

Another World 71

Chapter 71 - Indifference and Passion

They moved forward. This time when they encountered villages, there were still people, which made Zhao feel relieved.

But seeing the villagers, Zhao had mixed feelings. To be honest, the sixth level black mages, although very strong, were nothing in the eyes of those with real strength, like against Meirin or Green.

In Meirin's eyes, those ordinary commoners were like ants, and she was a god that was free to kill them.

Zhao knew that if it weren't for the existence of the space, he would be no different than those commoners in the eyes of the strong. He was like an ant.

He wanted to become strong, but unfortunately he drank the Water of Nothingness, so he couldn't learn magic or martial arts. The only remaining thing he could rely on was the space.

But Zhao understood that living an easy life was not easy. Just because you try to avoid trouble, doesn't mean that it won't come to you. If you want to have a stable life, then you have to ensure that you have the power to keep your life stable.

Strength! This was the first time since he was born that Zhao felt such a strong desire for power. Unfortunately, he didn't have a way to enhance his own strength.

The space was amazing, but it lacked offensive power. Although he was able to rein in some undead to use for his own purposes, he couldn't go into the carrion swamp to collect the undead. That was no different than courting death. Zhao still clearly remembered that day he stood on the castle walls, shocked by the overwhelming number of undead spirit beasts that came out of the swamp.

If you don't have the power to protect yourself, then how can you live peacefully? There's only one answer. Look for a place to hide where people can't find you.

The Black Waste was a good choice. Because of the ground, it was a place that no one paid attention to. But there was a problem that left the Buda clan in a mess.

Others may not pay attention to them, but those old nobles definitely would. If they wanted people to not pay attention to them, then they would have to think of a way, otherwise they would make life difficult for Zhao and the Buda clan.

But the only way Zhao could think of was by improving the level of his spatial farm a little faster. As long as his space's level goes over ten, he would be able to open a ranch.

Once he gathers a variety of plants in his farm, he could enhance the level of his space and open a ranch, then it wouldn't be long before he could put animals from the Ark Continent into the space. If that is so, once he reins in some spirit beasts, then this will add to his power.

In fact, back in the Black Waste, Zhao had tried to gather spirit beasts inside his space, but without success. It was clear that the space couldn't store spirit beasts for now. He would have to wait until after he opens the ranch.

Ah, levels. If you play a game with a low level, you'll just get bullied everywhere. Just you wait until I get a high enough level.

While thinking of these things, his undead was moving towards the city. Along the way, they passed by towns, but Zhao didn't go into those towns because they just needed a secluded spot outside of it, then hide in the space overnight.

However, recently Zhao let Green go into those towns to get a better understanding of what they knew. The Immortal mercenary group was such a big thing that it was impossible for people not to have heard of it.

The result was contrary to Zhao's expectations. He thought that it would be a very serious matter, after all, a lot of villagers have died. But he didn't think that this kind of news would turn out to be so common. When the Purcell Duchy heard of what the Immortal mercenary group did, they just took the land that the villages were on, then sent slaves to plow it.

Listening to Green's words, Zhao felt a little faint. For the first time he understood how much power the nobility in the Continent had.

The life and death of those commoners didn't even reach the eyes of those nobles. Maybe they even wanted those commoners dead at some point, so they could increase their area of land.

Zhao gave a helpless smile. He still hadn't fully adapted to the thoughts and ideas in this world. Perhaps in the eyes of those nobles, commoners and slaves weren't people, but in the eyes of Zhao, even a slave was a person.

However, although the way the Purcell clan dealt with those commoners who were killed by the undead mercenary group was very cold, the way they dealt with the attack on the Markey caravan was with passion. When they heard that members of the Markey clan were attacked, the Grand Duke himself, personally came by to give his condolences.

Also, there was another thing that Zhao had heard. Zhao's identity as an advanced black mage had emerged, and was now spreading everywhere. Such a person was very dangerous, so the Purcell clan was paying attention to Zhao.

Of course, these were just rumors that Green had heard from merchants and mercenaries, but there's no smoke without fire, so it may be true.

It was just as they expected. When an advanced black mage suddenly appears in the Purcell Duchy, of course the Purcell clan would pay attention to them. This was the result that Zhao wanted to see. When the Purcell clan notices them, it might give them a lot of trouble, but in general, this was a good thing. If they focused their attentions at Zhao's identity as a black mage, it would make his Adam identity more secure.

These days, Zhao had found that there were mercenaries and adventurers always around them. He was aware that they were there for surveillance.

They didn't show themselves much on the road, but at night, they would monitor them when Zhao entered the space while leaving his undead to stay outside.

Zhao didn't know that the people who were monitoring them were envious to death. In the Continent, although there were a lot of black mages, the Necromancers who could summon undead were rare. Even if they could summon undead, it would just be skeletons or zombies, the lowest level of undead.

And this didn't mention the fact that they certainly couldn't ride a skeleton. The best they could do was have a few skeletons carry them in a palanquin.

Although a Necromancer could summon the lowest level of undead, this was obviously completely different to the skeletal undead that Zhao summoned. The dark green color, the hideous bone spurs, and its traveling speed showed off its power to the point that the people who were monitoring Zhao felt scared. They really wanted to know what spirit beast Zhao had to kill to make this undead.

Necromancers could generally be divided into two types. One of them could directly summon an undead from the ectopic surface. But this type of summoning is by chance, meaning that if you wanted to summon a skeleton, you might suddenly get a zombie. You don't know what you're going to get at that level.

For example, if you want to summon a skeleton to fight, then you might just call out a gray skeletal bust. This kind of thing, not to mention having no feet, it couldn't even fight. It is of the lowest level, just like weeds. No attack power and no value to its existence other than nutrients for other undead.

However, summoning undead is what is most commonly used by Necromancers. That is because this type of magic is less demanding, even a low-level Necromancer can use it many times. Of course, the higher the level the mage is, the stronger the magic, and so they would be able to summon dark creatures of a higher level as well.

Chapter 72 - Landscape

However, this method of summoning undead had one very fatal flaw: time.

If you summon the undead from the ectopic surface, there would be a time limit in which its presence could stay on the Ark Continent. This time limit depended on the level of the Necromancer and the level of the dark creature that was summoned.

Theoretically, with strong enough magic, you would be able to summon a high level undead and keep it on the Ark Continent for a long time. But most of the time limits were short.

There was an exception. If you summon a powerful dark creature, as long as you were willing to pay some vitality, then you could keep that creature on the Ark Continent for a longer period of time. But generally, Necromancers didn't want to use such a method to summon high level undead from the ectopic surface. That was because the higher the level of the creature, the more vitality was needed. If you wanted it to stay on the Ark Continent long term, then you were just being reckless.

The other method that Necromancers could use was the same one that the Immortal mercenary group used, creating your own undead.

As long as the mage killed the person or spirit beast, he could turn it into an undead. However, this wasn't really suitable because turning anything into an undead would reduce its level by a lot.

It was precisely because of this that those who were monitoring Zhao were surprised. If that undead was summoned from the ectopic surface, then it should have gone back by now.

Looking at the combat ability of Alien, they could only judge that it had great strength. So if this undead was artificially created, then how high was its level before it got killed? They were all confused.

A mage, under normal circumstances, could only produce low-level undead. If they wanted to make advanced undead, then they would have to pay the cost of their vitality. If that black mage was able to make such an advanced green undead, then why was he still alive?

The Ark Continent was big, but there weren't many places that could produce undead. In fact, there were only two notoriously, fierce places in the entire Continent that could generate their own undead: Carrion Swamp and Deep Magic. These places were two of the five forbidden areas. In the past century, no one has ever made it out alive from those two places, and in the last thousand years, those who did make it out alive died within the next five years.

For this reason, the Carrion Swamp and Deep Magic became off limits. No adventurers went there, because no one wanted to die.

This was also the reason why Zhao blatantly left his undead outside. He had appeared in Montenegro Fortress, and someone could connect that together with the carrion swamp. So Zhao would be known as the black mage crazy enough to go into the swamp, which would not tie him to Adam's identity.

The next day, Zhao's advancing speed wasn't very fast. It could even be said that he was slow, but Zhao deliberately did this. If they wanted cooperation with the Markey company, then they would certainly have to work with someone that they could trust, and the most appropriate person was Laura. However, she had not yet come back from Montenegro Fortress, so Zhao would get to Casa city before her. But it wasn't a big deal. They didn't worry about it and just slowly moved forward.

While they were moving slowly, Green had already gone ahead to Casa city. Right now, the person who was riding on the undead's head while wearing Green's full body armor was one of the slaves.

Green had gone to Casa city to buy a small estate and do some preparatory work. With all eyes focused on Zhao, when Green did these things, it didn't attract anyone's attention.

Of course, even without Green, Zhao wasn't lost since a map was drawn for him, which included the terrain and other roads. His understanding of this world was too little, but he wanted to know more about the surroundings around his home. However, right now he had to focus on his lack of security. With Green not here, Zhao had to be more careful. He was afraid that someone would be tempted to attack them, since now they only had Meirin to fight, so their fighting strength had been cut down by nearly half.

But in fact, Zhao was just thinking too much. With his identity as a black mage that no one dared to doubt, no one would even try to tease him, especially when they saw that undead.

It could only be said that Zhao underestimated the deterrent that black mages have against ordinary mercenaries and adventurers. They would rather offend a powerful warrior than a black mage. If you offended a warrior, then he would just kill you. But if you offended a black mage, you would most likely be tortured to death, then become an undead that would fight for them forever.

Adventurers and mercenaries weren't afraid of death, but they would rather have their bodies eaten by spirit beasts than to become an undead.

For this reason, they didn't want to risk offending a black mage, especially one that could summon something with that much strength.

Although Zhao wasn't moving very fast, he still attracted the attention of the entire Purcell Duchy. Whether they encountered a caravan on the road or an ordinary pedestrian, they attracted a lot of

attention, even if for no other reason than the rumors about their fight with the Immortal mercenary group.

The Immortal mercenary group was very famous, to the point where no one dared to offend their existence. And now they had heard that Zhao went to battle against the Immortal mercenary group, yet weren't killed by them. This aroused a lot of people's attention.

No one thought that Zhao had actually seized the whole group. In their opinion, it was impossible for the Immortal mercenary group to be defeated. They had come out unharmed many times from many battles. Even when they fought against the Xinya clan, and were almost destroyed, they still came out of it with hardly any losses in power. So even if Zhao was strong in combat, no one believed that he could catch up to the undead mercenary group's strength.

Now everyone was paying attention to Zhao to see when the Immortal mercenary group would retaliate.

But everyone was significantly let down. Zhao was just going on his way peacefully, with the Immortal mercenary group seemingly absent. Zhao didn't face any trouble, which was so unlike the style of the Immortal mercenary group.

So under the eyes of everyone in the principality of Purcell, Zhao was leisurely heading to Casa city without any rush, almost becoming part of the landscape. They were all confused.

But to achieve his goals, Zhao had to keep all eyes on him, and for no one to pay attention to the Buda clan. Also, he didn't want anyone to pay attention to the fact that outside Casa city, in a small manor on a small mountain, a hundred gold coins was being exchanged.

This small manor was originally built by a businessman, on a remote hill in the mountains outside of Casa city. It was a barren hill, unable to grow anything. The only thing commendable about it was that the estate was built around a spa.

Obviously, the businessman wanted to build this small estate as a hot spring where you could take a vacation. But unfortunately, he later went bankrupt. Because the estate was too remote, no one was willing to buy it. When Green found out about this, he immediately put down one hundred gold coins to buy it.

Chapter 73 - Outside Casa City

The reason Green chose this small mountain was because, firstly, it was cheaper here. It was only one hundred gold coins to buy the manor and the hill it was on. Secondly, it was close to Casa city. Even with an ordinary carriage, it would take just two days to get to the city. A round trip of four days to deliver the radishes and back was entirely feasible. And third, it was very remote. Under normal circumstances, no one would notice them.

In the hills near Casa city, almost every estate had some kind of aristocratic manor that acted as a holiday resort. It was one of several sources of income for those estates. Buying an estate for this reason was very normal, so no one would pay attention to them.

After Green bought the manor, he immediately went into Casa city to try to find out information. He wanted to know what kind of attitude the Purcell Clan had towards the sudden appearance of the black mage. More importantly, he wanted to find out the prices in the city. Right now their money was running out, leaving them with less than fifty gold coins. And if they wanted to sell their radishes, they had to wait until Laura came back.

Fifty gold coins, although it was a lot for ordinary commoners, for them it was too little. Everything costs a lot in a big city like Casa. He feared that fifty gold coins won't support them for long.

Zhao had been moving slowly on the road. What should have taken seven days had taken them a full ten days to get to Casa city. When he finally made it, he didn't go directly into Casa city, and decided to spend the night outside of it. That was because it was already dark when they got there.

Others believed that Zhao was staying outside the city because it was dark, but in fact he was waiting for Green to come back and tell him what he had arranged and what was the situation in Casa city.

At midnight, Green dove into the undead, followed by a hole opening up, allowing Green to enter the space. Outsiders simply didn't notice this. The space did not belong in their category of magic. Without feeling any magic fluctuations, the ones that were monitoring Zhao didn't discover anything.

Once Green came to see them, Zhao immediately greeted him, then asked, "Grandpa Green, how is it?"

Green smiled. "Rest assured, Master. The arrangements have been made. I bought a small estate outside the city. We can stay there until Laura comes back, then we could make a deal with her."

Zhao was relieved. "That's good. Once we settle in the estate, I also want to go look around Casa city."

"Yes, we should go see Casa city." Green nodded. "These days, I found that the Purcell Clan seemed very attached to our clan. But now that the black mage has sprung up, they're now directing their attention at us, so we should make an appearance."

Green sounded like he was making a contradiction, but Meirin and everyone else understood what he meant. They weren't afraid that the people would check out the identity of the black mage that had suddenly appeared, they were afraid of those that would find out their identity as the Buda clan. So Green wanted Zhao, the black mage, to make an appearance in front of these people to get their attention.

Zhao nodded. "Good, I want to see the way they treat me. But there's one thing I'm worried about, the man behind Drunk and the other undead black mages. It has been ten days since I put Drunk and the rest inside my space, so it's been that long since they have not made contact with that organization. Do you think that organization will doubt our identity?"

"That's not very likely," Green said. "We don't need to be afraid of them. Instead, it might be better this way if they come to us. As long as they come, we can find some clues about them."

"So much the better," Zhao said. "Tomorrow, we will go to the estate where we will settle, then we will go to Casa city."

Green nodded, but there was a pained look on his face. "Master, even if we go into Casa city, we still can't buy anything. Right now we only have fifty gold coins. This amount of money is really not enough for us to use." They really couldn't do anything with fifty gold coins. He feared that they couldn't even buy the most ordinary oil press, let alone anything else.

Fortunately, Green had already bought a lot of food and supplies before, so within this short time, they would at least not go hungry.

Zhao shook his head. "We don't have to buy anything, we can just go look around the city. Plus we have to let those people know that we are coming."

Green laughed. "Well, when we get to the city, I want to see how those people will react when they take a look at us."

Zhao smiled, but he didn't say anything. He knew that recently Green had felt stuck when the Buda clan was nearly destroyed. In order to keep Adam's life, he had to bow to those big nobles, which was clearly out of line with Green's character. Then he became overwhelmed by the pressure of the daily life in the Black Waste.

But it wasn't the same now. Although they had another identity, now that they could go out into the world and take action, it gave birth to a new feeling in Green.

With their current status, they weren't affected by whether the people welcomed them or not. At least in this capacity, they could now walk outside and not be afraid of those old nobles who were against them.

A person who had never seen the light, but then one day he was finally able to see the light. It was useless to try to describe this feeling with words.

Green, of course, knew that even though their true identity was the Buda clan, he also knew that they had to put on a performance. After all, to not be suspected, sometimes you had to act high-profile to make a good cover.

Acting high-profile, Green was naturally looking forward to it.

But Meirin was frowning. "Master, if we act too high-profiled, would this affect us in the future? Once we sold the radishes and bought some machines, we would then go back to the Black Waste. So when we go back, wouldn't the eyes of those guys be on us?"

Green smiled slightly. "Do not worry about such things yet. When we get to Montenegro Fortress, we can go into the woods and hide there inside the space for a few days. So even if they turn all those mountains over, they will not find us. Then Master could get Drunk to lead the undead into the Black Waste to cause trouble. I don't believe that those who are afraid of the undead will be able to find our castle. This will ensure that there will be no problem."

Meirin and Zhao felt that this way was good. Right now Zhao had a lot of undead, but they didn't have a lot of intelligence. After all, it really wasn't like Zhao could talk with them. The undead just listened to his commands. They were just like robots. Whatever Zhao ordered them to do, they would do it. But they couldn't speak.

Drunk and the undead black mages were different. Not only were they humanoid undead, they were also advanced undead. They had almost the same intelligence as when they were alive. They could easily communicate with Zhao, so he can make them lead the undead into the Black Waste, so outsiders wouldn't be able to easily enter.

People in the Continent may not be necessarily afraid of the Black Waste, but they were definitely afraid of the carrion swamp. And now there will be a lot of undead spirit beasts from that swamp running around, so no one would dare touch the Black Waste.

Of course, if anyone really did want to go see the castle, Zhao didn't mind letting Drunk and the rest of the undead black mages, with each being at the sixth level, take care of them. Their strength, along with more than a thousand undead, was more than enough.

Chapter 74 - Fire Fish

Zhao was standing bare foot while looking around at all the lush mountains. His heart couldn't help but burst with a smile.

When he first heard that Green bought a small mountain, plus a manor, for only a hundred gold coins, he thought it was strange. It was too cheap, right? But when he arrived at the mountain, he understood why it was so cheap. Really, it should have been cheaper.

The small mountain had no specialty other than stone. Everywhere you looked, you could see blue stones with weeds growing between the crevices. This was not a great estate. The whole mountain gave the impression of a guy who was wearing a hat so small that it revealed half of his scalp, which only had a few strands of hair. It looked extremely awkward.

Green, who was standing beside Zhao, naturally saw Zhao's face, and he couldn't help but feel embarrassed. He already knew that this mountain was horrendous. But there was no way they could buy any land close to Casa city with a high price. With the money they had, only this mountain was suitable for them. Green knew that Zhao wasn't satisfied, so he quickly said, "Master, this mountain may not seem like much, but it does have a small manor with a hot spring."

Zhao saw that Green was afraid that he wouldn't like the mountain and manor, so he said, "It's nothing much, but it's still a good place."

Green nodded. To be honest, he didn't really think about it much when he bought this place, other than it was cheap and not too far away from Casa city. If Zhao thought it was fine, then he wouldn't worry about it.

Meirin and Meg was also standing beside Zhao, and although they didn't mention it, they were both dissatisfied with the mountain when they saw it.

Zhao didn't care, and instead went back into the room of the undead's body, then directed it to walk up the hill. He really wanted to see the inside of the estate.

There was a stone road, about five meters wide, that went from the bottom of the hill to the top. The road was clearly not paved with stone blocks, but with natural stones found on this small mountain. Still, when Zhao looked at the road, he thought it was strange. In his past life, although he had never lived on a mountain, he was very clear on the fact that the roads that led carts up the mountain would generally be winding roads.

The so-called winding road would go up the mountain at a gradual angle, by circling upwards. Although this would make the road longer, it created a slope that was conducive in allowing vehicles to move up the mountain.

But the road that Zhao was on went straight to the top of the hill. Inevitably, this created a steep road. If it was in his past life, this would hobble carriages, making it difficult for horses to pull anything as it climbed.

However, Zhao didn't say anything, because he also discovered that there were traces of carriages going up this road, indicating that this route had been used. He also knew that he couldn't judge the Ark Continent based on what he learned on Earth, so he didn't say anything as he directed his undead to walk up the hill.

Soon they came in front of the estate. Its three meter high blue stone walls seemed very strong, with some moss growing here and there, while a lot of paint had chipped off its tall wooden doors. It appeared that it had been a long time since someone took care of the place.

Zhao and everyone else got out from the undead and went up to the wooden door. The door was two meters tall and nearly five meters wide, with paint falling off, revealing the original color of the wood.

Green stepped forward and forced open the doors, giving off a shrill, squeaking sound.

When the door opened, Zhao's eyes brightened. They got a good view of a yard that wasn't any smaller than their castle square.

In this yard was a row of four houses made out of wood and stone, with two meter wide doors, one meter wide windows, and flat roofs. It seemed like these four houses were used as living rooms and reception areas for outsiders. These houses were a bit worn, with many places that were cracked. However, if you wanted to live somewhere that could avoid strong winds, then this place was possible.

Zhao looked at these houses and was satisfied. The manor might not look good, but what did it matter. Almost all of the buildings were built with blue stones as the main material. It was very strong. Although this place hasn't been well taken care of, despite the wind and rain over the years, it didn't suffer any great damage.

Everyone went into the houses and found that the rooms were empty. There was no furniture, so the rooms could be considered fairly spacious. Simply tidy it up, and a person could live here without a problem.

Through this row of houses, they discovered a large patio-style courtyard. In the middle of it was a tree with leaves that were similar to ginkgo, though Zhao didn't actually know what species this tree was.

There was also a small ditch where water was flowing. Zhao was surprised when, from time to time, he could see a few small fish.

Patios, trees, water, and fish, arranged in a very nice way in this courtyard, almost like Chinese-style buildings from ancient times. It could soothe the mind of any trace of anger.

Zhao nodded with satisfaction, then he turned and asked. "Grandpa Green, this environment is really good. But the water isn't so deep and it must be cold in the winter, so why didn't these small fish freeze to death?"

Not waiting for Green to speak, Meirin and smiled and said, "Master, I think that this must be hot spring water. The water temperature is never low, and you might not recognize that these small fish are called fire fish. They're tropical fish with thermal properties. Strange to say, these fish must have been chosen for their properties related to fire and that they can only survive in warm water. If the water temperature was too low, they would freeze to death. This fish is a rare delicacy. They taste delicious, with smooth and delicate meat. I heard that even the king would use these fish to entertain foreign guests. It is fine cuisine."

Zhao was surprised. He really didn't think that there would be such a fish. He crouched down and reached into the ditch, and sure enough the water was warm, even a little hot. The temperature never seemed to be below thirty degrees celsius. Not only were these fish able to survive in these temperatures, they were able to live comfortably.

He watched as the fish swam around in a relaxed manner, then he tried to grab one. But he didn't think that the fish would be able to turn so flexibly in the water, fleeing away from Zhao's clutches.

When Zhao didn't catch a fish, he stood up. "Well, it seems like in the future we will be able to raise some fish. While I release a few undead on the hill to keep us alert, lets also let the slaves out. They haven't breathed fresh air for so many days."

Green smiled. "Yes, ah, letting them come out is good. Maybe they could work on the blue stones in this mountain. I have read that these stones are very hard, a good material to make stone tools. Master, what about using it to make that mill stone? Wouldn't it be a good opportunity to make it now?"

Zhao nodded, then laughed and said, "Grandpa Green, it seems that this time we really picked up a treasure. There is a hot spring, fire fish that we can raise, stones to make what we need, and soon we will make a lot of money."

Chapter 75 - Level Up

Mark quietly lurked through the woods. The woods were very tall, mostly only having shrubs. But it was because of these shrubs that the grass here was able to grow long and dense, which was suitable for him to hide himself in.

Mark Purcell was a specially trained killer. His training methods weren't the same as a warrior's. It was mostly based on a number of light-weights, disguises, sneaking, and assassination. It was an alternative type of training that major clans would give to a few members who weren't afraid of death.

This time the task that the clan gave him was simple. He had to monitor Stony Mountain, because there were some rumors of a black mage named Zhao. This small mountain seemed to have been bought by him, and his clan wanted to know what Zhao was going to do with it.

Mark made it halfway up the mountain when he saw a chaotic situation among the rocks.

Although he didn't see what was happening inside the manor, the outside of the estate couldn't escape his eyes. There was a layer of black fog enveloping the manor. He was very clear on the fact that this wasn't the usual mist that formed around Stony Mountain, but something that could only be made by a black mage. In addition to the darkness, he could see many undead wandering around the mountain. Their large size, dark green color, and eyes that flashed with red fire. Even though Mark was a highly trained killer, his heart felt scared.

It was because of these undead that Mark didn't dare get closer to the manor. He was very good at stealth and assassination, but he feared these undead because they might determine his location without even seeing him. Everyone in the Continent knew that the undead desired fresh flesh. No

matter how you tried to hide yourself, as long as you were a living creature, you couldn't fool the undead.

Mark wanted to know what those people were doing on this mountain, but unfortunately, he couldn't see anything and could only lie there waiting.

Since Zhao couldn't use black magic, he certainly didn't create that black fog. That spell was casted by Drunk. It was just an added effect to make people more sure that Zhao was a black mage.

Right now, what Zhao eventually named Blue Stone Hills estate, was very busy. The slaves, now free from the space, were busy cleaning up the manor, putting in the furniture, and making a variety of tools.

This place wasn't the same as Iron Mountain, which barely had any trees and was difficult to find stones that they could mine. Because that mountain had already been hollowed out by dwarves, if they mine randomly, it might collapse.

Stony Mountain was different. The mountain was full of blue stones that they could use, plus the other mountains around them had forests. If it wasn't another person's private domain, then they were free to cut down those trees. So now they could rest assured because of this and had plenty of materials to make tools.

However, Zhao didn't immediately send anyone to go around the mountains to cut down trees. In any case, it wasn't like those tree could run away. Now he just made his undead gather stones and then ship them back to the manor, allowing Ann and the slaves to use them. This way, they were able to make several discs for the mill stones. However, Zhao thought that it wasn't enough. They had a lot of corn, and just a few discs wasn't much. Plus they also had to make a variety of tools.

As for the outsiders, Zhao knew that when they arrived at Stony Mountain, there would be people keeping an eye on them, but he didn't care. He had already become accustomed to it.

Meirin had suggested to cover the manor in a blanket of darkness. Do not forget, Zhao's identity was supposed to be a black mage, who were usually secretive and mysterious.

The estate wasn't that big. It only took half a day for a hundred people to finish cleaning it. Once they were done, Zhao chose a room for himself in the manor. The original owner, Henry, could be considered very intelligent. He had built the manor so that hot water would flow into the rooms, creating spa pools. There was one in the bedroom that Zhao chose.

The only source of water in Stony Mountain came from the hot springs. When the owner built the manor, he took the time to plan it. The water would be divided so they could use it in several different ways. One was for bathing, the other was for drinking, and the last was for the fish.

It could be said that although the manor's appearance didn't look very good, the inside was very well built, apparently designed by a famous expert.

Since everyone in the manor was busy, Zhao didn't have the time to properly soak in the spa. He had to wait until the evening. After dinner, Zhao returned to his room and took his black robe off, then he got into the spa.

Out of the entire estate, his room, which was the biggest room, had the largest spa, which was about ten square meters. The other rooms only had spa pools that were two meters long and one meter wide.

But this manor was built very well. Every bedroom had a spa, which was very extraordinary. And the drainage system was good too. After washing yourself in a bath, you just simply pulled the cork and the water would drain away. It wasn't just convenient, but also hygienic.

Zhao was sitting in his spa, releasing a sigh at how comfortable he was. He didn't know how long it has been since he took a bath. In the Black Waste, because of limited conditions, he could only clean himself by wiping his body. There was no way to comfortably take a bath, but now he finally had the chance.

Gently paddling his fingers, Zhao softly said, "Ah, it feels nice to bathe in a hot spring after a long day. I wonder what will happen if I put this water in the space. I should take a look at the quality of the water."

His hand made a move and a space hole appeared next to him. A surge of hot spring water then flowed into the hole, which then closed. Fortunately, today the slaves were sleeping outside the space, otherwise Zhao would have woken them up.

Once the hot water was in the space, the voice immediately rang out: [High-grade hot spring water contains a variety of beneficial minerals. Extracting useful minerals. Spatial water has been upgraded. Your level has risen to six. The space has reached the necessary requirements. Increasing size for hot springs. You will be rewarded with a bag of broccoli seeds, enough to plant two acres]

Zhao froze for a moment. He knew that there would be a reaction when he put the hot spring water into the space, just like last time with the underground lake water from Iron Mountain, but he didn't think that it would be this good. Did the voice mention a hot spring? What did that mean? Zhao couldn't wait. With a thought, while naked, he stepped into the space.

Zhao discovered that the space was different. Not only was there the spatial water spring in front of his hut, in addition to that was another spring where steam was coming out. It looked like the temperature was definitely not low.

It was a good thing that no one else was in the space because Zhao was in his bare buttocks when he quickly ran to the hot springs. The spa looked promising, but he didn't dare to touch it. With the steaming hot water, he feared that the temperature may be very high, maybe even eighty degrees celsius.

A high temperature of eighty degrees could boil eggs, so Zhao naturally didn't put his hand into the water. If he wanted to soak in a hot spring, he could just go back to his room's spa.

Taking one last look around the space, he saw that nothing else had changed. The oil fruits were growing well, and the corn were also looking good. He might be able to harvest them tomorrow.

Zhao stepped outside the space and back into his spa pool. Lying there quietly, he calculated with his hands.

Right now he had about two hundred and forty thousand catty of radishes, his oil fruits were growing in their eleventh batch, and he had around four hundred and ninety five thousand catty of corn, which had just gone through their twenty sixth batch. Also, two days ago he stopped growing corn for awhile and started planting wheat, cabbages, and eggplants. Now he had thirty two thousand catty of wheat, twenty thousand catty of eggplants, and twenty thousand catty of cabbages. Plus his space had six hundred gold coins, and he had just gotten a bag of broccoli seeds. The remaining seeds were just pasture seeds. All of these things were what Zhao currently had.

Chapter 76 - Casa City

These things seemed like a lot, but there was little money in most of it. The highest yield crops were corn and oil fruits, but nobody wanted to buy corn, and oil fruits weren't worth a lot.

The eggplants and cabbages were planted by Zhao so that he could make a lot of different dishes, but he feared that no one on the Continent would buy them, meaning no money.

The only thing he had that was worth a good price were the radishes. Right now his space only had six hundred gold coins, but that wasn't enough for the future development of the Buda clan, so he could only rely on these radishes.

As for the corn, Zhao was ready to harvest all of his corn tomorrow, then maybe he could plant some broccoli, though the amount of broccoli seeds he had was only enough for two acres. Maybe he could just use the other two acres to grow wheat, since he had wheat seeds in his barn.

Right now the kinds of seeds he had on hand was too little. When he was on the road, Zhao didn't collect any seeds of other plants, because people had been staring at him. If he collected any seeds, it would make the people look at him strangely, so Zhao didn't fool around.

Also, Zhao had thought, even if he collected seeds, he alone wouldn't be able to get enough. Even if he was more powerful, how many seeds could he actually collect? It was too uneconomical. Instead, after he makes money and some preparations, he could just put out a task for mercenaries and adventurers to do it.

In this world, as long as you had money, you could make mercenaries and adventurers do any task that you requested. Even if you asked for the king of the Aksu Empire to be assassinated, there would be people who would take care of it, if you could afford it.

Zhao, while sitting in the spa pool, was brooding over these things. But right now he had too little money available, and his enemies were too strong, so Zhao decided to maintain his customary low key style.

Suddenly, Zhao was hit by a feeling of tiredness. He shook his head. After soaking in the spa, he actually felt faint. Standing up, he picked up a towel and dried his body, then he went into his bedroom where there was a pot of tea. Pouring himself a cup, he sat on the bed and quietly drank it.

Zhao's body felt weak. He knew that he had been in the hot spa too long. He had been living with too much pressure lately, so he wanted to be lazy for awhile. Lying there quietly in the spa had felt nice.

But now it was time for bed. Calming his emotions, Zhao decided to get a good night's sleep. Tomorrow, they will be going to Casa city. He really wanted to see why it was known as the pearl of the northern parts of Aksu Empire.

This was going to be Zhao's first time going into one of the big cities. He really did have some expectations. Although Adam had lived in the capital, which was the largest and most prosperous city in the Aksu Empire, for Zhao, those memories were like watching a movie in his head. It didn't feel real. That was why he was looking forward to going to Casa city.

The night passed without words. The slaves were sleeping peacefully outside the space, in the open air.

The next morning, everyone woke up in high spirits. Most of the rooms had a spa, so the slaves were able to take a nice bath.

After breakfast, the slaves went into the space again to learn to read and write words, then Zhao got into his undead and moved straight towards Casa city.

From here to there, if they were riding by carriage, it would be two days away, but Zhao was riding inside an undead. Compared to horses, its speed wasn't that bad, and since it leveled up, it was even faster. Also, horses would eventually become tired, while his undead just kept on going.

Now it only took a little over half a day before Zhao made it to Casa city.

Because of the few mountains around the city, its walls weren't traditionally square shaped, but circular. The walls were nearly thirty meters high with six meters of thickness, and it had eighteen gates. Stuck to the wall was the flag of the Purcell clan, looking majestic. From time to time, teams of soldiers would

patrol the walls, heroic looking in their silver armors while holding shining weapons. Everything showed that this was an extraordinary place.

Zhao was standing beneath the walls, looking straight up. He had never seen walls like these before, because in his past life he had only lived in a modern city. Looking at these imposing walls, he couldn't help but think of those ancient Chinese cities. You could definitely count on these walls to stop the momentum of any army.

Zhao could only marvel at them.

By now, Zhao had already returned his undead into the space. The general rule of big cities, like Casa city, was that there was a warning area about five hundred meters away from the walls. If you weren't someone malicious, then it was best to put your summons away, otherwise the defenders of the city would be likely to count you as malicious and then attack you.

Zhao didn't know this, but Green did. About five meters away from Casa city, he made Zhao put away his undead. Although they wanted people's attention on them, that didn't mean that they wanted to stir up trouble. As long as they maintained a high profile, there was no need to cause trouble. And if they fight, it might expose their secrets.

Green didn't understand why Zhao had stopped and stared up at the city walls. Such an action could easily lead to suspicion. If it weren't for those defenders seeing that he was a mage, Green feared that they would have already been questioned.

Fortunately, Zhao only looked for a moment, then recovered. He walked towards the city, followed by Green and Meg. Meirin didn't go with them because Zhao didn't want the people to know the full extent of their power.

Zhao waved and walked towards the gate. In front of the gate were two big boxes, which had one word written on it: tax. It appeared to be boxes designed to collect taxes. If the people wanted to go through the gates, they had to put money into the box, or they will be stopped.

However, Zhao didn't have to pay the tax. He remembered what Green had told him, that mages could live tax-free.

Of course, it didn't mean that wearing a mage's robe would make you exempt. If you wanted to live tax-free, you had to go register at the Mage Association and get a badge. No badge, no exceptions.

But Zhao was an exception. Although he didn't have a mage's badge, the defenders had already seen him put away his undead. This indicated his identity as a mage, so those defenders didn't dare block him.

There were a lot of black mages on the Continent that didn't register with the Mage Association. Except for places like Montenegro Fortress, no one would dare pretend to be a black mage.

Once they got closer to the gate, Green again reminded Zhao of what to do, because he feared that if Zhao's performance as a black mage was too moderate, then it might arouse suspicions.

Chapter 77 - Mage Association

The three slowly walked towards the city, and sure enough, not only did the defenders of the city not stop them, they even formed a ceremonial line, allowing Zhao to go through. In this world, as long as you had strength, you were respected.

They entered the gate, and were hit by a confusing scene. The road was nearly a meter wide, with pedestrians coming and going like flies. Along the roadside were some stalls and shops. Apparently, there wasn't any urban management here. Everyone was crying out, and from time to time the pedestrians would stop and buy something from them. It was extremely lively.

The people on the street were divided into several kinds. Some were just ordinary people dressed in linen, while others wore leather helmets and the clothes of a warrior. But there was hardly anybody wearing mage robes walking in the street.

Just then, a voice called out. "Dear mage, would you like to hire my carriage. It's very comfortable and cheap. I grew up in Casa city, so I know every single street. I can send you anywhere you want to go."

Zhao looked around and spotted a coachman sitting on a parked carriage. The carriage was pulled by a big red horse, while its wagon was painted black with a beautiful pattern.

Zhao didn't know what the horse was, but Green recognized it. Although the horse looked good, it was just an ordinary spirit beast. It definitely didn't match with Zhao's identity.

But even if it didn't match, they had just arrived at Casa city and were still unfamiliar with it, plus they didn't have that much money so they naturally couldn't buy their own carriage. And in this city, it was impossible to freely use magic to summon, so he couldn't just call out his undead. The only way they could find their way around was to hire a carriage.

Green went to the driver and asked, "What's your name? And how much would it cost to hire you for a day?"

The driver didn't think that things would go so smoothly. You know, mages weren't generally short on money, so they would rarely hire a common carriage. He didn't even expect that they would ask him for the price.

The driver quickly answered. "Dear mage, my carriage is very cheap, only one silver per day. And my name is Rocky."

Green threw out a silver coin and said, "I'll hire you for a day." Then he turned around and spoke to Zhao. "Master, please get on."

Zhao nodded. He got on, followed by Meg. The carriage's wagon was very large, able to fit six people. But Green didn't get in the wagon, and instead sat next to Rocky. "Send us to the Mage Association," Green said.

The Mage Association was an organization of the Continent, with each Empire having their own independent association. The Mage Association was specifically set up to serve mages, and not to manage them. In an Empire, a mage had equal status to the nobility, so the association didn't dare to manage them, and would only provide necessary services.

Every mage that was registered with the Mage Association would get ten gold coins per month in subsidies, but of course, few mages cared about that small amount of money. However, registering with the association provided a lot of other benefits. For example, a mage badge would make you exempt from a lot of things that were imposed on others.

Registering as a mage in the association was easy since their policy was very liberal. There was nothing like a test. All you had to do was show off your magic to prove that you were a mage, then you can register with the Mage Association.

Of course, mages going through the registration would be graded with different levels. If you just show off a little magic, you could only register as a mage of the lowest level. That would mean that the only benefits you could get were ten gold coins per month and living tax-free. But if you showed that your strength was at a high level, you would get more services and benefits.

For example, if Zhao had an advanced mage badge, then when he got to the city gate, the association would immediately send a carriage to pick them up. Everything would be arranged for them, their living expenses would be reimbursed, and they would get a monthly allowance ranging between one hundred and one thousand gold coins. Of course, to get this badge, you would need to have enough strength that was at least at the sixth level.

One of the reasons Green came to this city was for Zhao to get a mage badge. It would give them a lot of conveniences.

When Green told Rocky to go to the Mage Association, he saluted and drove his carriage straight towards the association.

The Mage Association was a very special presence in the Empire. They directly got their funding from state finance, specifically to provide services for mages. In the Empire, mages were a very popular career. Even if you were just a stage magician, there would be a lot of people lining up to get on your good side. The only possible exception were the black mages.

Because black mages were very weird, those among the aristocracy didn't want to meet them. Only a few businessmen might visit a black mage. So most black mages usually become mercenaries or risk takers, since they were still very popular among mercenaries.

Compared to other types of mages, the life of a black mage was the most difficult. Other mages were treated as nobles, while black mages were more like commoners.

There were many black mages that would only be issued ten gold coins a month by the Mage Association. You know, learning magic was very costly. You had to buy magic materials and wands, as well as have enough money to eat and drink. Everything was going to cost you.

The Mage Association in Casa city was very impressive. It was a three-story building with an area of one thousand square meters, just two blocks away from the main street.

Directly above the building's door was a large badge that was the symbol for a mage: a hexagram. The hexagram represented the six basic elements of nature: light, dark, wind, water, fire, earth. It was the mark for all mages.

After Rocky stopped the carriage, Green jumped down and opened the wagon's door, letting Zhao and Meg come out of the carriage. They then walked towards the building, but the three didn't even take two steps before a fat man came out quickly. The man was wearing servant clothes, but the fabric was made out of the finest silk. Along with his fat body, his clothing style looked inconsistent. He looked like a nobleman, and not like a servant.

The fat man quickly walked in front of Zhao and bowed. "Dear mage, your servant, Carl, has come here to serve you."

Zhao froze for a moment. He didn't think that the association would send out a servant to serve a mage. However, he still remembered what Green told him, so he just grunted and proudly walked inside.

The first floor of the building obviously was a place to rest. It was divided into two areas. One of them had some couches and a coffee table, while the other had a few dining tables. This was part of the Mage Association's rules. If you were registered with them, you could rest and dine here for free.

Zhao went to the lounge and sat down on one of the sofas. When fat Carl saw Zhao sit down, he immediately waved at one of the other servants, who turned and went into the kitchen, then came out with a pot of tea and some cups.

After putting the cups down, Carl personally poured tea for Zhao, then bowed and stood there. "Dear mage, how else may I serve you?"

Zhao didn't touch the cup of tea. He just sat there and waved at Green, who said, "Carl, we are here today for a registration."

"It is my pleasure to serve such a great mage," Carl quickly said. "Sir, please come with me to the back so we can get you started on our registration procedures."

Zhao gently nodded, then stood up. They followed Carl as he led them to the back of the hall, not seeing the naked flashing in Carl's eyes from time to time. Apparently, he wasn't such a simple character.

Even Green didn't know that in addition of being in charge of the Mage Association, Carl was also an intelligence agent for the Purcell Duchy. In fact, he knew exactly when Zhao came into the city. If he wasn't trying to know more about Zhao, he wouldn't have personally come meet them. Under normal circumstances, a registering mage wouldn't get such a personal reception.

Chapter 78 - Unusual Performance

Behind the association's building was a large open space with a length and width of one hundred meters. Some distance away, set at ten meter intervals, were targets that were used to test magic.

All mages that wanted to register with the Mage Association had to cast a spell to prove that they were a mage, and also for the association to know what rating to give them.

Once they got to the grounds, Carl turned to Zhao and said, "Dear mage, please use your magic. Any magic will do. If you want to get an advanced mage badge, then use some advanced magic." He then stepped aside and quietly watched Zhao.

No one knew this, but although Carl wasn't a mage, due to his prolonged contact with mages over the years, he had gained some knowledge on magic and his ability to sense magic power was very sensitive. As long as a mage used magic, he would be able to analyze a mage's level. Eight times out of ten, his judgment would be correct.

It was because of Carl's judgment that he was able to have an inseparable relationship with the Mage Association for decades. Carl slowly built up their system to rate mages, by checking their magic control,

what type of magic they used, how proficient they were at incantations, etc... which all reflected a mage's level.

There were a lot of mages that didn't have a low level, but this wasn't proportional to their fighting strength. Those mages have not experienced a lot of combat, so they lacked the capacity to respond and control their magic in tight situations.

Thanks to his superior judgment, Carl was able to ride the Purcell clan's coattails and become head of their Mage Association. Usually, those who served the association at a high level position were mages.

When Zhao entered Casa city, Carl got the news that he was heading to the Mage Association to register, so he immediately decided that he should personally go greet Zhao. In the end, he wanted to know what level Zhao was.

It had to be recognized that most people in the Continent would instinctively reject black mages, including the Purcell Clan. However, when the Markey Clan got news of Zhao's fighting strength, the Purcell Clan had to pay attention to him. If a mage was at a high enough level, clans would want to form a relationship with him no matter what type of magic he used. That was because high level mages were equivalent to nuclear weapons. Although they might not necessarily use such a weapon, it would be enough to deter an enemy just by having it.

If a famous mage in the Continent went to the Purcell Duchy, the Purcell Clan would warmly receive him, even if they couldn't pull that mage into their clan.

But for Zhao, the Purcell clan took a more calm attitude. They didn't take any initiative to get close to him, even though Zhao was very strong. That was because one of the principles of this large clan was that ability takes second place. Loyalty takes first place. The world has so many people, but those who were loyal were few. Even if your abilities were strong, if you always revolted, then no one would dare use you. That was the policy of the Purcell clan. If you were an eighth level mage, but you weren't loyal to them, then they wouldn't use you. They would rather have two loyal seventh level mages, than an unloyal eighth level mage.

Zhao's identity was still a secret and they couldn't find out much about him, so this made the Purcell clan reluctant to draw him in. Right now the Purcell clan was developing well since they had managed to establish their own principality. They weren't adventurous, especially towards unknown factors, so even though Zhao had great strength, if they got him to join their clan, they wouldn't be able to rest well with what little they knew about him. So they gave him the cold treatment.

But despite the cold treatment, they still had to pay attention to him. After all, since Zhao was now in Casa city, the Purcell Clan's face wouldn't look good if they didn't do anything.

Zhao didn't think too much about all of this. He just knew that he was short on money and registering at the Mage Association would at least give him an income of ten gold coins per month. To most mages, this was probably nothing, but it was very important to Zhao. The amount of money the Buda clan had could only add up to fifty gold coins, so this income was equal to a fifth of what they had.

Of course, Zhao knew that he would get an advanced mage badge as long as he released some undead, but he didn't know how much strength he should let these people see. Being too high profile wasn't part of Zhao's character.

In the end, without incantations, he just held up his staff and his undead appeared at his side.

Zhao didn't call out his army of undead. He just wanted to do enough to prove that he could do magic, even though it was actually pseudo-magic.

With the emergence of Alien, Carl's eyes widened. He had worked for the Mage Association for many decades and have seen countless mages using magic. Some of the magic was beautiful, while others were ugly. Some took a long time to cast, while others only took a short amount of time. But Zhao's casting time was really short. He just held up his magic staff and he was finished? Wasn't this a huge exaggeration?

Zhao gently touched his undead. Like a puppy, when Alien was touched by his owner, it madly wagged its tail, almost killing Carl. Feeling scared, Carl quickly jumped away.

After a while, Zhao returned his undead. Carl still wasn't reacting, so Green had to ask, "Did my master pass the test?"

Carl quickly recovered. "Yes, dear mage. This way please." He led everyone back to the seating area.

Once Zhao was sitting in the lounge, Carl turned and ran, then returned with some paper, which he put on the table in front of Zhao. "Dear mage, please fill out this form. This will complete all the formalities."

Zhao took the piece of paper and carefully looked through it. He found that it was very simple. He just needed to fill in the blank about his name, age, sex, and other basic things.

Zhao nodded, then gave the paper to Meg, who understood what Zhao meant. Carl then gave them a pen.

While looking at Zhao's performance, Carl's heart was crying. There were no rules that said a mage had to fill out the form himself, but most registering mages would do so. This was out of respect towards the Mage Association. The association was a national organization, so even those who weren't part of it would still show a little respect.

Carl had wanted Zhao to fill out the form, so as to collect some more information about Zhao. In the Continent, there were special handwriting appraisers that could learn all kinds of things from looking at someone's handwriting. Carl was planning to send the form to the Purcell clan, who could hire someone to analyze the handwriting and see if they could find any clues to Zhao's identity.

But he didn't expect that Zhao wasn't going to fill out the form himself, and instead got Meg to fill it out. His plans had been dashed. This made Carl highly wary of Zhao. In his opinion, everything Zhao did was intentional. It showed that he was trying to cover up his identity, which only dangerous people would do.

In fact, from the very beginning, Carl had been constantly observing Zhao. He saw Zhao's attitude to the people around him and found that he acted like an orthodox nobleman. He had sent Zhao some tea just to see what he would do, but Zhao didn't even touch the cup of tea. And so far, Zhao didn't speak, so he couldn't judge anything from the sound of his voice. His plans just kept dropping off.

Now his plan for him to fill out the form had also failed, which made Carl feel a deep impression from Zhao. He thought that Zhao must be a famous person on the Continent, but his reputation was certainly not good, so he had to cover his identity.

So what was Zhao's true identity? Carl had no idea.

Chapter 79 - Poison

Zhao looked at the badge in his hands. This wasn't an ordinary low mage badge, but an intermediate one. This badge was personally handed to him by Carl, along with one hundred gold coins.

Green didn't think that Carl would give Zhao such a high assessment. Zhao had just summoned a single undead, and he didn't use any other magic. Yet, he was able to get an intermediate mage badge.

Anyway, an extra one hundred gold coins would be a solution to their urgent needs. This would only add to the future development of the Buda clan.

The three went out to the carriage. Green looked up at the sky, then turned to Zhao. "Master, let's go get something to eat right now. We'll go to one of the restaurants owned by the Markey company."

There were a lot of places in the city that sold a variety of things for living, but they were different from the restaurant and hotel industry. Those places that sold daily supplies were usually on the low end, but you had to take the high road to get to the restaurants and hotels. To eat a meal there didn't just take a few coins. You should know that even one gold coin was sufficient enough for a common household to live on for a month.

Zhao nodded, then got into the carriage. Green told Rocky where to go, who drove his carriage until they stopped in front of a restaurant. This restaurant in Casa city was even bigger than the Mage Association, about four stories tall.

When the carriage stopped, a man dressed in gorgeous leather armor came out. The armor looked beautiful, painted with a layer of reflective blue paint, which made him look sparkling. The clothes seemed to be the security uniform of the Markey Clan's restaurant.

The man went to the carriage and bowed. "With respect, sir, your carriage is not allowed to stay here. Please follow me over here."

Green didn't argue with him. Instead, he got down from the carriage and opened the door, allowing Meg and Zhao to get out. The three then walked into the restaurant while security directed Rocky to park somewhere else.

When the three went into the restaurant, two beautiful girls dressed in waitress uniforms immediately greeted them and bowed. "Welcome to the Light Prism restaurant, dear mage. Do you have a reservation?"

Zhao didn't say anything. Green just came up and handed them the gold medal. The two girls looked at the gold medal carefully, then gave it back to Green and bowed again.

Green at once said, "Arrange a room for us. We have come here to dine."

The two girls escorted the three into the restaurant and arranged a room for them on the third floor. The rooms in the third floor weren't that much, only there for those who just wanted to eat a meal. Once they were there, Green randomly pointed out two dishes he wanted to order and some soup. Once he finished, Green calculated that the food would cost about ten gold coins, but the ingredients to make it was only one gold coin. Ah, they were really profiteering off of their customers.

After they made their order, the waitress immediately brought them a pot of tea. Zhao didn't move, waiting until they were served their dishes. Once they received their food, Green closed the door to the room and Zhao was finally able to take off his hat. He breathed out. "This was suffocating me. What kind of life would you have if you always had to wear these clothes?"

Green smiled. "It must have been uncomfortable to be unable to speak."

"But worth it," Zhao said. "Anyway, today could be considered a good day since we gained one hundred gold coins, Grandpa Green. Maybe we should buy some meat and give it to the slaves to improve their lives."

"Although we were able to get one hundred gold coins," Green said, "we don't know when Laura would come back, so we should hold on to the money and save it for later."

Zhao nodded helplessly. He had been a little too excited about the one hundred gold coins. If they were to spend it in such a place like Casa city, he feared that it would only last an hour before the money runs out.

Meg poured a cup of tea and held it in front of Zhao. "Master, have some tea."

Zhao nodded, then took the cup. Meg then gave a cup of tea to Green.

Zhao was about to drink from the cup, when suddenly there came a tone and the voice said: [Discovery of toxic substances. Opening host protection program. Extracting toxins. Toxin analysis complete. A chronic neurotoxin that would cause severe damage to the human nervous system. Expected time of death in three hours. Creating the antidote. Antidote creation complete. Please drink the spatial water. Using newly discovered toxins to strengthen robotic objects]

Zhao froze in amazement, then he immediately put down the cup. He looked at Green who was about to take a drink. "Stop! Grandpa Green, the tea is poisoned!"

Green stopped for a moment, then his face changed. He immediately put his cup down on the table and rushed towards the door. He opened it and looked out, finding no one. He then closed the door and sat back down at the table. "Master, is the tea really poisoned?"

Zhao nodded. "Ah, it's a chronic poison. But you don't have to worry, Grandpa Green. The antidote to the poison is already in the spatial water, so you can rest assured."

Green was still frowning. "We're in a restaurant that belongs to the Markey company, so it should be impossible for others to try to poison us. The only culprit is the Markey clan. But why would they want to deal with us?"

Zhao wrinkled his brow. It was strange. Supposedly the Markey clan should have no reason to try to kill them, since they had even helped out members of the Markey clan earlier. But if it wasn't the Markey clan that did it, who else would it be?

Meg suddenly spoke up. "Master, Grandpa, I think that the Markey clan attacked us because of the infighting within their clan. Couldn't that be the reason?"

Zhao and Green hadn't thought of that, but it made sense. Green nodded his head. "That's most likely true. We had shown them the gold medal, which must certainly be an important thing, otherwise why would Laura give it to us as thanks for saving her life. Generally, that gold medal should have announced

us as important guests, yet the person in charge of this restaurant didn't come out to greet us. If the person in charge didn't appear, then there must be a problem."

Zhao frowned. "It seems like we have stumbled into the Markey clan's internal struggles. They told the Immortal mercenary group what Laura was doing, and when the group failed to kill her because of us, they might have mistaken us as enemies."

Green nodded. "Master, I think we should leave at once."

Zhao laughed slightly. "Why should we leave? The food's already here. I wanted to see if they poisoned the food or not. If they really dared to do that, I would burn down this restaurant."

Zhao felt ignited. Although he was an otaku that wanted to remain low key, that didn't mean he doesn't feel anger. An honest man wasn't the same as a man without a temper.

Although they still weren't completely sure who was behind this poisoning incident, only the infighting within the Markey clan could have caused it.

"Did you think that your internal struggles had anything to do with me? I was just passing by and saved Laura's life from the Immortal mercenary group. Just for that, you would go so far as to poison me?" Zhao thought to himself.

While thinking that, he picked up a knife and fork and ate the food. To be honest, it tasted delicious. But it wasn't toxic. Zhao told everyone that the food wasn't poisoned.

But just to be sure, Zhao added some spatial water to the pot, which would detoxify the poison. While drinking the water during dinner, no one was afraid of poisoning.

Chapter 80 - Leveling Up an Undead

Satiated, they paid their check.

While doing so, Green paid some attention to the attitude of the waitress. He wanted to see if he could spot any clues from her face. If the waitress was behind the poisoning incident, it would show.

However, Green was disappointed because he could see nothing wrong. Even when Green gave her a tip, her actions were quite satisfactory.

Since Green didn't see anything, he followed behind Zhao as they left the restaurant.

They then immediately left the city, since there was no reason to stay. Plus, Green wanted to do some fishing. He believed that the people who tried to poison them would like to see the results. Poisoning a black mage was dangerous, because there were black mages who were masters at poison, so they couldn't be sure if their toxins had worked.

It was precisely because of this that Green believed that those people would come see if they had been poisoned or not. If the three stayed in the city, they wouldn't be able to move around freely, and they might cause a big enough disturbance for the Purcell clan to intervene. Green didn't want to pull the Purcell clan into this conflict. He wanted to deal with the people who would dare poison them.

Once they were outside the city, Zhao took out his undead and rode on it as they hurried towards Stony Mountain. As of now it would take two hours for the poison to take effect. Zhao calculated the time as he started pretending to look more and more poisoned.

Up til now, Zhao had not seen a trace of their enemies, but Green was sure that someone must be following them. Of course, trained killers from large clans wouldn't be so easily found.

The season was spring and it was four in the afternoon, so the sky was still bright. Although the darkness of night would have been more favorable for Zhao to lure his enemies out, the poison didn't give them that much time, so he decided to go near the mountains where they could be alone.

Spending two hours to lead people away from the city was very boring. But eventually, after calculating the time, Zhao turned to Green and said. "It's almost time, Grandpa Green."

They had arrived at the mountains. Although there was a road that led here, it was clear that not many people used it, especially at this time of day. It was now six and starting to get dark. Green looked around and nodded. "We'll work with this," he said.

Zhao got his undead to slow down, then he returned it to the space. After that, the three fell to the ground and laid there, motionless.

Nothing happened in the next half hour as they quietly laid there among the weeds, trying to be as still as possible. Luckily, it wasn't cold at this time of day. But just lying on the ground for a long time was really hard to accept.

It wasn't until an hour had passed when there was finally some movement. Green heard faint footsteps coming towards them.

Although Zhao didn't have as good a hearing as Green, he could still use the screen from his spatial farm. The screen was projected in front of his eyes. Even though he was outside the space, he could still use it to monitor his surroundings. And ever since he rose to level six, his monitoring range had increased by ten meters.

Ordinarily, if a man was walking towards them from fifty meters away, they should be able to hear him. But Zhao didn't hear a sound. If it weren't for the screen, it would have been impossible for Zhao to find someone.

The screen showed a little green dot approaching them.

The green dot was a man that wore dark clothes and was carrying a black sword. He had a long nose and small eyes. Seeing the image of the man, Zhao couldn't help but think of one person: Shi Qian.

Shi Qian was a fictional character from the Water Margin novels. Although he had an ugly appearance, he had amazing thieving skills, earning him the nickname, Flea on a Drum. If this man went to Earth, he could play Shi Qian on tv without needing any makeup.

The man stopped twenty meters from Zhao, then he took out some throwing darts.

Zhao's heart couldn't help but curse loudly. Even though they had been lying here for an hour, this man was still being careful. Just as the man was about to throw a dart, Zhao suddenly summoned Drunk to stand in front of him. Now it was impossible for Zhao to get hit by the dart.

The moment Zhao summoned Drunk, Green also moved. He was an eighth level warrior. With a yellow light flashing around his body, he sprang towards the man. Meg also got up and created a layer of blue to shield Zhao and herself.

Several of the darts were thrown, but it was impossible for them to break Meg's shield.

When Drunk appeared, the man knew that he must withdraw, but unfortunately he didn't have the opportunity. Green was stronger and faster than he had imagined, and was rushing towards him from twenty meters away. Even if he wanted to run, he wouldn't be able to.

So the man simply didn't run. He closed his eyes and his lips moved, then he spit out black blood as he fell to the ground, dead.

Zhao stood up just in time to see the scene. He really didn't expect that the man would act so decisively. When the man knew that he couldn't escape, he immediately committed suicide by swallowing the poison in his mouth, like you would see on tv.

Green also didn't think that the man would choose suicide as he stood beside the man's body. Now it was impossible to question him. All he could do was examine the dead body, but there were no markings that told them who were the forces behind this man.

Zhao also walked over and looked at the man, then he turned around and asked Drunk, "If we make this guy an undead, could we ask him anything?"

Drunk shook his head. "No, Master. I'm now an undead, so I can only make low level undead. So even if we turned him into an undead, he simply wouldn't be able to answer any questions."

Zhao looked at the corpse, then made his decision. "Turn him into an undead. If they dare to come against us, we should show them what will happen to them."

Obedying his command, Drunk casted a spell. Black gas formed and then floated down to the man's dead body. Once the black gas disappeared, there was nothing but a pale skeleton lying on the ground. Of course, his clothes didn't disappear, and he still had his sword.

With nothing else to do with the man, Zhao threw him into the space. But he didn't think when the man entered the space, the voice would appear and said: [Low class robotic object. Leveling up. Strengthening its abilities and strengthening it with toxins]

Zhao was confused for a moment, but then his face lit up. He summoned the undead man out of the space. The man was now a dark green skeleton, just like Drunk.

"Do you understand me?" Zhao asked.

The man nodded.

Zhao was overjoyed. "What's the name of the forces you belong to?"

The man shook his head. "I am your faithful servant, Master."

Zhao paused for a moment, then he asked a few more questions, but the man just gave that same answer. It was then that Zhao understood. The man didn't remember anything from before he died.

Zhao had a wry smile. He thought that after the level up, the man would be able to tell him something useful, but it appeared to be in vain.

Zhao then asked. "What are your abilities?"

"Master, I can assassinate with darts and I can fight with a sword," the man said.

The man wasn't like Drunk, he was a lower undead, so he naturally couldn't remember things from his past. But with the level up from the space, he could at least now use his assassination skills that he previously had.

Zhao nodded. "Starting today, remember that I am your master, and your name will now be Shift," he said before he returned the man to the space.