

Another World 51

Chapter 51 - Aggro

Because the people of the Continent didn't place great importance in developing agriculture, sometimes there would be pests cutting their crop yields, leading to a lot of starvation.

However, Green also knew that the natural conditions of the Ark Continent were very good, such as with the rice tree. This tree was like a bamboo, growing more than ten meters, and would produce rice twice a year. Despite that, most of the Continent's people would still go hungry.

The rice that this tree produces is mostly eaten by slaves. This tree didn't have very high land requirements. There were many places on the Continent where it could be grown, so it wasn't easy to have a food shortage in the Continent.

But Green didn't buy the rice seeds to grow these trees.

Even though he was clear on the fact that the soil requirements weren't that high, it would be impossible to grow this tree on the mountain, because this tree has one important drawback. It was very sensitive to metal.

A test was done in which they put a hundred pound piece of iron in a rice field. The result was that within ten days, all the rice trees in that farm land died off.

It was precisely because of this that Green didn't buy any seeds for the rice tree. Even though the dwarves have pretty much mined all the iron ore, the soil on this mountain probably has higher levels of iron than other places. Growing rice was simply nonsense.

So Green chose to grow oil fruit trees instead. Their soil requirements were very low and the clan would be able to benefit from those trees for many years. Plus, they could be grown on the mountain.

But, like the rice trees, the oil fruit trees also had a fatal flaw. They were vulnerable to pests.

Compared to the rice trees, the oil fruits were really susceptible to pests. Although rice trees would on average experience a large-scale infestation every five years, the oil fruit trees would practically be

affected by those pests every single year. But fortunately, they could grow almost everywhere, so they would be able to keep up the production of oil fruit.

However, this disadvantage was very deadly to the Buda clan. They needed a large amount of oil fruit trees as a major source of income. But if the trees were infested with pests, then they would be finished.

This was what Green was worried about, but now that Zhao showed him the pesticide, it felt like a heavy load had vanished from his heart.

Seeing Green so cheerful, Zhao said, "But I don't agree with the use of these two things. These two bottles are toxic. If we use them on the crops, there would be traces of toxins on them. Although it won't immediately poison the body, over many years of eating those crops, the toxins will accumulate, deteriorating your health."

Green paused for a moment, then frowned. "This is a problem. It seems that we won't be able to eat if we use that stuff."

Zhao shook his head, and decided to think about it for later. There were other problems he had to face. "Grandpa Green, let's go into my hut and see how many undead are on the screen, then find a way to catch them."

Green nodded. To be honest, Green felt that the screen was very convenient. You could see outside the space to know what the situation was. The only drawback was that the range was too small.

Several people in the hut looked at the screen. The number of green dots didn't seem to change, staying around a dozen. Zhao looked at the living room and saw that a green dot had appeared there.

Bringing up the living room view, Zhao spotted a rat skeleton spirit beast. Looking at it, he couldn't help but freeze. He then looked up at the small three-dimensional map on the top of the screen, and sure enough, the green dot from upstairs was gone. It seems like the rat skeleton from upstairs had gone down to the living room.

Zhao wondered what was so special about the living room.

Green was also tracking the rat skeleton on the screen. "It seems like it senses people. Strange as it may be, the undead's ability to smell living flesh is really amazing."

Hearing what Green said, Zhao understood. The smell of human flesh must have leaked out of the space hole, making the rat skeleton go into the living room.

Figuring this out, Zhao felt joy because he thought of a way to catch these undead. There was a gaming term for it: Aggro.

In his past life, Zhao didn't play much of these games, but he still understood them from reading web novels.

Zhao turned to Green. "Grandpa Green, if we just wait for the undead to come into the living room, we might not get a large amount since we'll only be catching them one at a time. Maybe we can send a person out to pull more of the undead. We'll gather a lot of them and lead them here."

Zhao knew that the undead were sensitive to the living.

"Yes, that's a good idea," Green said. "But Master, what if this causes even more undead spirit beasts to attack us? Don't you think that it's because of us being here that those undead are coming?"

Zhao thought for a moment, then his face changed. This was certainly something he was worried about, in the case that the undead felt their presence, they would over run the castle and make it even more unsafe.

Meirin shook her head. "I do not think that it's because of us. Do not forget, we have been here for almost a month. If we're the reason, then those undead should have come out from the carrion swamp the moment we came to the Black Waste."

Green and Zhao heard what Meirin said, and they couldn't help but feel relieved. But Green then frowned. "That's strange. I remember people saying that here in the Black Waste, an outbreak of undead occurs every ten or twenty years And the last time was just three or four years ago. If it isn't

because of us, then why did this outbreak happen so soon? If the frequency of outbreaks is this fast, then we're in trouble."

"You can't really believe those rumors. No one really understands how the Black Waste works," was all Meirin could say.

Green nodded. "Yes, ah, I forgot that there's really nothing appealing in the Black Waste, so naturally no one actually comes here. Well, anyway we can always hide in the space if the plan doesn't work."

Green's attitude was a lot better than before. It wasn't like when he felt so desperate as if he had lost hope. In their struggle, he became very serious because it was hard to do what was best, which gave him a lot of pressure.

But now that he knew about Zhao's space, Green's attitude completely changed. He looked relaxed, because he believed that as long as Zhao had the space, the Buda clan would continue. Even if it wasn't restored to its former glory, it wouldn't be difficult to ensure the continuation of the Buda clan.

Hearing what Green said, Zhao couldn't help but chuckle. "Don't worry, Grandpa Green. If we could put some of the Continent's plants into the space, we can level up the space, which means we could make it larger. This will make it more helpful."

Green's eyes lit up. "Really? Master, is it true that the space can become bigger?"

Zhao nodded. "Of course. In fact, the space has already leveled up twice, giving us four acres. Grandma Meirin knows this since she was in the space during the second level up."

Chapter 52 - Right Answer

Green turned to look at Meirin, and after getting a positive response from her, he had a look of excitement. "That's great. As long as we can get through this crisis, we can then start sending the magic radishes to the Markey Company. What do you want to do now, Master?"

"Grandma Meirin, Grandpa Green, you'll go out the hole behind the hut while I monitor the undead from here. Today, we must grab as many as we can."

Green and Meirin nodded, then turned and walked out, while Zhao paid attention to the undead.

In the next five days, the slaves were practicing their reading and writing, while Zhao and the rest were catching the undead spirit beasts.

In these five days, they used Zhao's suggestion of aggro, and they managed to catch about a thousand undead. Once these undead entered the space, the green soul fire where their eyes were supposed to be turned red, and then Zhao threw them into his barn.

Also, in this five day period, thanks to his four acres of land, he was able to harvest eight batches of corn, while also harvesting a lot of oil fruit. Now that he had about a dozen batches of stored corn, Zhao thought that he should try planting something else.

But now wasn't have the time to think about that because there were spirit beasts outside. After a lapse of five days, the undead spirit beasts had almost all disappeared after getting caught and converted.

This allowed Green to feel at ease. He had some worry that it was because they were here that the undead spirit beasts came out of the carrion swamp. But now that the undead were gone, and no more were rushing out of the swamp, he was relieved by this good news.

Once the undead spirit beasts have receded, Zhao and everyone else immediately left the space. But once they were out, all of them had a frown on their faces when they saw the horrendous destruction of the castle. Although the main building didn't suffer that much damage, all the supplies had been battered and destroyed, making the castle look more ragged.

Looking at the dilapidated castle, Zhao's heart felt uncomfortable. Although the castle was plain and simple, it was still home.

The screen had allowed them to see what was happening outside, but now that they were actually here, the destruction looked more intense. Blockhead couldn't resist punching a wall until blood flowed down from his fist.

Contrary to that, Green was very calm. These past few days he had been out of the space doing the aggroing, so he was clear on the situation of the castle.

Meirin also saw the filthy state of the castle. "Well, let's gather up anything that the spirit beasts touched and get them out of the castle. I'm afraid that they could be toxic. Once we get everything out, I will use water to rinse out the castle."

Green frowned. "But now the moat water is green and it seems to be toxic. If we use that water to clean the castle, then it might just infect it instead."

Meirin also frowned, then she turned to Zhao. "Master, should we go look at the moat?"

Zhao also wanted to see it. He wanted to check if his spatial water's detoxification ability could be a solution to the moat water's poison.

Green apparently thought of this as well. "Master, do you think you can detoxify the water in the moat?"

"We'll go take a look first. Meg, you will arrange for everyone to throw out everything in the castle. Everyone has drunk the spatial water, so I don't think that they would be poisoned if they touch anything."

Meg agreed, then organized the slaves to clean up.

Accompanied by Green and Meirin, Zhao walked straight towards the moat. The three looked at the moat. It was really like Green said; the moat water indeed released a queer green light. Not only did it scare them, it also made them feel puzzled. Although the water was flowing, the green color didn't dissipate.

Meirin wrinkled her brow as she looked at the moat water. "The water is flowing, but evidently it still contains a lot of toxins. I think that the problem could be from the underground lake."

Zhao nodded. "Grandma Meirin, take out a little water. I want the space to analyze it and test how strong the toxicity of the water is."

Meirin waved her hands, and a bubble of water floated up. Zhao immediately put it in his spatial farm.

The spatial voice sounded in Zhao's head. [Purification of toxic compounds in the contaminated water is possible]

Zhao could now rest assured. "Grandpa Green, Grandma Meirin, let's go to the underground lake. If we want to use the spatial water to remove the water's poison, then we better start at the source."

Meirin and Green were also relieved. To be honest, they were afraid that the spatial water would have trouble removing the poison. Although they believed that flowing water would eventually take out the poison, this would require a very long period of time, which would impact their clan's development.

Just as they were about to head to the mountain, Zhao suddenly stopped, standing motionless while staring at something.

Meirin and Green were both puzzled, so they followed where Zhao's eyes were looking. It was just an area of black soil, nothing unusual in the Black Waste. Green was confused, not knowing why Zhao was staring at it. Meirin also had some difficulty figuring out why he froze, but when she finally understood, her face suddenly went white.

That area of black soil was where Zhao first did his land improvement. Now the color of that piece of land was no different from the rest of the Black Waste.

Meirin's voice quavered. "Master, could it be?"

Zhao nodded, his face pale. If it was really the case in which that land changed back to the original black soil, then his land improvement had failed.

Green didn't understand what was wrong with the two, but looking at their faces, he knew that something bad had happened. He walked behind Zhao as they went towards that piece of land.

Once Zhao stood in front of it, he squatted down and carefully looked over the land, then he dug his hand into the ground and brought up some dirt. He breathed a long sigh of relief.

It turned out that this land didn't completely change back to its original appearance. Maybe those undead spirit beasts had just brought the black soil over and covered this piece of land so that nothing would grow. His land improvement wasn't a failure.

Meirin also grabbed a handful of soil and carefully looked at it. She still made an ugly face.

Green looked at the two with puzzlement, not knowing why they were closely staring at the black soil. He also crouched down and grabbed some of it with his hand. He soon discovered the improvements in this soil. Startled, he excitedly faced Zhao. "Master, what is this?"

Zhao took a deep breath and explained. "It is because of my space. Using the spatial earth and water, I was able to improve the soil in this piece of land so we could grow things here. But for some reason the spirit beasts brought this black soil from elsewhere and covered up the improved land."

Before Green could say anything, Meirin spoke up. "No, Master, I don't think that this black soil was brought here from elsewhere, but rather the surface of this land has been infected by the spirit beast's toxins, turning it back into black soil. If the spirit beasts really did bring the black soil here, it would definitely not be so uniform. Look around, this entire mu of land changed color."

Zhao took a moment to carefully look over the land and found that what Meirin said was true. The black color was very uniform. This was too unreasonable. The only explanation was that the improved land wasn't covered, it was contaminated.

No one on the Continent knew why the Black Waste had become like this. But when Zhao saw the polluted water, and now looking at this piece of land, he naturally thought that it was polluted by the spirit beasts. Unfortunately, they found the right answer.

Zhao hit the ground. "Why must our efforts go in vain?"

Green patted Zhao's shoulder. "No, Master. Rest assured, we will find a way to resolve this matter."

Zhao's face still didn't look good. He touched the ground and said, "No, you don't understand. Such a big piece of land, I planned to slowly improve it for farming, but now it seems that this plan would never be implemented."

Zhao stood up with a look of frustration. This time the blow was really too heavy. He simply couldn't transform such a large area of land within a short amount of time. If those spirit beasts come before he completed the transformation, then all of his efforts will come to nothing. Even if he completed the transformation, and those spirit beasts appeared, that would also tantamount to him doing useless work.

Green didn't know how to comfort Zhao. Obviously, after encountering such a situation, it would be hard to make his heart feel better.

Zhao looked at the Black Waste, and sighed. He turned around and walked towards the mountain, but he didn't take two steps before he stopped, and muttered, "No, this seems right."

Just when Meirin and Green were about to follow Zhao, Green was puzzled when he stopped. "Master, what's wrong?"

Zhao pointed at the mountain. "Grandpa Green, what do you see in that mountain?"

Green looked at the mountain, and frowned. "I only see weeds. Ah, wait, how can there be weeds on the mountain when the spirit beasts make black soil with their toxins? How could the soil on the mountain be unaffected?"

Meirin also reflected over this question. She looked puzzled thinking about how the spirit beasts trampled over the weeds, but after a few days of recovery, they would just crop up again. They were really tough with a tenacious vitality.

Seeing the weeds with restored vitality, Zhao felt that something was wrong. If the Black Waste was really contaminated by the touch of those spirit beasts, then it should be impossible for anything to grow on the mountain.

Looking at the patch of black land, Zhao murmured. "No, but if it isn't because of being touched by the toxins on the spirit beasts, then what is it?"

Green and Meirin also turned to look at the black land, seeing how far it stretched to the end. Originally, Meirin felt that her answer was right, but now that she saw those mountain weeds, she knew that it was the wrong answer.

Zhao walked in a circle, trying to figure out why the land had become like this, and thoughtlessly he ended up at the edge of the moat, where he unconsciously stopped, seeing the green moat while in a daze.

Meirin and Green saw Zhao standing motionless by the moat, and were a little nervous wondering what was happening to Zhao.

Zhao then forcefully clapped his hands. "I think I got it."

"Master, what are you thinking about?" Green was surprised.

Zhao pointed to the moat. "The water is flowing, but it is still green. That is to say, the underground lake where the water comes from must have been contaminated by the spirit beasts. But why should those spirit beasts go there? There's nothing to eat there. So I think that the purpose the spirit beasts go to the lake is to most likely take a bath."

"A bath? " Green and Meirin couldn't help but say. They both gave Zhao strange looks, thinking that he was frantic.

"Master must be distraught," Meirin quickly said.

Zhao turned around and looked at Meirin. "What? Grandma Meirin doesn't believe what I said?"

"Master, those spirit beasts came from the carrion swamp. It's a marshy place where there's no scarcity of water. Why would they come here to take a bath?"

Zhao snapped his fingers. "This is the problem. Although the carrion swamp does have water, that water is toxic. Like you said before, the air over there is toxic, so how could the water not be toxic? They wouldn't use that water for bathing. I think that they must be looking for some clean water to bathe in."

Hearing what Zhao said, Green and Meirin had never really thought about it.

Zhao looked at the two. "The reason that this land has become black is most likely related to those spirit beasts. Those creatures came from the carrion swamp, where everything, including the air and the water, is toxic. Maybe even the poison is too much for those spirit beasts to stand. So they will most likely go to the Black Waste, here, and try to flush out the excess toxins from their bodies. This will slowly make the Black Waste reach its current state."

What Zhao said made more and more sense to Green and Meirin.

But Green frowned. "But even if we can detoxify, when the spirit beasts come out of the carrion swamp with a high frequency, wouldn't we still be in trouble?"

Hearing what Green said, Zhao's look of excitement disappeared. He remembered that even if he found out a possible truth, he still didn't find a solution yet. Zhao took a deep breath and looked at the Black Waste. "We can't keep worrying about it since it's already happened. If there is a solution, we'll think about it eventually."

That being said, he walked towards the mountain. Green and Meirin took one last look at the Black Waste with a sigh, before they followed behind Zhao. They were afraid that there could be spirit beasts lingering around the underground lake, so it would be dangerous for Zhao.

The three made it to the entrance to the mines. Before Zhao could walk in, Meirin pulled him aside. "Master, let Green have a look first."

Zhao reluctantly stopped, but soon Green's voice could be heard coming from inside. "Master, Meirin, come in. There are no spirit beasts here."

Zhao and Meirin went into the mines, and eventually made it to the underground lake where Green was standing, looking at the lake in a daze. Meirin immediately used a lighting spell, now the three could clearly see the situation of the lake.

The lake was green. It was a deeper green than the moat.

Zhao sighed. "With such a good lake, I hate it when you guys take a bath in it." With these words, he opened up a hole, and the spatial water poured into the lake.

But Zhao didn't think that the moment the spatial water entered the lake, it would induce something like a chemical reaction. From the point of contact, the detoxification effect moved with a fast speed towards the center of the lake, and then beyond where Zhao could see.

Zhao was stunned. Although they suspected that the space could solve the water's poison, wasn't this too quick? From where the water flowed out of this lake, would it also react as fast?

Zhao was still uncertain. "I don't know if the water still contains toxins, Grandma Meirin. Could you look and see?" Since Meirin was a powerful water mage, this kind of thing was within her abilities.

Meirin nodded. She reached towards the lake and whispered a spell. A group of blue light emitted from her hand, like a sky full of stars, then they disappeared into the lake.

Eventually, the blue lights were brought together in Meirin's hands, then they slowly disappeared. Meirin opened her eyes with a look of shock. "That's amazing! All the toxins had disappeared. There's nothing left."

Zhao at once said, "Let's go back to the castle and see."

The trio immediately walked out of the mines, as soon as they were out of the entrance, they could see smoke rising from the castle. Evidently, Meg was doing her job.

Once they made it to the castle, they saw Meg was setting some of the garbage, which they threw out of the castle, on fire. After seeing that, Zhao quickly walked to the moat, and sure enough, the water was clear. All the green had completely disappeared.

But Zhao still wasn't reassured. He told Meirin to float up a water bubble, and then he brought into his space to see if it was still poisonous. The voice came, and it told him that the water has been completely cleared of toxic compounds.

After waiting until after Meg threw out all of the garbage, Meirin magically used the water to clean the castle. Once it was done, the castle was finally livable again.

Chapter 54 - A Seedling

Although the castle was clean again, it wasn't wet, mainly thanks to Meirin's control over water. She was an eighth level water mage, her control was perfect. The water only washed away the dirt until the castle was practically shining, and then there was nothing left but a little water vapor after she was done.

After Meirin cleaned the castle, Zhao immediately took the supplies back out from his space, along with some corn stalks for the kitchen and the slaves. After all, they needed this stuff to live. Once those things were taken out, Zhao left Meg to finish cleaning the castle, while he took Meirin to go check out the valley. He wanted to see if the valley also became the same as the rest of the Black Waste.

Green also wanted to look at the valley with Zhao. If it hadn't been contaminated, it would be considered a good source for growing food.

Meirin used her water spells to bring them over the lake and straight towards the valley. Zhao's heart was disturbed. He feared that the valley would be no different than the rest of the Black Waste.

Once they made it to the valley, Zhao was silent. It was as he expected, the land in the valley he had improved returned to its original look. But as he was looking at the valley, he discovered a problem.

There were no footprints.

There was no indication that anything had been on this land. If the spirit beasts hasn't been here, then how could the land become like this?

Zhao was puzzled. Next to him, Green sighed. "If there are no footprints, then it seems that those flying spirit beasts were here, spreading their poison."

Hearing what Green said, Zhao looked up towards the mountain and saw a few black spots here and there. It really seemed like Green was right, that it was because of the toxins from the flying spirit beasts.

Zhao felt depressed. Not only did they have to deal with spirit beasts on the ground, they also had to deal with the ones flying in the sky?

Just then, while searching the ground, Meirin suddenly shouted. "Ah, Master, come look!"

Zhao and Green didn't know what Meirin was so excited about, so they rushed over and were shocked at what she showed them.

In front of them was a seedling. A tiny corn seedling.

In front of their eyes was a small seedling, but do not forget that this land had been turned into black earth, so seeing it grow, wasn't it strange?

Looking at these seedlings, Zhao was puzzled. "How could it grow when the land has become like this?"

Meirin and Green didn't know how to answer him, they too didn't understand why. Zhao clawed at the ground around the seedling, and found that even if the surface had turned into black soil, the roots of the seedling were being nurtured by the fertile earth. The roots were very sturdy, allowing it to grow.

Looking at these seedlings, Zhao was reminded of something from his past life, when he saw corn seeds in rural areas. He was shocked to discover that those corn seeds were pink, and not the golden color that he was expecting. Thinking that it was strange, he questioned the people about it, and they laughed because, of course, corn seeds weren't actually pink. The reason that they were that color was because they were treated corn seeds.

In the north, because of the climate and the worms, it was difficult to grow corn. So they needed to treat the corn seeds with pesticides to help them sprout and survive until they grew into seedlings.

Growing in such a difficult environment reminded Zhao of this situation. Of course, he wasn't thinking of using pesticides and killing insects. He was thinking about dousing these seedlings with spatial water to help them grow. He wanted to see if corn could grow without land improvement, because now the spatial water had detoxification abilities.

Green and Meirin were standing there motionless while looking at the seedlings. They were very surprised, thinking that they would see a catastrophe with all the planted corn being destroyed. Never did they expect that the corn seeds would survive.

Zhao patted the earth and stood up. "Grandpa Green, Grandma Meirin, after we go back and settle things, we can use the spatial water on these tiny seedlings. Since the spatial water can detoxify, maybe it can also improve the land. The success rate might be low, but if it is successful, we can do it many times in one day."

Meirin was surprised. "Master, didn't you say that you could only improve one mu of land per day?"

"Certainly, the space has specified that we couldn't do so much land improvement, but it never said anything about just using the spatial water. We'll need some more land to test, and I have a lot of corn in my barn that we could use as corn seeds. Let's try it to see whether we could do it or not."

Before Meirin could speak, Green nodded his head and said, "Master, this is a good idea, but will we run out of spatial water?"

Zhao chuckled. "That shouldn't be the case. When so many of us were living inside the space, we were drinking water every day. The amount of water everyone drank per day was certainly not a small amount, yet did you see if there was less spatial water?"

"There really wasn't any decrease," Green recalled. "This is really great, Master. But I still think we should first go send the radishes to the Markey Company. Then we could start growing oil fruit seeds and alfalfa seeds on the mountain. Once we douse it with spatial water, we can slowly change the mountain land to shorten the growth period of the oil fruit trees. Once we have a good harvest, then we can have a fixed income."

Zhao nodded. "Yes, we should do that. But I'm a bit worried that when we go deliver the radishes, what would happen to the people in the castle when we leave? If those spirit beasts attacks, they will be unable to resist."

Green laughed. "Master, what are you worrying about? We can just take everyone with us inside the space."

Zhao thought for a moment, and then smiled. He forgot about that. With his space, he could simply take everybody with him. After all, protecting everyone was the most important.

"This is a good idea." Meirin nodded. "Also, we shouldn't disguise how damaged the castle looks. The people in the Continent already knows about the disaster with the spirit beasts invading the Black Waste, so if they send someone to come see, it would be like we were playing dead. Perhaps in the future, we wouldn't need to worry about those guys."

"I fear that it may not be that easy since you've just cleaned up the castle," Green said. "If someone were to look at it, then I'm afraid that we won't be able to hide it for too long. Once we head out, we can only stay away for a short time, so the only thing we should do is sell the radishes."

Meirin gave a wry smile. She never really thought that it would be a mistake to clean too fast.

"Well, then we should go as soon as possible, and not be found out by those guys," Zhao said.

"Then Master, we should go back and start at once. There are a lot of things that have to be done."

Chapter 55 - Black Mage

When Zhao returned to the castle, he told Meg to make the necessary preparation. In two days, they were going to go to the Purcell Duchy with everybody.

In fact, this preparation was very simple. They could just put everything they needed into the space. The slaves had already been in the space before, so they were ready and willing to go in when they were informed .

Two days later, everyone went into the space. However, Zhao didn't go in. He was staying outside with Green.

Green, if he was traveling by himself, could go really fast. But since Zhao was going with him this time, they would naturally move more slowly.

Fortunately, Zhao took out one of the undead from the space, and now he and Green were on their way, riding on Alien. Although Green was fast, he would still become tired, while an undead could keep on going like a perpetual motion machine.

It should be said that the Black Waste was really huge. Their speed was not slow, and they have been moving day and night, but it would take them three more days before they could see the outer perimeter of the Black Waste.

Fortunately, Alien was large enough for Zhao to simply cover its back with planks of wood to make a bed, like turning the undead into a car.

Right now they were going down a road paved with slabs of stone, and although it had become weathered, it was still flat, which showed off the dwarves superb craftsmanship. This road was used by the dwarves to move a large number of iron ore, along with a wide variety of iron products, to be sold to the whole Continent. But since all the iron ore were mined, and no more adventurers had tried to conquer the carrion swamp, no one uses this road anymore. If not for the fact that grass didn't grow here, there would simply be no road at all.

Three days later, Zhao finally saw the outer perimeter of the Black Waste. In the distance, he could see something green, which made his spirit rise.

Green was also relieved. To be honest, he would like a change of scenery. Seeing the endless black soil was a kind of a torture. Throughout their journey, he and Zhao had been talking less and less, especially in the last half day, when they didn't even say a word to each other. The two just sat there, looking at the endless black soil, like their souls had been sucked out.

Then imagine what would happen when their eyes suddenly spotted something green. Even if it was just a little bit, it had a huge impact.

Zhao shouted, like he wanted to run off. Green chuckled. "Master, this is the outer perimeter. Over there is the Purcell Duchy. If we go any further, we will be leaving the Buda clan's territory."

From what Green said, Zhao nodded and turned around to look at all that black land. The land was his, but it didn't bring him a happy mood. Seeing the endless land that couldn't be planted made it look like his ideas weren't feasible.

Slowly, they saw more and more patches of green. Zhao then spotted mountains that were bigger, and with a lot more trees, than the iron mountain near his castle. He was shocked when he saw these steep mountains, which made the iron mountain look gentle.

Green noted the look on Zhao's face, and smiled. "I guess Master didn't expect that the mountains here would be so high and steep?"

Zhao nodded, then Green continued. "In fact, this is not surprising. Even if it's not the highest place, it is definitely not the shortest. Comparatively speaking, they are higher than the one near our castle."

They then saw a valley, hundreds of meters wide, in the distance. It was the only way out of the Black Waste. As long as they go through there, they would enter the territory of the Purcell Duchy.

Green pointed to the valley. "That place was once called the Iron Stream Valley. All the iron flows out through there. But ever since there was no more iron coming out, people slowly forgot about the name of this place, and it eventually became known as the Forgotten Valley. In the Forgotten Valley, there's a

fortress called Montenegro. It was designed to prevent any massive outbreaks of spirit beasts from going through the Forgotten Valley and into the Purcell Duchy. Strange to say, those spirit beasts had never come out of the Black Waste. So the fortress slowly turned into a paradise for adventurers. They were risk takers, and although the carrion swamp was too risky, they could still hunt spirit beasts around here."

Zhao nodded. "Then how do we get past it without getting found out?"

Green smiled slightly. "Master doesn't need to worry. Later, we will go straight into the mountains of Forgotten Valley, and then I will go into Montenegro and buy some clothing for you. Since you can use these undead, you'll have to dress like a black mage."

Black mages were actually general terms for those who learned dark magic, poison magic, blood magic, and other attributes that were related to darkness. But even if this world was repulsed by black mages, it still respected power. As long as you had strength, regardless of what abilities, you will be accepted.

The black mages were people that no one wanted to provoke, probably because they might have learned that type of magic for a very dark reason, and their characters were somewhat gloomy. If you mess with them, they might not attack you on the spot, but they will definitely make you pay one day.

If you were asked who had the highest position in this world, some might answer that it was the nobles or the royalty, but it was undeniable that the status of mages was certainly not low. A powerful mage will find courtesy in any empire.

There might have no longer been a Buda clan if they didn't have a powerful mage such as Meirin.

However, even if no one wished to offend a black mage, no one wanted to welcome them. Most people did not wish to get into contact with a black mage. Green wanted to make Zhao look like a black mage as an added protection, since they would stop people from finding out Zhao's identity.

Zhao's understanding of this world was too small, so he didn't argue with Green, and just nodded his head. "You arrange it, Grandpa Green. I've rarely walked outside, so I don't know what to do. I'll listen to you."

Green nodded. What they were doing was related to the survival of the Buda clan. No one could find out their identity while they were selling the radishes, otherwise the Buda clan would be in big trouble.

The Buda clan was hated by the Aksu Empire, who would deliver a merciless blow if they found out about this transaction. It was precisely because of this that Green had to be more careful. Even if he didn't know that Adam was replaced by Zhao, he would do everything he can to not let Zhao be killed.

Since Zhao was going to rule the entire Buda clan, Green wanted him to better understand the world. Green was actually paving the way for Zhao. He knew that his Master was young, but he still hoped that he would grow up. The day that Zhao would become a person that could support the Buda clan, he will be able to feel at ease.

Chapter 56 - Not saying Hello

They quickly went into Forgotten Valley. Zhao didn't put away his undead yet, so as to keep up his identity as a black mage; because if they headed to the fortress, no one would bother them when they see a black mage with a summoned undead.

The sides of the valley weren't steep cliffs, but two gentle slopes, which contained shrubs and weeds, and also trees that were much stronger and more vibrant than the ones near his castle.

They didn't see anyone in Forgotten Valley, but occasionally they could hear the sound of insects, giving everything a harmonious nature.

After looking at the hills on both sides, Green turned to Zhao. "Master, once we find a good place to settle on the mountain, you will immediately go into the space, while I go into Montenegro to buy clothes and stuff."

Zhao nodded, and commanded the undead to climb the hill. Although it was just a skeleton, it still had sharp claws, so climbing a mountain wasn't strenuous. Once he was closer to the trees, he could see that they were similar to the ones on Earth. He didn't know much about trees, except for common species like poplar, willow, elm, and pine. He didn't recognize the other trees.

Green, while sitting next to Zhao, was also watching the trees. "Master, the woods are very dangerous. Not only because of spirit beasts, but there are plants that are highly toxic. So be careful."

Zhao nodded. Although he had never been in a forest before, he had read about dangerous scenarios that people had written online. Even in fiction, the forest would be depicted as a dangerous place. And since there were spirit beasts here, he had to be even more careful.

There was a lot of vegetation on the mountain. You could see a variety of trees everywhere, to the point where the light would get dim when you walked through the woods. It took them awhile, but they were finally able to find a secluded place.

They jumped off of Alien, and then Zhao and Green followed it into the space.

Inside the space, the corn were growing strong, the oil fruit trees were healthy, and Meirin was teaching the slaves to read and write.

But besides just reading and writing like last time, Zhao had brought the mined stones with him so Ann and some slaves could try to make a mill stone. Also, he had brought a lot of weeds into the space as well, to give the other slaves something to do. Moreover, the effect was surprisingly good. There were simply no problems for the slaves since they could now work, as well as rest.

Meirin saw the two come in, so she quickly greeted them and said, "Master, Green, how come you're here? Did anything happen?"

"Nothing happened," Green said. "We just finally made it to Forgotten Valley. Let the young master stay in the space for a few days, while I go out there to get some clothes from Montenegro."

Meirin understood what Green was doing. "Well, make haste. We'll be here waiting for you to return. And remember our position so you can find your way back."

Meirin was in a good mood these days. The Buda clan was about to receive an income for the first time since they were exiled. Although they haven't received the money yet, it still represented hope.

Zhao turned to Green. "Be careful, Grandpa Green. Our identity cannot be exposed, otherwise we will suffer. Remember that selling the radishes now doesn't matter; we can just wait for some other time if you run into trouble. Your safety is the most important."

A hint of a warm smile appeared on Green's face. He patted Zhao's shoulder. "Master doesn't need to worry. My bones may be old, but I can't bear to die before seeing the revival of the Buda clan." He finished his words with a laugh.

Before, Green would have never acted so friendly with Zhao, because he wasn't close to Adam. Green thought that Adam was very annoying, so how could he be so friendly towards him.

But now Adam's body was filled with Zhao's soul. Zhao was an otaku, an orphan, and he was born in China, which respected the elderly. Although Green and Meirin were his servants, ever since he woke up, they have been taking care of him, which resulted in a strong bond with his beloved elders.

This change in Zhao was felt by Meirin and Green. It was because of this change that Green could be so friendly with Zhao, otherwise it would have been impossible to get along with him.

Zhao let Green pat his shoulder, just feeling the elder's love, but he didn't say anything because he was very subtle and didn't like to put on an excessive show of feelings. He simply nodded and said, "Grandpa Green, I'll send you out." With a thought, Green left the space.

Green memorized his surroundings and left a mark, then he rushed towards Montenegro.

Green looked like an old traveler, so he didn't face any scruples when he encountered some adventurers. Those ordinary adventurers didn't pay attention to the Buda clan. After all, the great nobles didn't seem to see the Buda clan as a threat, so they didn't hire out any of these risk takers to deal with such a declining clan. Plus, they also didn't want to anger Green and Meirin, who were strong characters.

The real threat to the Buda clan was none other than the Purcell clan. The previous relationship with the two clans was good, even preparing their children for marriage, but since the fall of the Buda clan, the Purcell clan never mentioned the marriage again.

Aristocratic marriages weren't about love. The Purcell clan was only interested in the marriage with the Buda clan to gain some benefits.

But now that the Buda clan was down, the Purcell clan deemed that there was no value in honoring the marriage agreement. However, they still needed to save face.

Even though the Buda clan was now weak, if the Purcell clan dissolved the marriage that was their idea in the first place, then their clan would damage their reputation among the aristocratic circles. The Purcell clan wouldn't do such an idiotic thing.

There were only two ways to get rid of the marriage agreement.

The first way was for the Buda clan to initiate the dissolution of the marriage. Everyone knows that the Purcell clan was the one to offer the marriage, but if the Buda clan was the one to give it up, then the Purcell clan could possibly save face.

The other way was even simpler. Kill Adam Buda, and let the Buda clan die. Obviously, there wouldn't be a marriage after that.

In fact, Green had thought of releasing the marriage from the Purcell clan, but at the time, Zhao hadn't woken up yet. But when the Buda clan needed help the most, the Purcell clan chose not to aid them, even though they had the power to do so. It was precisely because of this that Green felt some resentment towards the Purcell clan, so he decided not to dissolve Zhao's marriage, just because the Purcell clan didn't help them, and let them fall to this point without even greeting them with a hello.

Green understood a noble's problems with saving face, so he will not take the initiative to dissolve the marriage with the Purcell clan, even if they were to pressure his Buda clan.

Still, Green had to be very careful, because the only way out of the Black Waste was the entrance to the Purcell Duchy. Since they were a thorn to the Purcell clan, the Purcell clan would obviously pay attention to their movements, so he had to be careful.

Chapter 57 - Montenegro Fortress

Standing quietly at the exit of Forgotten Valley was a fortress. The fortress was made of black stone, with walls reaching an appalling height of forty meters, and a length that completely blocked the valley.

The whole fortress was like an iron wall. If you want to get past the valley, you will have to go through Montenegro.

But when you actually get closer to Montenegro Fortress, you realize that it's not actually as mighty as you imagined. In fact, with its damaged walls, the entire fortress looked shabby, as if it had not been repaired in a long time.

This was true. The Purcell clan had built this fortress to prevent any carrion swamp spirit beasts from going through the Forgotten Valley and into the Purcell Duchy. But although the fortress has been established for hundreds of years, there have just been no activities of spirit beasts charging in from the Black Waste, which made this fortress become neglected. Although there were some troops here, they were more for protecting the peace and order of this place.

But even if Montenegro Fortress had no garrison, no one dared to underestimate the fighting strength here, because there were numerous adventurers and mercenaries.

However, with the existence of these people, the security of Montenegro Fortress became confusing. The city defense officials had to deal with adventurers, mercenaries, and even some rebellious guys that would even try to injure a child with knives. In the face of such a group of barbarians, the official defense forces were too weak.

Because of this, the defense forces of Montenegro finally evolved into several large mercenary groups and local merchants having their own site, and deciding not to infringe on each other, which resulted in a peaceful coexistence.

Of course, in this case, the Purcell Duchy can't even think of receiving any taxes, and because of this non-collection of taxes, the Duchy doesn't give them any money to repair the walls, so slowly Montenegro became a paradise for mercenaries, adventurers, and even fugitives.

This was also a side effect from the situation in the Black Waste. Since that wasteland was a place of death, Montenegro Fortress became one of the safest towns from outside forces, because it was

surrounded by mountains and no enemies. Such a place should have been an important border town, but because there was no trade and the Purcell Duchy couldn't collect taxes, this place was forgotten.

For Green, Montenegro was an undefended fortress.

Of course, he wouldn't just go swaggering into the main entrance, but he could easily sneak over the walls.

Montenegro had a very abnormal commercial development. Weapon stores, drug stores, and equipment consultations were everywhere, but pubs, hotels, restaurants, and a place to buy consumer goods were difficult to find. The whole fortress was full of adventurers and mercenaries, so the number of ordinary people was very small.

This wasn't a concern for Green. He found a remote equipment store and bought five black magic robes, along with a hat and a wooden staff. He also bought for himself a very beautiful suit of armor. Although it wasn't as good as most decent armors, it still had the most important part he needed: a helmet that could hide Green's entire face.

Naturally, the magic robes were for Zhao. With these robes and staff, Zhao could dress up as a black mage. After all, it wasn't odd for black mages to wear something that wrapped up their whole body.

You should know that magic robes have been improved over many generations in this Continent. They were particularly more comfortable to wear, but also more beautiful, especially the ones worn by female mages, to the point that the gorgeous robes looked like a dress. Compared to the ones generally worn by mages, Green bought a black mage robe that was very thick, along with a large hat that could entirely block someone's face.

As for Green's set of armor that would cover his face, he wanted to dress as a follower of a mage. Mages were high status people, and under normal circumstances they wouldn't be short on money. Although mages weren't afraid of melee combat, they would still have followers with them, and make those followers fight and help them in battle.

Therefore, on the Continent, if you see a mage around, it wasn't strange to see them with a bunch of followers.

This time, Green was going to dress up as a warrior that was following a mage, which was the only way to stand by Zhao's side without being suspected.

After buying these things, Green then bought some mercenary items, including a backpack.

Backpacks were the standard equipment for mercenaries and adventurers. Because they would often go out into the field, they would prepare a lot of stuff that corresponded to their different tasks, such as food, gathering loot, finding a place to make camp, and a lot of other things. This was how a mercenary backpack came into being.

Green mainly bought these things to not let people discover the secret of Zhao's space. He wasn't worried about passing through Montenegro, since this was a place where people simply didn't care about anything other than themselves, and the Purcell clan didn't flaunt their power here. However, getting into other places might not be as smooth. With the exception of Montenegro, the Purcell clan had very good control of their territory.

Green would like to buy more things, but he didn't have the money on hand. Although he got the orders for the radishes, do not forget that he hasn't actually sold them yet. So he could only buy some essentials.

Without wearing the shiny silver armor that blatantly hid his face, Green looked like an ordinary adventurer, which made him blend in perfectly. There were hundreds of those risk takers here, so no one paid attention to him. Still, he had to be careful to not be observed when walking into the mountains. He walked in a roundabout way until he was sure that no one was following him, then he went to the place where he made the mark. Suddenly, the space hole appeared. After Green stepped into the space, the hole disappeared. Everything was quiet.

Zhao had been paying attention to what was happening outside the space. Do not forget that he could see in a range up to one hundred meters, so he was able to find Green when he returned.

Seeing Green holding a big backpack, Zhao froze for a moment, because this backpack looked a lot like those mountaineering bags back on Earth. Even though it wasn't made of the same materials, the quality wasn't as fine, and there were no zippers, it still looked like a mountaineering bag.

Zhao was puzzled as he pointed at the backpack. "Grandpa Green, why did you buy this thing?"

Green smiled. "Well, we don't actually need it, but this thing could mask the presence of the space as we're traveling around."

Zhao immediately understood what Green meant, and nodded his head. "Yes, I didn't think of that."

Green then took out a magic staff and handed it to Zhao. "This is something for a mage. I chose this one because of how light it is, so Master doesn't need a lot of strength to wield it. And in this backpack are the robes that Master should put on."

Zhao held the staff and the backpack. He didn't know what kind of wood this staff was made of, but it was as light as bamboo. However, he didn't continue to study the magic staff as he took the backpack into the hut.

In the beginning, Zhao had been wearing aristocratic clothes that had been prepared for him, but although they were beautiful, they were still very inconvenient. For example, the lower half was like the Western medieval tights back on Earth, which really affected his range of movements. Meirin knew this, so she hadn't objected when Zhao started wearing the clothes of a warrior, much like Green's. Naturally, they were very loose and convenient, and easy to move around in.

Now it was time to put on the black robe.

Chapter 58 - Sly Smile

Zhao silently looked at the black robe in his hands. He didn't know what it was made of, but it was very thick, with good craftsmanship. However, what he most noted was that the style of the robe looked like something a villain from a TV show would wear.

As for the hat that he was carrying, it was a big hat. The most important thing about it was that it would cover his face so people couldn't see his appearance.

All of this was perfect for disguising himself as a black mage.

Zhao wore the robe over his warrior clothes. The black robe was very large and thick, not to mention he didn't feel cold after wearing it, and the cloth of the robe was quite soft, so it was comfortable to wear. He couldn't help but nod with satisfaction. Once he put on his hat, he then picked up his magic staff and walked out of the hut.

When Green saw Zhao coming out of the door, he discovered that the robe really suited Zhao. Wearing it really did make Zhao look like a black mage. That was because Zhao had a peculiar temperament that made him seem out of tune with the world. If you didn't pay attention to him, you wouldn't feel his presence, as if he was an invisible man.

In fact, Zhao's temperament was simply because he was an otaku from his past life. Otakus generally were less likely to communicate with other people and naturally they were very good at hiding their presence. They would always put themselves in a place where people didn't pay attention so that no one would notice them. And then they would sit there, watching the world.

In his past life, Zhao had such an experience. One time, he went out with his work friends. They went out to dinner and then to a hotel, but it was only when they went up to their rooms that everyone finally noticed him. "You were invited?" they all asked, surprised.

Being asked that by his friends, Zhao didn't know what to do, because even though he had accompanied them, they completely forgot about him. It was like being a pebble on the road.

It was precisely because of this temperament that made the black robe look appropriate on Zhao. It seemed like he was out of tune with the world, so you could easily ignore his presence, which was right for a black mage.

Everyone was looking at Zhao, while Green couldn't help but be surprised as he picked up the hat. "How very strange," Green said.

Zhao took the hat back from Green, and then wore it again. His body temperament suddenly changed, as if he was about to disappear.

This change, if you didn't personally see it, you wouldn't believe it. But everyone was happy about this. If Zhao wore the robe, he would look like a black mage. If he took it off, no one would think that he and the black mage were one and the same person. This was very convenient in hiding Zhao's identity.

Green shook his head. "I never would have thought that such clothes would be so suitable for the young master. Meg will also dress up too. She will follow you as a maid. If you go out, she can protect you, and no one would suspect anything when a maid follows a black mage."

Zhao looked at Meg. To be honest, although he wanted to see that side of her, his heart felt uncomfortable so he was a little afraid to face Meg.

Green then added, "Originally, I wanted Blockhead and Rockhead to follow you, but if those two fools worked together, then they would probably stand out too much and arouse suspicion."

Zhao didn't really think so. But since Green didn't want Blockhead and Rockhead to follow them outside, he had to give up.

Just then, Meg suddenly spoke up. "Master, do you not want me to go with you?"

Zhao was surprised as he turned around to look at Meg. He found that her eyes looked tearful, delicate, and charming to the point that would make people speechless. "No, that's not it," Zhao quickly said. "You can follow me." He then turned around again, afraid to look at Meg. When he turned his head back, he saw that she had a sly smile on her face.

Meg discovered that Zhao seemed to be a little afraid of her. Under normal circumstances, she would have not gone along with him, but now she wanted to see if Zhao cared about her. Turns out that he did care.

Men thought that girls would never understand if a guy cares about her or not, but just one look told her that Zhao did. Meg couldn't help but laugh when Zhao seemed to be afraid of her. Now she felt like teasing Zhao. But since Green and Meirin were standing next to her, she wouldn't.

Green couldn't help but stare at Meg, who lowered her head and then turned and ran off. "I have to go pack up some things," she said.

Meirin and Green didn't object when they realized that Meg was interested in Zhao. If it was in the past, they wouldn't have let Zhao get close to Meg, but now they didn't oppose it.

Green then turned to Zhao. "Master, you had better put up the screen so that Meirin could keep an eye outside, so that Meirin could be on alert for us, even if we were resting. If I were to leave, and if Meg wasn't at your side, you could always ask Meirin to help you."

Zhao thought there was no need for that, but he agreed nonetheless. However, he felt uncomfortable about it. If he allowed Meirin to use the screen, she would have to watch them twenty four hours a day, and he really felt bad about that. However, he still did it. Since they were outside the Black Waste, they needed the extra insurance.

Even though he had Adam's memories, from birth to now, Adam has never left the capital of the Aksu Empire, so he didn't know much about the outside world. In this case, Zhao didn't know anything about the situation out there, so he had to do things according to Green's advice.

Later, he put the screen up for Meirin. Meg was also finished packing, holding a bag while dressed as a maid. It must be said that Meg looked really beautiful in a maid outfit. She looked so gentle that people couldn't help but feel a desire to protect her.

After trying not to stare at Meg, Zhao turned to Meirin and said, "Grandma Meirin, if there's anything you need, you can just knock on the screen. I'll be listening."

Meirin nodded. "Master, you can rest assured. But you also have to be careful."

Zhao also nodded his head. Then with a thought, Zhao, Green, and Meg appeared in the woods.

Green took a look around, and then he said to Zhao, "Master, call out your undead. Then we will head off to Montenegro Fortress." Green smiled. "If it was any other city, when we have a summoned undead, people would think that we were attacking the city. But here is Montenegro. There's no reason to attack it. If we get past the city while sitting on an undead, it would reduce a lot of trouble because no one would bother us."

Zhao was puzzled. "But I'm wearing the robe of a black mage. Isn't that enough to stop them from bothering us?"

"That place isn't the same as other cities. It doesn't have that many mages, so many people would try to impersonate a black mage. Everyone in the Continent knows that black mages aren't to be trifled with. So often times someone would pose as a black mage to commit a robbery and extort things off of adventurers. If we don't take out an undead, people may not think that you're really a black mage."

Chapter 59 - Mercenaries and Adventurers

Zhao really didn't know there were people in this world that would impersonate black mages. He didn't think that someone in Montenegro would dare to pose as one. It was a strange place.

Green apparently saw Zhao's puzzled look, and he smiled. "There's nothing to be surprised about. Those audacious mercenaries and adventurers in this paradise have nothing that they wouldn't dare to do."

Zhao nodded. "Well, I'll listen to you. Let's go," he said as he summoned his undead.

Green put on the shiny body armor, even though he didn't actually need it for protection. As powerful a warrior as Green was, if he was someone that needed to rely on something to protect his own safety, he would have already lost the battle.

Meg, in her maid outfit, sat quietly on Alien, next to Zhao. She had seen Zhao sit on Alien before, but she had never personally got on herself, so she was curious about what it was like. She soon discovered that sitting on the undead was not very comfortable. Although there were planks covered with blankets to sit on, it still felt hard and there wasn't that much room.

Even though the undead reached a staggering ten meters long, most of it was from its tail, which measured about five meters, half the size of its entire body. Plus with a two meter long head, the main part of its body was a mere three meters. Green wasn't sitting with the two because he was on Alien's skull, and although the skull was a small area, with his skill, Green could stand or sit and even sleep with no problems. Alien naturally couldn't feel anything, so it didn't mind that someone was riding on its head.

The three slowly left the woods and were back in Forgotten Valley. They still didn't see any people yet, but Zhao didn't care as he directed the undead to walk straight towards Montenegro.

It wasn't very far, only taking about half an hour before they saw the distant walls and people by the gates. Zhao commanded the undead to keep going because of what Green told him. If they sat on Alien as they entered Montenegro Fortress, no one would dare to offend them. No one in this Continent wanted to mess with black mages.

While sitting on the undead's back, they swaggered towards Montenegro Fortress, and within five minutes, they ran into a group of mercenaries that was made up of five people. Each person, while carrying a backpack, was surprised as they looked with uncertainty at Zhao. When they saw the huge undead, they immediately stepped aside to the side of the road. It was as Green said. These people wouldn't dare to touch a black mage, especially one that could summon such a powerful undead.

It seemed like Zhao's head didn't move, but his eyes were looking over the mercenaries. They were wearing simple leather armor, each armed with weapons, and carrying a backpack. The guy in front was carrying a bow, a knife on his waist, and he had a body that was very thin, with long hands and feet. He seemed like a very agile guy. The second guy was holding a double-edged axe, and with a single glance you could tell that its weight wasn't light. Underneath his relatively thick leather armor, he looked like a powerful warrior with dark skin wrapping around iron-like muscles.

The third guy was dressed like an orthodox adventurer. He wore a leather helmet and thick boots along with his armor, while a cloak swayed from behind him. Plus he was carrying a large sword. The two people following behind that guy seemed to be brothers, who looked alike, but were not twins. They were very fat. One of them was stuffing his mouth with chicken feet, like he hasn't eaten in the past few days.

Although Zhao was watching them, with the large hat hiding his face, it looked like his head didn't move. Those five people thought that Zhao's eyes were focused straight towards the front, so they didn't notice him looking at them.

There were often people who posed as black mages in Montenegro Fortress, but to see such an undead, nobody suspected that Zhao was a fake. It would be impossible for a fake black mage to summon an undead spirit beast.

Soon Alien left those five people behind, and Zhao turned his eyes back towards the front. To be honest, this was the first time he saw actual mercenaries, so he was very curious. But even if Zhao got a first impression from those five individuals' characteristics, he still couldn't tell how strong they were.

Just then, Green spoke up. "Master, those five people coming out of Montenegro Fortress is part of a famous mercenary group called Kui Snake. The strength of those five are good, with the axe guy and sword guy already at the peak of a sixth level warrior."

Zhao was surprised. He thought that those people were so powerful. Peak of a sixth level warrior? So they were stronger than Blockhead and Rockhead? It seems like there were a lot of experts in this world.

Along the way, the three encountered a lot of adventurers and mercenaries. Some were dressed in leather armor similar to those previous five, while others were more mixed. Some of the adventurers didn't even wear leather armor, and instead just wore plain warrior clothes. A few didn't even have backpacks.

After these mercenaries and adventurers saw Zhao, they invariably got out of the way. Even if their strength was good, they weren't willing to get into a conflict with a black mage.

While sitting on an undead, under the eyes of everybody, Zhao swaggered into Montenegro Fortress. Even the guards that were standing in front of the gates did not dare to intercept them. Although they were supposed to guard the fortress, they weren't that big of a force, so naturally they wouldn't dare to touch a black mage.

According to Green's directions, the three stopped in front of a luxurious hotel. Zhao looked up at the hotel and found a sign that had a Bana symbol.

The three got off the undead. Green picked up the backpack, while Meg picked up her own bags. Zhao had nothing to hold but a magic staff, which he waved around and returned the undead back into his space.

The stewards of the hotel looked outside at the black mage. They didn't want to go out and meet him, but they were also afraid of angering the mage, so one unlucky guy had to bite the bullet and go out. He had a smile on his face as he greeted Zhao. "Welcome, distinguish mage. I'm sure you must have taken a

long journey to Montenegro Fortress. In our upscale hotel, we can provide you with hot water twenty four hours a day so you can wash away your fatigue."

Zhao didn't say anything. He just gave a wave, and Green immediately stood in front of the steward. "Two of your best rooms. Have hot water ready, and bring a good meal to our rooms."

They were then escorted into the hotel. It was good that he and Green had discussed it beforehand, for Zhao to not speak as much as possible and to make it look like he was ordering Green do all the talking. Not only would this make Zhao seem mystical, but it would also prevent people from finding out Zhao's age from his voice.

Chapter 60 - Fat Boss

In the Continent, under normal circumstances, the strength of a mage was directly proportional to their age. It was different for a warrior. All a young warrior needed to do was to toughen their bones and grow in strength with training under the guidance of adults.

Martial arts practice was not easy. The training had high strength requirements. But to become a mage was a lot more difficult. As children, they will be sent to designated locations to check if they have the talent for magic. If there was any, they would focus on training as a mage. If not, they would go back home to try to become a warrior.

The age requirement to become a mage was very strict. If you were younger than twelve years old, then you couldn't practice magic. After so many years of research, the people in the Continent discovered that if a person was twelve and under, then they didn't have the mental strength to learn magic. It was because one so young would have unstable spiritual power, which might cause them to become brain dead or result in death if they tried to practice magic.

It was precisely because of this reason that the age of a powerful mage would often times not be young. Meg, who had already become a sixth level mage, could definitely be considered a genius.

Very few people in the Continent knew about Meg's strength, which was strictly confidential. Even only a few of the Buda clan knew about it. That was because Meg was strong for her age. If word got out, it

would only result in two things. They would either try to control Meg, or try to kill her. These two results were something the Buda clan didn't want to see.

Mages tended to live a lot longer than warriors. A warrior, even an eighth level one, generally could live up to two hundred years. But an eighth level mage can reach two hundred and fifty years of age. Because of this, advanced mages were very important to the Continent. They could protect the Continent for at least a hundred years or so.

On Earth, a king of a feudal country, even if it was a long lived one, could only rule the country for a couple of years. But it wasn't the same here in the Ark Continent. On average, the king of an empire would rule for a hundred years or so. A short lived king would be someone who only ruled for a few decades. And it was for this reason that, even after so many years, the Continent's development wasn't very fast. They didn't invent new machines and technology, and just stayed as a society that used slaves.

It was precisely because of this that Green wouldn't let Zhao speak, especially to a person that would scrutinize other people. As long as he heard someone speak, he could tell their age.

The steward led Zhao into the hotel, which was very well decorated. Beyond the door was a hallway about forty feet long, and from the top hung magic lamps. Even though it was still day, the magic lamps were lit. Facing the entrance was a large bar where two beautiful waitresses and a fat man were standing respectfully. This man was wearing nice silk clothes and on his chest was pinned with a badge that had the Bana symbol. He seemed to be the boss of this hotel.

When the boss saw Zhao come in, he immediately moved towards him and stopped three steps in front of Zhao, then greeted him with a bow. "Welcome, sir mage. You have brought honor to our hotel with your presence. Please stay here and rest, and we will immediately bring you some tea."

Zhao didn't say anything. He turned and walked to the side, then sat down on the sofa that was specifically placed there as a temporary place to rest. The moment he sat down, a waitress came over with a pot of tea and a cup, which she placed down on the coffee table in front of Zhao. He helped himself to it, then gently waved for Meg to stand beside him. With his black robe, the fact that he hadn't spoken, and just made small movements to command Green and Meg, Zhao seemed very impressive.

The boss of this hotel had been paying attention to Zhao. Feeling Zhao's peculiar temperament, his eyes couldn't help but shrink, but the smile on his face didn't change as he soon stood in front of Zhao, and bowed. "Dear Mr. Mage, your room has been arranged on the third floor. Please come with me."

Zhao nodded and stood up. He went along with the boss to the third floor, which wasn't the same as the first or second floors. The third floor had no halls, since there wasn't a need for one when there were so few rooms.

The fat boss led them to room 601 and personally opened the door. Zhao and his group went inside, while the boss stood outside the door. "Dear Mr. Mage, if you need anything, all you have to do is ring this bell to summon someone. Your food will be here shortly. This room has five bedrooms, enough for you and your followers to live in. If it's not to your liking, then I can arrange another room for you."

Zhao said nothing as he looked around the room, but Green understood what he meant, so he immediately turned to the fat boss. "We are very satisfied with this arrangement."

Fat boss immediately bowed. "It is an honor to serve such a great mage. Now please allow me to take my leave." He respectfully closed the door, then left.

With the fat boss gone, Zhao let out a breath and took off his hat. "I didn't expect that these clothes would work so well. That boss was really respectful."

Green also took off his helmet. "Master, you're too naive. That boss just did it out of habit. He's a professional. You may not know this, but this hotel is owned by the Markey clan. That fat boss is one of the Markey's intelligence agents. I believe that before long, the Markey clan will know about us."

Zhao was surprised. "This place is owned by the Markey clan? Grandpa Green, why are we staying here?"

Green smiled slightly. "Sometimes, Master, being low key is not a good thing. Since you can summon an undead, you can actually impersonate a black mage, so they would think we're suspicious if we're not blatantly swaggering around. Plus, this would make everyone doubt that we're from the Buda clan, because no one thinks that we would have the courage to do this."

"I really didn't think that we would actually inform the Markey clan about us in such a place. Grandpa Green, how did you know that this hotel was owned by the Markey clan?"

"It's not a secret. Outside the hotel is a sign that has a Bana symbol, which is the badge of the Markey clan. With the strength of their clan, no one in the Continent would come here to make trouble. We do not need to worry about anyone when we stay here," Green said. "Plus there are a lot of spirit beasts in the mountains. So you could find a lot of useful things here and get them at a very cheap price, so why wouldn't the Markey open a business here?"

Zhao nodded. He had learned from that miscellaneous book that a lot of things on the Continent were made out of materials that came from spirit beasts. Along with their powerful bodies, a lot of spirit beasts had magical properties, which were very useful for alchemists and pharmacists to refine. Those mercenaries and adventurers rely on hunting those spirit beasts to make a living.

However, Zhao was still somewhat puzzled, because from looking at the miscellaneous book, he knew that there weren't any adventurer guild organizations, which you would often see in web novels. "Grandpa Green, where can the adventurers get a task? Or is hunting spirit beasts all they do?"

"Of course not," Green said. "In fact, adventurers can receive a task from equipment shops, hotels, and pubs, which gets them from the big cities. Even if the task is not suitable, they could just go somewhere else to look for one. For example, whenever the Markey Company needed something, they could just share the task with their branches throughout the entire Continent, like the one here in Montenegro Fortress. If they administer any tasks, it would be simple to send a message and get it to an adventurer by tomorrow."