towards Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai had a bonfire in front of him, but since it was winter and they were outdoors, it didn’t feel warm.

Zhao Hai looked at Ruyen and calmly said, “Young lady, we will pass through River Law City tomorrow. The city is a large-sized city in Rosen Empire so there should be a Shelley Hotel there. We’ll rest for a few days inside River Law City while we send a letter to Grand Duke Evan and wait for his reply. Does the young lady have any objections?”

Ruyen shook her head and replied, “I don’t, I’ll leave every decision to mister. If there’s nothing else, Ruyen will head back.” Zhao Hai nodded, then Ruyen lead Jill and the maids back to their tent. At this time, hoofbeats could be heard, making Zhao Hai and the others attentive.

Chapter 347 - Shelley Family’s Test

Zhao Hai and the others had already gotten used to it these past days. They would even consider it strange if nobody would attack them at night. Therefore when they heard hoofbeats, Zhao Hai immediately opened the monitor to observe the situation.

Before long, a team of cavalry appeared on the monitor. The group numbered about 500 people, but the cavalry weren’t heavily armored, they had bows and arrows as well as spears and swords. They look like light cavalry, wearing only leather armor.

But on this group's saddles were several heads of people. This image made Zhao Hai confused. Looking at the state of the heads, it seemed like they were killed not too long ago. What is happening?

After a short while, the cavalry arrived at Zhao Hai's camp. Surprisingly, they didn't attack Zhao Hai but instead they stopped and dismounted from their horses.

A dismounted cavalry was a message of well-meaning. Since people knew that the main attacking prowess of cavalry soldiers was when they were on the backs of their mounts, a dismounted cavalry means that they don't have any intention of attacking.

Zhao Hai was confused as he looked at the cavalry, he didn't know what this group's intentions were. At this time, a cavalryman took a few steps forward and said, "Is the man in front mister Wales?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "It's me. And you are?"

The man immediately replied, "This one is from Shelley Family. I'm light cavalry captain Might responsible for escorting mister. Mister had been attacked these past few days, but since mister suddenly changed course, the family had been slow to react, please forgive me."

Zhao Hai was surprised, he didn't think that Shelley Family would protect him. He quickly responded, "I wouldn't dare. So it turns out to be friends from Shelley Family, please take a seat. Shun, Shue, go prepare some lamb and some mutton soup for these brothers."

Shun and Shue complied and immediately took out several pots from the supply carriage and prepared some food for Might and his team. Seeing that Zhao Hai allowed them to enter their camp, Might relaxed, then he immediately had his subordinates construct several tents outside the camp and have the heads removed from the saddles. Zhao Hai knew without asking that these heads were from those who would've attacked him but were killed by this cavalry group.

Zhao Hai asked Might to sit by the bonfire. He looked at Might and said, "Brother Might, you said that you were ordered by the Shelley Family to protect me, why is that? I may have some milk wine to trade with the family but I don't think that our relationship has gone quite deep."

Zhao Hai knew that there was no point in going around circles when talking to soldiers, so he got straight to the point.

Sure enough, Might immediately answered, "Mister is too polite. Although mister only had some milk wine trades with the family, he has helped us a lot before. Mister once saved the hotel at Hundred Battles Fortress, which made the Grand Duke go after mister. The family felt responsible for the incident so we wanted to send someone to escort mister. But our family had been suppressed by Grand Duke Lionheart for so long, so I was only able to arrive today."

Upon hearing Might, Zhao Hai knew that he managed to reach Shelley Family from his recent actions, making the family send him some guards for protection. This was a good start.

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "This is nothing. We are partners and I just happened to be there at that time and those people took me as an excuse, so I naturally couldn't just ignore it. I did it not to help the family but to save my reputation."

Might laughed and said, "Mister says this, but the house couldn't help but feel responsible. In any case, this matter was because of us so the family sent us out to escort mister and his group. Let me tell mister about something, this will soon pass."

Zhao Hai stared at Might and said, "Why? Did the family already prepare a counter-attack?"

Might didn't hide the truth from Zhao Hai, with a serious tone he said, "Nobody can suppress Shelley Family and not pay the price. The family is a business family and doesn't generally work with nobles. The family's attention is mainly on making money, but Lionheart had been too much this time, the family couldn't stay back any longer."

Zhao Hai nodded, Shelley Family was one of the pinnacle business families in the continent. Although they weren't as overbearing as the Markey Family, they also wouldn't be polite to those who offend them.

Might looked at Zhao Hai, "The members of the family look highly upon mister. These past few days, Lionheart had been trying to deal with mister but you had managed to stave him off time and time again. This feat attracted our admiration."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "If I don't have such skill, then I wouldn't dare cooperate with the Shelley Family. Also, If I don't have such ability, I wouldn't wade in such turbid waters."

Might felt Zhao Hai's self-confidence and was so amused that he couldn't help but laugh. He smiled at Zhao Hai and said, "Mister is really a frank person. Hahaha, I really like to make friends with people like mister."

Zhao Hai also laughed, "I also like to make friends with people like you, simple and direct. Being friends with nobles is too tiring. Hahaha"

At this time, Shue had already prepared the mutton soup. These mutton were made from Iron Mountain Fort. Just pour in hot water and wait for a while then you can already eat it. Although it didn't taste as good as fresh mutton, it was quite a delicacy in this kind of weather.

After eating, Might went back to take a rest but not before leaving 50 men to be the night guards. They came this time to protect Zhao Hai so obviously they couldn't make Zhao Hai's men keep watch for the night.

With Might's men keeping watch for the night, Zhao Hai's group naturally slept in extreme comfort. After having their early morning breakfast, Zhao Hai and the others rushed towards River Law City under the protection of Might.

Zhao Hai knew for a fact that Might already knew about their whereabouts and can catch up to them at any time. They simply didn't do so because they want to see Zhao Hai's strength and determine whether Zhao Hai was qualified enough to have the family's support.

The people from Shelley Family knew that protecting Zhao Hai meant that they were willing to further their cooperation with him. For a large family like Shelley's, people who they form connections with must be competent enough, otherwise they wouldn't be able to match the family's status.

After observing these past few days, the Shelley Family deemed Zhao Hai to have enough capability to cooperate with them. Thus, Might appeared.

Zhao Hai didn't sit inside his carriage today, but stood at the bench outside the carriage. Might was right beside him on horseback. Zhao Hai looked at Ruyen's carriage and said to Might, "We'll settle inside River Law City for a few days to recuperate as well as to solve the young lady's problem. All her escort guards are dead so she couldn't go study at Carson City anymore. So I'm sending a letter to Grand Duke Evan and have him send people to fetch Ruyen here. When I receive the Grand Duke's reply, I'll leave River Law and head to Sky Water City, when that time comes I'll have to trouble you with Ruyen's safety."

Might smiled and said, "Of course, as long as they are guests inside Shelley Hotel, we would certainly guarantee their safety. Not to mention that the City Lord has connections to our Shelley Family. So the security of young lady Ruyen is not a problem."

Zhao Hai nodded, "That's good, so you're saying that River Law city is under Shelley Family's domain? Then we should be safe being there right?"

Might smiled, "Although it couldn't be our domain, River Law city could be considered to be our home. There, nobody could touch us, even if Rosen Empire's Emperor wanted to deal with us, we would have a lot of ways to retreat."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "Good, your words made me feel relieved. Right, if I wanted to head towards Sky Water City, what would be the easiest way to get there?"

Might smiled faintly, "It would be riding a boat. River Law City is just adjacent to Law river, and the river stretches up to Sky Water City, so you can go there through this body of water. Thus, if you want to travel quickly to Sky Water City, travelling by boat would be the most convenient method."

Zhao Hai nodded, "Good, then we'll wait for the boat passing through Law river. Right, you don't need to protect me anymore when I head towards Sky Water City. Also, how much do you know about Sky Water City?"

Might smiled, "Not very much, you should know that Shelley Family's headquarters isn't inside the empire, but the clan had been planning to move here. Although the empire isn't very likeable, they have one thing right, which was being at the dead center of the continent. Not only did it place at the center of the continent, its waterways were also very suitable for trade. So the family had always wanted to move the headquarters to Rosen Empire. And Sky Water City was the city that was of the most concern to us. It is a natural harbor, able to dock large sized ships. And from there, you could head directly south towards Ocean Waves Dynasty directly. Towards north, you would be able to reach the

Beastman Prairie. One could say the city is Rosen Empire's center of maritime traffic. But the city was under the rule of Calci Family, and Calci Family is one of the oldest nobles of the empire. They hold great power, and Sky Water City is the family's money purse. Nobody else could touch it. Therefore, our forces there could only be small. The other were the same, even the Radiant Church that is everywhere in the continent was very unpopular there."

Zhao Hai nodded, he didn't say anything, and more importantly he couldn't just tell Might that Calci family was basically the League of Dark Mages. For such a clan to allow the Radiant Church to establish a foothold in their own domain would be crazy.

Might turned to Zhao Hai and said, "Why was mister asking? Does Mister want to do business with the Calci Family? That family has always been low-key, only a few people in the continent had managed to cooperate with them. I'm afraid doing business with that family will not be easy."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "I'm just saying this. You should know that I have a business inside the prairie, and Sky water City has a harbor that could be used to head towards the prairie directly. And the tax also wasn't high, therefore I decided to go to that city to do business. Moreover, I also heard that the entirety of Sky Water City is controlled by Calci Family. So if I go there, how could Grand Duke Lionheart be able to touch me?"

Might nodded, "He absolutely wouldn't dare. Everyone inside Sky Water City reports to Calci Family. As long as you settle there, even if the Rosen Empire's Emperor wanted to catch you, he would still need to go through Calci Family. It was precisely because of this that a lot of merchants gathered in Sky Water City for the protection of Calci Family."

Zhao Hai didn't expect that the Calci Family would have such control over Sky Water City. But it was better for Zhao Hai, with this kind of control, nobody would be able to mess with him.

The group didn't hurry along, but when people on the road see them, they would immediately make way. The cavalry had hung the family flag of Shelley Family. At this time, if someone dared to attack them, they would be offending the family. There wasn't a lot of people in the continent who had such guts. If Shelley Family really put their foot into it, even the Rosen Empire Emperor would need to behave temporarily.

Only a fellow like Grand Duke Lionheart, who did not know about the immensity of heaven and earth, would offend someone like the Shelley Family. Although if you were to mention a merchant family, the

first thing to come into people's mind would be Markey Family, it was because the Markey Family was too overbearing and thus left very deep impression on the people in the continent.

However, if someone really understood the intricacies of the continent, Shelley Family was also a powerhouse that couldn't just be offended. Their family being able to open hotels all throughout the continent is a testament to their strength.

The hotel industry was a very profitable business, but for so many years, the Shelley Family had always been the pinnacle of the hotel chain business. Wasn't this fact enough to explain their capabilities?

There were even rumors in the continent that the all-powerful Markey Family once tried dipping their hands in the hotel business, making them in conflict with the Shelley Family. But in the end, the Markey Family wasn't able to shake Shelley Family's position. This should be quite enough to explain the family's might.

Presently, Zhao Hai was like a small spider, knitting his web network little by little. And when he is done, he would have the strength to revive the Buda Clan.

Obviously, Shelley Family is an indispensable part of this network. With such strong collaborator, Zhao Hai's network will be more robust and be more resistant to getting blown away.

Without stopping, the convoy could already see River Law City when noon came. But there was still still a ways to go, although they could see the city's shadow, it would still take them two hours of travel to reach there.

Zhao Hai and the others simply ate inside their carriage and didn't stop. And Might who was beside their carriage just munched on some dry rations and continued on without stopping.

Chapter 348 - River Law City

It was in the afternoon when Zhao Hai's convoy reached River Law City. Not only was River Law City right beside Law river, the water used for its moat was directly sourced from the river itself. They artificially redirected a small portion of water from the river effectively making a branch route for the

water to pass through. Because of this, aside from the ordinary city gates, there were also two water gates allowing mid and small sized ships to approach the city.

River Law City was very big, it was a city large enough to support a million residents. In an era where high rise buildings were uncommon, you can imagine how huge such a city was.

Zhao Hai's group entered the city through its west gate. Once they entered, Zhao Hai could feel the peculiarities of this city. First, there were a lot of people walking around, more numerous than other large sized cities back in Aksu Empire. The cities streets were extremely dense with people. If these people didn't wear different clothes, Zhao Hai would have thought that he had returned back to China.

Fortunately there were so many escorts to open the way for them. The pedestrians immediately made way upon seeing their carriages.

Before long, the group arrived at the front door of River Law City's Shelley Hotel. This branch was quite different from other branches. The hotel was very high, Zhao Hai could count more than a dozen floors in the building. Without concrete, it was very difficult to build a structure that high.

As soon as they arrived at the hotel, the attendants inside immediately welcomed them. The attendants knew Might, so they immediately took charge in taking care of the mounts towards the back courtyards.

The same was with Zhao Hai's carriage. Zhao Hai didn't need to worry about it since there was someone who came and took care of their carriage. When the group entered the hotel, the hotel's manager came to greet them. The manager was called Amare, he had a very tall and big stature. If he didn't wear silk made business clothing, Zhao Hai might have mistook him for a warrior.

The manager didn't say any nonsense to Zhao Hai and immediately arranged for their accommodations. The manager gave them the best suites in the hotel and let Zhao Hai and the others rest.

What surprised Zhao Hai was that there was an elevator inside the hotel that looked like it ran on electricity. But upon closer inspection, it was in fact powered by magic. Zhao Hai wasn't the only one surprised, Laura was also quite shocked.

One must know that the energy used by such an elevator wasn't free. One could imagine the upkeep costs of such a contraption. Aside from Shelley hotel, no other place would dare install such a thing.

The biggest difference between River Law City's Shelley hotel and other places was that there were so many guests here, so business was extremely booming. Here, well-dressed nobility who wore silk clothing wasn't uncommon. Merchants who wore the same level of quality clothes were also present, further showing the exquisiteness of the hotel.

When the other guest saw Zhao Hai, they didn't care too much. Zhao Hai was walking together with Might so they just thought that he was someone from the Shelley Family.

After settling in the hotel, Zhao Hai immediately released a blood hawk to send a letter to Evan. The reason that he didn't send a hawk before was that he didn't know whether they would be able to stay at a single place for a long time. But now that they were inside River Law City, he was now able to send his letter, telling Evan to fetch Ruyen.

Zhao Hai didn't make Shun ride the hawk. The last time was only used to test the hawk's capabilities. This time, such method was unnecessary, moreover, it was currently winter so with the hawk's speed and latitude, the rider would be frozen cold.

Evan's reply came in quick that very night. Evan didn't have Ruyen stay inside River Law City, but he requested Zhao Hai to take her to Sky Water City where he would send a ship to go pick Ruyen up.

This made Zhao Hai surprised, but when it came to mind that Ruyen wasn't a good companion to travel with, Zhao Hai immediately felt a headache.

Ruyen had previously given him trouble back at Iksa Domain. Now that she was behaved, she was extremely behaved, making Zhao Hai doubt deep inside.

The next morning, when Zhao Hai and the others had their breakfast he told Ruyen about Evan's plan for her. Then Zhao Hai asked Might to help them arrange a ship to ride on. Such matter was extremely easy to do for someone like Might. But even then, they couldn't leave today, it has to be the next day.

Zhao Hai didn't mind. Although there were vessels headed for Sky Water City, they couldn't just board one. There were ships which were very attractive for pirates, so just picking any ship wasn't a wise thing to do.

Although Zhao Hai wasn't afraid of them, Might couldn't just allow that to happen. Zhao Hai requested him to prepare a ship for them, so if their ship were to get attacked by pirates, it would be ugly for his reputation.

Since they were going to stay inside River Law City for another day, Zhao Hai didn't just hide inside his hotel room. He went for a stroll around the city while at the same time buying a lot of things, majority of them were some items people from the prairie would need.

What do people in the prairie need the most? First was grain. Second was salt. And third was iron!

Grain, needless to say, was what the prairie lacked the most, followed by salt. As much as the beastmen liked consuming salt, their appetite for iron was just the same. One must know that there was absolutely no way to procure iron from the grasslands, so all the ironworks inside the prairie were most likely brought in from human territory.

But among humans, these three were not that urgently needed. And since Zhao Hai already produces food and grain by himself every single day, he only bought salt and iron as well as other miscellaneous living commodities.

Since he stayed inside the prairie for quite some time, he already knew what people from that place needed the most. And with Laura's help, Zhao Hai didn't worry that he might buy something that was useless.

Regarding Zhao Hai's actions, Might didn't say anything. This was what a businessman would most likely do anyway. If a merchant only thinks of fighting and not make any money, then what kind of merchant would that be?

The next day, Zhao Hai and the others ate their breakfast and prepared to leave. Right outside the city's docks, there was a ship headed towards Sky Water city that the Shelley Family knew quite well. So the group boarded that ship.

When they arrived at the docks, Zhao Hai was shocked. He really underestimated the city's pier. There were no fewer than a thousand large to small sized vessels docked. The largest of them looks like it could carry a thousand jin worth of cargo, and this was not a small number.

It was fortunate that Law river's surface was very wide, while its depth was also very adequate. Otherwise it wouldn't be able to accommodate such a number of ships. Zhao Hai and the others boarded the largest vessel on the dock. The ship was very large, it could carry a thousand jin of cargo quite easily. The ship had three masts and besides loading cargo, it also accepts passengers onboard.

Might had already arranged rooms not only for Zhao Hai's group, but also for their magic beasts.

This was Zhao Hai's first time riding a boat after he arrived at Ark Continent. He had ridden a boat back on Earth, but that ship was already made of steel, he had not been inside a wooden ship before.

After boarding the ship, Might also introduced Zhao Hai to the ship's captain. The captain was called Stack. He grew a full beard on his face, with a tall and big stature, and due to being aboard the ship for years, he had quite a tanned skin that appeared very robust, he also wore a cold expression. But he was extremely amiable when meeting Zhao Hai, it looks like he already knew Might for a long time.

However, his appearance wasn't what attracted Zhao Hai's attention. Upon observing the main, Zhao Hai noticed that he was actually a 7th rank Warrior.

Zhao Hai also paid attention to the crew on board. Their bodies weren't weak, and while they wore weapons, they also operated the several ballistas mounted on the ship.

Zhao Hai actually forgot that these ships needed to be able to protect themselves when they go travelling, so it was very natural for them to be equipped with weapons.

Such was a ship arranged by Might, he couldn't just get a ship that he wasn't confident with. So Zhao Hai also trusted the ship. After obtaining Stack's consent, Zhao Hai explored around the vessel.

Apart from Zhao Hai, the ship probably had more than a hundred passengers. Some were merchants, while some were civilians that wanted to visit Sky Water City. And the living quarters were clearly divided where the lower decks were the cheaper ones.

After asking around, Zhao Hai found out that the travel from River Law City to Sky Water City will take about 5 days by ship, but if they were to travel in land, it may take about half a month or so.

Law river's surface was wide so there wasn't much swaying of the ship, but nevertheless, Meg developed seasickness. Zhao Hai had no other choice but to have her return to their room and had her sent to the Space.

Laura was well traveled so it was natural that she didn't get seasick. Instead, she was extremely spirited and followed Zhao Hai in exploring the entire ship along with Nier. Ruyen was as usual, being behaved and stayed inside her room and didn't come out.

If it wasn't for Ruyen's previous actions, Zhao Hai might have thought that she had gone crazy. When Zhao Hai was just starting out with their travels, he could see Ruyen almost every day, But now, Ruyen eats all three meals of the day inside her room. When they were inside the carriage, he wouldn't be able to see her. Even when they stay inside their tents back when they were travelling, Ruyen would still stay inside. She seems to be hiding from Zhao Hai.

These days Zhao Hai had already gotten used to her. But he was still somewhat worried, he's afraid that Ruyen had developed some sort of sickness. If this was so, he wouldn't know how to explain himself to Evan.

Evan's initial purpose was to let Ruyen get in contact with Zhao Hai as much as possible. Although Zhao Hai already had Laura and Meg, having more than one wife was quite normal in the continent. After seeing Zhao Hai's transformation, Evan made his plans. But it seems like his thoughts were wasted, Ruyen didn't get in contact with Zhao Hai often, so how could they discuss getting betrothed with each other?

Chapter 349 - Arrow Turtle

After three days onboard the ship, Zhao Hai didn't experience any discomfort. Instead, he managed to make quite a few friends among the passengers as well as getting more acquainted to Stack.

Zhao Hai wasn't innately a mean spirited person, and adding on to the fact that people who ride ships were generally wine lovers, Zhao Hai naturally supplied his Milk Wine. It was the first time Stack drank such wine, so naturally the captain of the ship was very happy.

The milk wine that Zhao Hai produced wasn't the same as the other low alcohol level wines. He had been able to make a 40% alcohol content wine, one little sip is all you need to taste its potency.

This high alcohol content liquor had never appeared in the continent before and Stack had become one of the first persons who were able to drink this wine, but he managed to get drunk after taking only a few sips. Fortunately, Zhao Hai's wine doesn't give people hangovers, so the captain just slept it off.

Although he already got drunk from such small amount, Stack absolutely loved Zhao Hai's liquor. Its flavor was very satisfying, especially to the drunkard Stack.

But Zhao Hai didn't give him the same type of liquor, but instead he took out another one but had less than the amount of alcohol content in it. Nevertheless, Stack still liked it so he hounded Zhao Hai to purchase more of this kind of wine. Zhao Hai was generous and directly gave Stack 50 jin of wine, allowing Stack's impression of Zhao Hai to skyrocket.

Zhao Hai stood at the top deck of the ship, watching the other vessels come and go. He knew that since the Law river was quite busy, ships would always be visible at all times. It really did seem that this Law river is the busiest river in the entire Rosen Empire.

Laura was standing right by Zhao Hai's side and looked at the scenery, "Brother Hai, how about we get a ship for our use later on?"

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "Right, we'll have to get a ship later so that we can get to the prairie much more easily. We could also use it to go out and experience the vast seas."

Laura smiled, "Good I'm already grown up but I still hadn't been out to the sea yet. I really want to see what it looks like."

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile, "Don't worry, in the future, you'll be able to see it whenever you like. Haha." At this moment, Zhao Hai felt the ship shudder. Zhao Hai immediately thought that something must have gone wrong as the ship's hull shook again.

Seeing that the state of the ship wasn't normal, Stack also ran towards the sides of the boat and looked closely into the water. Although he didn't know what they were looking for, Zhao Hai also looked into the river.

There was a dark shadow underneath the water, just beside the ship. The shadow's head wasn't very small. Zhao Hai looked confused at the dark shadow and asked Stack, "Stack, what is that? Did that collide with the ship?"

Stack nodded, "Right, it did collide with the ship, that is Law river's unique magic beast, an Arrow Turtle. These beasts are notorious here, they're very big, their strength isn't something to scoff at, and their shells are very special. It has a horn about a meter long in front of it that looks like a sword. Besides its shell, it also had tough scales all throughout its body that is very difficult to deal with. Most importantly, this turtle likes to smash itself towards ships, our ship is still safe since it has a thick hull so we don't need to worry in the meantime. But if it keeps ramming itself to the ship, it's possible to make a hole in it. This would be dangerous so we cannot just allow it."

Zhao Hai asked curiously, "What are you planning to do? Shoot it with harpoons? Is it effective?"

Stack nodded, "We'll just send in a warning shot, this thing's quite cowardly. Sometimes it only takes a few shots to make it retreat. But if possible, we'll catch it, this thing is a delicacy."

As he was saying that, Stack signalled to his crew to prepare the harpoons as Zhao Hai watched them. These harpoons were very different from the ballista arrows used in the continent. The difference between the ones used here from the one used on land was that the harpoons actually had ropes tied onto them.

Under Stack's command, the crew quickly loaded the harpoon onto the ballistas as they continuously shot at the shadow, producing massive ripples on the river's surface. Before long, red blood could be seen appearing on the water as the crew pulled the harpoons back to the ship.

At this time, a sailor shouted, "Captain, the harpoon has hooked on to something, it's possibly the Arrow Turtle."

As soon as Stack heard it, he immediately became happy, he replied, "Really? Fantastic! Quickly, everyone, come help pull it onboard." Then the crew put all of their effort to pull the rope while Zhao Hai and Laura observed at the side.

After a short while, the crew managed to pull the harpoon to the surface. On the tip was an Arrow Turtle hanging from the rope. The Arrow Turtle was just like what Stack said, it was 5 meters long, had a spike on its head that was connected to its shell. Its skin closely resembled those of alligators and looked very thick. But in the end, Stack's harpoon managed to penetrate the turtle's foot. Even with the struggles of the Arrow Turtle, it didn't manage to dislodge itself from the harpoon.

The Arrow Turtle appeared very aggressive, it often opened its mouth to roar, showing Zhao Hai the canines inside its mouth. This was definitely a magic beast capable of strong attacks.

At this time, a sailor was getting another shot ready to kill the turtle. Pulling in onboard while still alive was a very dangerous thing to do since the creature's attacks weren't weak.

Seeing that the sailor was about to shoot the arrow, Zhao Hai quickly intervened, "Wait! Don't shoot! Stack, how about selling this turtle to me?"

Stack stared, "What do you want this for?"

Zhao Hai faintly smiled, "You leave that to me, so are you selling it?" Stack smiled and said, "What sell, I'll give it to you. We just captured it anyway."

Zhao Hai was happy, he didn't become polite as he arrived at the side of the ship and waved his hand immediately sending the Arrow Turtle into the Space. This was a new type of magic beast that may help Zhao Hai upgrade his Ranch. It's wounds didn't matter since the Space could just heal it.

When Stack saw the way Zhao Hai took the turtle away, his complexion changed. Although he was just a ship captain, he also had a lot of experiences. For Zhao Hai to do what he just did showed that he had a

spatial item with him. For a person to hold a spatial item, one's status shouldn't be that low. Stack didn't think that Zhao Hai would own such item.

One should know that spatial items were status symbols in the continent. It was normal for Great Noble families to not have one, yet Zhao Hai actually had one, clearly showing his capabilities.

Although Stack wasn't a noble, he had met a lot of nobles before. These past few days that he interacted with Zhao Hai, he saw that Zhao Hai was quite different in a lot of ways. Zhao Hai didn't have the innate arrogance nobles generally had. With all of his interactions with Stack, he didn't show even a least bit of disdain, this made Stack feel touched.

Now seeing Zhao Hai reveal his spatial item, Stack cannot help but reevaluate his perception of Zhao Hai's status. Stack knew the Shelley Family very well, he frequently helps the family transport their cargo. When he saw Zhao Hai being accompanied with Might, as well as the absence of the Shelley Family emblem on him, Stack thought that Zhao Hai was not a member of Shelley Family. But he didn't expect Zhao Hai to possess a spatial item. This made Stack think that Zhao Hai might have been a direct lineage member of Shelley Family.

Law river's small incident was just a small distraction. Zhao Hai chatted with Stack for a while then returned to his room. He wants to quickly take a look whether the Space levelled up after taking in the Arrow Turtle. He wanted to see what changes the Ranch would undergo when it reaches level 10.

However, it was a pity that the Arrow Turtle wasn't enough to upgrade the Ranch to level 10. It became just like any animal inside the Ranch.

Zhao Hai didn't mind that the Ranch didn't level up. But this incident gave Zhao Hai a new idea. Although there were a lot of animals on land; the rivers, lakes, and seas also had a lot of plants and animals within, possibly even more than those in land. If Zhao Hai can take in some plants and animals from the river, levelling the Space wouldn't be difficult.

Laura who sat near Zhao Hai said, "Brother Hai, how about we directly absorb the river's water? Will that work?"

Zhao Hai froze, he didn't think about that. Directly absorbing the river's water? This method was worth trying.

Zhao Hai nodded, "We'll try, but we must wait for an appropriate opportunity. In two days we'll arrive at Sky Water City. Not only can we absorb Law river's water there, we could also get some seawater as well, this should be enough to upgrade the Space. The Ranch had slowly gotten upgraded recently, but the Farm hadn't level up since. When we reach Sky Water City it would be best to find more unique plants to upgrade the Farm quickly. When we manage to cure the Water of Nothingness, then we can relax."

Laura agreed, "Right, we really need to upgrade the farm as soon as possible. But it is currently winter, plants aren't exactly very abundant at this time. Most of them would have wilted by now or in the last months. If we want to get rid of the effects of the Water of Nothingness, I'm afraid we'll have to wait until spring."

Zhao Hai nodded, "We can wait, no need to worry about it for now. We have already waited for quite a long time, so there should be no problem waiting longer. Also, when we arrive at Sky Water City, we still need to settle down."

Laura also nodded and said, "We currently have Might to protect us, but it means that we're currently identified as members of the family. This might give us problems later on, which I think the Shelley Family depends on to tie us to them. With this, others might think twice when cooperating with us. Brother Hai, do you think that this will affect our cooperation with Calci Family?"

Zhao Hai shook his head, "It shouldn't, we are people from the League of Dark Mages. Technically, our connection with Calci Family is much closer than with the Shelley Family, so they shouldn't doubt our intentions."

Chapter 350 - Insane Level Ups

Laura nodded, "If we can really form a relationship with the Calci Family, then it would certainly be a good thing for us. That way, if we decide to reveal our identity in the future, nobody would dare to say anything."

Zhao Hai smiled, "If we don't reveal it then nobody would know. Our territory is in Aksu Empire anyway. If we let people know who we are, then we'll always get into trouble, and that would be annoying."

Laura agreed, although Cai'er can make them survive inside the poisonous fog, it wasn't a complete protection. There were a lot of 9th ranks all throughout the continent, as well as people with divergent abilities. Moreover, they shouldn't underestimate the strength behind an empire. Right now, not only are they enemies with Aksu Empire, there was also the more formidable Radiant Church.

The Radiant Church's capabilities are massive. Moreover, Light element magic has qualities that can suppress the poison fog. If the Radiant Church actually came to know Zhao Hai's identity, they will certainly go to the Black Wasteland, this situation was what Zhao Hai didn't want to happen.

When Zhao Hai saw that Laura didn't say anything, he continued, "What's the situation with your subordinate who went to the prairie?" Zhao Hai was naturally asking about Ah Tai, Laura's subordinate who was in the prairie.

Originally, Zhao Hai was meant to see Ah Tai when he arrived in the prairie and together they would head towards Beast God City. But because of Wales' matter, that didn't happen. However, Laura still instructed Ah Tai to head to Beast God City to act as the advance party.

Laura nodded, "I received info a few days ago, he already arrived at Beast God City, now he's currently understanding the situation there."

Zhao Hai nodded, "That's good, currently, Brother Wales is our only customer there. But his tribe alone cannot consume all of our grain. We must head to Beast God City later on and hopefully come in contact with those huge Warring Clans. I think that after we have settled in Sky Water City for some time, we'll see if there's a ship headed for the Beastmen Prairie, then we'll board it."

Laura frowned, "I think we should wait until spring arrives before we head back to the prairie. There's no business there at this time, beastmen had already prepared grains to survive the winter, going there would be a waste of time."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "It is exactly because all merchants think that there's no opportunity that we have to go there. Who knows, some special event might happen."

After saying this, Meg suddenly said as she was looking at the monitor, "Young Master, something isn't right. The ship's hull seem to be shaking more and more."

Zhao Hai stared for a moment and then left the Space with Laura. Upon exiting, he could clearly feel the violent shaking of the ship, it felt like the previous Arrow Turtle attack but much more intense.

Zhai Hai immediately arrived at the top deck along with Laura. Stack was stern faced while looking at the river. Zhao Hai quickly went on to his side and saw a lot of Arrow Turtles. These Arrow Turtles seem to ram the ship non-stop.

When he saw the situation, Zhao Hai couldn't help but frown and ask, "Stack, what is all this? Did these Arrow Turtles go crazy?"

Stack shook his head and said, "They're not crazy, but quite similar. We've been plotted against. Arrow Turtles prefer a type of wood known as Fragrant Cedar Wood. So as long as a ship made from this material travels along Law river, it would be frequently be beset by attacks from Arrow Turtles. My ship had just been repaired at River Law City, so I suspect that they might have used Fragrant Cedar Wood to patch it up and then just covered it with paint. The paint immediately fell off as it touched water, revealing the wood underneath. The Arrow Turtles must have smelled it thus they have attacked our ship."

Zhao Hai started, then his complexion changed as he looked at Might. Might also frowned, and as soon as he saw Zhao Hai look at him, he didn't freeze but instead creased his eyebrows even more, "Mister, is it that?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "It is, I suspect that this matter is Grand Duke Lionheart's doing. He should be able to do that."

Might's face turned ugly, "Does he have any shame? To deal with us, he'll sacrifice the other people onboard?"

Zhao Hai shook his head, "For the Grand Duke, killing others as collateral isn't important, eliminating our group is. He will be mocked continuously as long as we are alive so how could he let this opportunity pass?"

As soon as Stack heard their conversation he said, "So you're saying that this is Grand Duke Lionhearts doing? Just to kill you?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "It's highly probable that it is so. Right from Hundred Battles Fortress, the Grand Duke didn't stop attacking me. And in the entire process, I had managed to kill about ten thousand of the Grand Duke's people. You could imagine his hatred towards me. Brother Stack, it seems like I have implicated you this time. But this seems very strange, how did they know that I would ride your ship?"

Might smiled bitterly, "It must be because of me. Our Shelley Family's cooperation with the other merchants was quite clear to Grand Duke Lionheart. Ever since we arrived inside River Law City, the Grand Duke hadn't been able to deal with us, so he may have placed his hand on Brother Stack's ship. It might be possible that he also set up some ambushes on the road since he couldn't be sure whether we'll continue by land or water. It seems like we had underestimated him this time."

Stack also smiled bitterly, he didn't think that he would become a collateral victim. Law river's Arrow Turtles were quite a difficult creature to deal with. A single turtle might be manageable, but a large scale attack like this was absolutely a nightmare for a ship captain.

Might turned his head to Stack and said, "Stack, what means do we have to survive this?"

Stack forced a smile as he replied, "We can only abandon the ship and take refuge on another one to survive, but the ship is already done for."

Might nodded, "So we need to leave the ship behind. Don't worry Brother Stack, Shelley family would certainly compensate you. This matter is caused by us, so we cannot let you suffer some losses."

Hearing Might, Zhao Hai secretly nodded. He heavily approved Shelley Family's approach. From his point of view, Zhao Hai thought that Shelley Family couldn't be bad people.

Seeing the amount of Arrow Turtles gathering below, Zhao Hai suddenly said, "I'll try to see whether I could do something about these turtles, maybe we don't need to abandon the ship. Stack, anchor the ship and make all the other people take refuge inside."

When Stack heard what Zhao Hai said, his eyes couldn't help but light up. Then he immediately had his crewmen anchor the ship. Although Might said that they will compensate for the ship, Stack much preferred keeping this one. This ship was made by him from scratch, it was a family member to him. He has feelings for this ship so he didn't want to leave it behind as much as possible.

However, he still prepared the lifeboats. Keeping lives was much more important. Now that there were a lot of Arrow Turtles in the river, the ships around it have left the vicinity so there were no other ships that could be seen close by. This also brought more convenience for Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai's method was actually very simple. It was based on what Laura just suggested before, to just have the river water enter the Space. Doing so, the other creatures in it would also get carried along. Naturally, these Arrow Turtles weren't exceptions.

When the ship was properly anchored, Zhao Hai turned to Stack and said, "Brother Stack, you need to control the ship and have the sails retreat. I'll be causing the river to shake a lot, so if something goes wrong, the ship may turn over."

Stack thought that Zhao Hai would use water element magic, so he didn't ask anything more. He just nodded and commanded the sailors to take down the sails. Then he went to the helm and took control of the ship.

Seeing that they were prepared, Zhao Hai immediately brandished his Ghost Staff and went to the side of the ship. Then as he supposedly muttered a spell, he ordered Cai'er to make a spatial rift on the river and absorb the water directly.

Might and Stack looked carefully at Zhao Hai, they didn't know what Zhao Hai intends to do. At this time, at the surface of the river a huge spatial rift suddenly appeared, absorbing the river. Before long, a giant whirlpool was sucking everything towards it, even the ship they were riding on.

Might and Stack were frightened, they didn't expect Zhao Hai to not use water element magic. Instead, it seemed like Zhao Hai just used the very rare spatial magic.

Space Mages were the most difficult type of people to meet in the continent. Some people didn't even know many space magic spells, but all of them were aware of the most iconic spatial magic out there which was the spatial rift.

Seeing the spatial rift on the surface of the river, they certainly thought that Zhao Hai was a Space Mage. Might's eyes lit up as he looked at Zhao Hai, he also heavily praised the family's good luck.

Space Mages were very precious in the Continent. Any Power wanted to obtain a Space Mage for themselves. If the fact that Zhao Hai was a Space Mage were to become known, he would get the highest reception everywhere he'll go.

Might and the others felt the amount of water in the river was slowly decreasing. With their naked eyes, they could see the volume of water the spatial rift was absorbing.

Zhao Hai let Cai'er observe the Arrow Turtles in the water. As long as all the turtles were gone, only then will he stop.

Before long, Cai'er informed him that all of the Arrow Turtles surrounding the ship, about 300, had already been absorbed. Zhao Hai immediately stopped the rift, making the rift vanish from the surface of the river.

As soon as the rift vanished, the people on the boat immediately let out sighs of relief. Even though the ship had loosened its anchor, they felt that they were still gonna get sucked into the rift. So when they see that the rift was gone, they immediately relaxed.

A short while after the rift was stopped, the river's water level became normal, and it became calm. But the people onboard the ship looked at Zhao Hai strangely.

One must know that Space Mages were the most exalted among all the other Mages. And it was clear that what Zhao Hai just used was a Space Mage's spell.

Might looked at Zhao Hai and said, "I didn't think that mister is unexpectedly a Space Mage, I had been very disrespectful."

Zhao Hai looked at Might's appearance and laughed, "Come on, I'm just a Space Mage, not your mother. No need to be serious."

Might also laughed, then Stack came over. He looked at Zhao Hai strangely and said, "If I tell others that I have a Space Mage as a friend, nobody will believe me."

Zhao Hai and Might laughed. Zhao Hai looked at the river and said, "These turtles definitely aren't the only things waiting for us along the river. I'm afraid that Grand Duke Lionheart still has some tricks up his sleeves. We should get going, the sooner we arrive at Sky Water City, the safer we'll be." Stack agreed and immediately had the crew set the ship up for sail.

Zhao Hai pretended to be tired and said, "Right, since you'll be busy, I'll go back to my room and rest." Then he waved his hand to Might as he walked towards his room. Might didn't stop him, in fact, he was even more excited as well as happy for the family. For Shelley family to get in touch with a Space Mage was a very fortuitous encounter for them.

When Zhao Hai entered his room, he immediately went into the Space. Upon entering the Space, Zhao Hai seemed to hear a prompt on his mind but he didn't notice what it was. So when he arrived at the Space, he went to Cai'er and said, "Cai'er, what just happened."

Cai'er smiled and said, "Young Master, the Space levelled up. The Farm went up by one level while the Ranch went up by five, now it is level 14. Moreover, the Space has gained a new function which are the fisheries. If young master is thinking about farming fish, he could go to the ranch where the river is placed. The aquatic animals will not account for the limit imposed on land animals. Master can raise another 10,000 magic beasts in the river. After reaching level 10, all of the animals raised in the ranch will be immediately upgraded to become magic beasts, so common animals will be upgraded to magic beasts."

Zhao Hai felt great happiness upon hearing the news. He didn't expect to gain such a huge benefit. After upgrading the Ranch to level 10, all animals inside would actually be turned into magic beasts. Moreover, he can now breed some fishes, this was an excellent gain.

However, he immediately had a thought, he turned to Cai'er and said, "Cai'er, are the Fire Fishes I raised inside the hot spring included in the fisheries function?"

Cai'er nodded, "So long as the animal lives in water, it is included in the function. Not only can you raise aquatic animals, the amount of land animals that can be raised has been increased to 10,000 as well. Master can now raise 10,000 aquatic magic beasts as well as 10,000 land magic beasts."

Hearing Cai'er, Zhao Hai couldn't help but laugh and said, "Good! Fantastic! Let's go, when we enter the house you'll have to tell me about the benefits of this upgrade."