

Astral Apostle

- Chapter 129: Stealth; Butterfly Effect (1) |

Chapter 129: Stealth; Butterfly Effect (1)

The yellow clouds overlapped, and the setting sun cast a layer of bloody light on White Plains Town.

The pedestrians on the street gradually thinned out and became deserted.

Zhou Jing hid in the corner of the house and looked at the Lord's House, which was a street away. His gaze wandered around the windows of the residence.

He had been scouting throughout the day and had roughly figured out the situation around Lutt.

Because of the scare half a year ago, Lutt had been staying in the castle. If someone wanted to kidnap Lutt, they would have to sneak in. Lutt had set up several guard teams in the castle, which were scheduled to patrol long-term. They worked two shifts day and night, standing guard on the main roads all over the castle. In addition, he had also recruited a new group of mutant guards to protect him.

On paper, this castle was heavily guarded. It should have been difficult to enter silently.

However, people would slack off... The defense lasted for half a year without any danger. The guards had long relaxed. It was unlikely to expect them to be tense for such a long time.

In the past few months, people wanted to see the world in chaos or were quite dissatisfied with Lutt. They were hoping that some hunter would follow Jason's example and attempt to assassinate Lutt again.

However, now that White Plains Town was in a slump and many hunters had left, even the commoners felt that it was impossible for any assassinations to happen again. The guards also had the same thoughts, so they would not be on their strictest behavior at all times.

Tight on the outside, loose on the inside—that was Zhou Jing's assessment of the castle's garrison.

"I'll make my move after midnight." Zhou Jing made up his mind and disappeared around the corner.

...

Night arrived as expected, and White Plains Town gradually fell into a slumber.

As time passed, the guards at the door also began to blatantly slack off, yawning from time to time.

In a low house on the side of the residence, two guards were hiding. They were eating some nuts and chatting casually. Occasionally, they would turn their heads and lift the curtains to observe the residence through the window.

Their mission was to monitor the outer wall of the castle and prevent people with extraordinary physical fitness from climbing up the outer wall and sneaking into the castle through the window. If they found anything, they would immediately ring the bell for the rest to be on guard.

However, after half a year, this sentry post had long been slacking off. They were already giving him face by not sleeping directly.

"Tsk, the last time the mutant beasts caused trouble, there weren't enough hunters, so we had to use the army. Many people died as a result. In the past, when there were enough hunters, there was no need for us to risk our lives," one of the guards muttered unhappily.

Another guard shrugged. "Fortunately, we were chosen to protect the castle. We don't have to fight the mutant beasts. It's safer here. I think White Plains Town is about to be finished. Let's save up more money here and settle down in another town."

Although they were town guards, they were equally unhappy with Lutt. Their work was just for the sake of living, not loyalty.

At this moment, a figure seemed to flash past the corner of their eyes.

The two of them subconsciously turned their heads and lifted the curtains to check, but they realized that there was no one outside.

Just as the two of them thought that they had stayed up too long, hence starting to see things, someone suddenly knocked on the door behind them.

Thud thud thud...

Both instinctively turned around.

At this moment, a figure jumped over the eaves above the window and landed silently behind the two of them like a raccoon. His hands reached out like a ghost.

Pak! Pak!

The mouths and noses of the two guards were covered, and they could not shout. Their eyes widened in fear. They felt an arm that was like steel wrapped around their necks, preventing them from breaking free.

An irresistible force pulled them into the bosom of the person behind them before the arms on their necks suddenly tightened.

Their vision instantly darkened, and they lost consciousness.

Zhou Jing knocked out the two guards and gently placed them on the ground. Then, he pulled open the latch and let Ross, who was knocking on the door mechanically, enter the house.

“Change your clothes.”

Zhou Jing instructed and changed into the guard's clothes.

He had been to the residence a few times before, so he was familiar with the structure. It was a four-story castle. Lutt's original bedroom was on the third floor, and it was also most convenient to reach through the window from the outer wall.

However, he felt that since Lutt was already so afraid, it was unlikely that he would leave behind such an oversight. He would definitely take some methods to prevent enemies with extraordinary bodies from climbing the outer wall and sneaking into his room.

Therefore, during the day, Zhou Jing thought about it from another perspective. *With the lord's resources, how could he take precautions??* In the end, he still had to rely on manpower to monitor the situation... Under his careful search, he had already discovered the sentries monitoring the outer wall of the castle during the day.

He had already quietly dealt with all the external sentries he had discovered so that he would not be easily discovered by climbing the wall.

Zhou Jing and Ross quickly changed into the guards' clothes and removed some of the armor that could easily make a sound. Then, they found a thick rope from the house and tied the two naked, unconscious guards together. At the same time, they stuffed their mouths with a rough cloth. He usually knew his limits when dealing with ordinary people, but the strength he used was enough for the two guards to sleep for half a day.

After doing this, Zhou Jing brought Ross around to the back of the castle. Under cover of the night, they quietly climbed up the wall, their movements extremely agile.

However, Zhou Jing did not climb in through the window of the lord's bedroom on the third floor.

He felt that since Lutt was guarding against hunters, he would probably not dare to continue living in his original place. Perhaps he had already changed to a room without windows. The original lord's bedroom might have been changed to an empty room or used as bait.

Zhou Jing directly climbed to the roof and stuck his head out to look at the crenellations there. He realized that there were indeed a few guards standing guard on the roof, but they were lazing around and napping.

The only one who was not sleeping had taken off his shoes and was scratching at his feet. He even smelled his hands from time to time.

“What unique taste...”

The corner of Zhou Jing's eyes twitched, and he suddenly used all his strength to flip onto the rooftop. With just a step, he crossed a few meters and pounced in front of this person.

Chapter 130: Stealth; Butterfly Effect (2)

This guard had just taken a whiff of his finger and was intoxicated by the smell. At this moment, he had no time to react.

He had just seen the figure when he was chopped by Zhou Jing's hand blade. His eyes rolled back, and he fainted.

The entire process took less than a second. Almost no noise was produced, and the other guards were still asleep.

Zhou Jing dealt the finishing blow one by one, clearing the defense of the rooftop, leaving only one guard behind to shake this person awake.

“Uh... is it time to change guards?”

The guard opened his sleepy eyes and spoke subconsciously.

Suddenly, he felt a metallic chill on his neck. He looked down and realized that a long saber was pressed against his neck. His sleepiness was instantly frightened away.

The guard glanced to the side and saw that all his companions had fallen unconscious. His entire body trembled in response.

“No shouting. Tell me what’s going on in the castle. I’m only here for Lutt.”

Zhou Jing spoke in a low voice.

The guard nodded with a tremble and did not dare to disobey. Instead, he spilled everything he knew.

That small salary he received was not enough to support his loyalty.

Because he felt that Lutt had most likely changed rooms, Zhou Jing needed to find Lutt’s location, and the guards stationed inside the castle would know.

The rooftop guard on duty went by rotations, and this guard knew what floor Lutt currently lived on.

According to him, Lutt had changed rooms, but he still lived on the third floor. The original servants’ room with no windows had been converted into a new bedroom for Lutt, with the original lord’s bedroom occupied by a few mutant blood guards.

In addition, every room with a window in the castle had an additional latch added outside the room door. It was locked from the outside. Even if one climbed in through the window, they would have to break through the door. On the entire third floor, the guards were the strictest.

“It seems easier to get into the castle from below than to climb in from the outside.”

Zhou Jing thought to himself, but he did not hesitate to knock this person out.

After dealing with the aftermath, he led Ross from the rooftop to the fourth floor and into the castle.

The fourth floor was not heavily guarded. Guards were patrolling or standing guard, but they were all slacking off.

Although he had changed into a guard’s uniform, this was just a form of insurance. Zhou Jing relied on his extraordinary senses to listen to the breathing around him. He took out the guard posts and tried to circle around them.

The two of them quickly reached the stairs leading to the third floor. Unfortunately, people were guarding this place, so there was no way to circle around.

Zhou Jing pressed down on his round helmet and walked straight over with Ross, prepared to deal with the interrogation and even attack.

However, the guards guarding the stairs only glanced at the two of them. Seeing that they were dressed like guards, they did not care anymore and chatted among themselves as they let the two go downstairs.

Zhou Jing looked straight ahead and walked past with Ross.

As expected... the interior of the castle was already quite lax.

When he arrived on the third floor, the guards were much denser. Zhou Jing circled around for a while and did not alarm anyone. Soon, he found his target.

It was an inconspicuous position in the castle. The corridor extended down a narrow staircase that led straight to the room. There were four guards on duty at the top of the stairs and two others at the door. Everything signified that Lutt lived here.

“The Mutant Blood Guards seem to live on this floor, plus there might be Mutant Blood Guards in Lutt’s room as well. These people can’t be lured away. It doesn’t seem possible to avoid causing a commotion... But we’re already here. As long as we get close to Lutt and capture him, we don’t have to worry about being discovered.”

Zhou Jing pondered for a while before leading Ross to the staircase.

The four guards standing guard at the top of the stairs noticed them. Their scrutinizing gazes landed on the two of them as they tried to identify them.

Zhou Jing quickly approached the four of them. Without waiting for them to ask, he took the initiative to speak.

“Carl called us over. We’re changing shifts.”

“... Who’s Carl?”

The four of them were lost. Just as they were about to question the two, they were greeted with this question first. They started to subconsciously wonder if there was anyone called Carl among the people they knew.

At this moment, Zhou Jing suddenly attacked, his movements quick like a rabbit!

Taking advantage of the short moment when the four of them were in a daze, he quickly punched out like an arrow, hitting the four of them in their chests.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

The heavy force penetrated their bodies, breaking their bones and tendons. They screamed and fell to the ground, unable to get up. The leather armor on their bodies had almost no protection against the astonishing force of the punch.

The expression of the guard standing guard at the door of the room not far away suddenly changed. His originally listless state instantly became tense, and he shouted without thinking,

“Enemy attack! There’s...”

The two of them had only shouted half a sentence when Ross, who was behind Zhou Jing, had already rushed forward like a bull.

Peng!

The two guards couldn’t dodge in time, and Ross knocked them back. Their backs hit the door with a dull thud.

Ross didn’t stop walking as he slammed the both of them against the door.

Crack!

The sound of wood splintering was heard as the door was smashed into pieces by the three of them.

Ross forced the two guards, whose bones had been broken, into the room.

A sudden loud noise woke the people in the room.

Lutt had been frowning as he had a nightmare. In his dream, he was once again being chased by Jason, who had no chin.

Suddenly, his dream was shattered by a loud bang. He suddenly opened his eyes, still in a daze as he looked at the shattered door.

On the soft couch on the other side of the room, a Mutant Blood Guard was resting while protecting him. He was also woken up by the noise.

“Who!”

The Mutant Blood Guard shouted in shock and anger. He drew his long saber and charged at Ross, who was crawling up from the ground.

However, before the blade could hit Ross, a figure suddenly appeared from the side. A kick hit him as fast as lightning, making him unable to react.

Chapter 131: Stealth; Butterfly Effect (3)

Chapter 131 – Stealth; Butterfly Effect (3)

Peng!

In the next moment, the Mutant Blood Guard felt a sharp pain in his ribs. The terrifying force seemed to have broken half of his ribs, and he was sent flying.

With a bang, he flew out, causing cracks in the walls upon contact. His long saber also flew out of his hand.

He fell to the ground and spat out a mouthful of blood as he struggled to get up.

Zhou Jing did not stop after succeeding in his attack. He chased after him and kicked his head.

The guard was in so much pain that he could only raise his hand to protect his face. His arm suffered the brunt of the kick, and his bones were instantly broken.

Peng!

The explosive kick that was like a cannonball directly hit his skull through his arm.

The back of his head hit the wall heavily, creating another dent and sending out a ring of floating dust.

The Mutant Blood Guard bled from all seven orifices and fell to the ground, no longer able to fight.

Zhou Jing was expressionless as he kicked him again, breaking his neck before stopping.

When dealing with Mutant Blood Warriors, he was not as “gentle” as he was with ordinary people. He would kill them whenever he could.

This guard was only at the First Enhancement, while his foundation was outstanding even during his own First Enhancement. The effect of the Second Enhancement only pushed his attributes much higher than that of ordinary people, and his physical fitness was almost overwhelming. The other party was not his match at all.

The moment he succeeded in getting in a single hit, he could instantly kill the enemy.

At the same time, the commotion here also alarmed the guards and Mutant Blood Guards on the entire floor.

Tap tap tap...

Chaotic footsteps sounded outside the door, quickly approaching. Soon, the two of them would be trapped in this room.

Zhou Jing's expression did not change. The powerful strength from the second enhancement of (Tiger Courage) gathered his arms as he smashed them into the wall.

Boom!!!

The wall exploded, and bricks flew everywhere.

A gap appeared in the cold wind, and outside was the scene of White Plains Town.

Although there was no window in this room to retreat, breaking through the wall could still lead to the outside world. In front of his extraordinary physical fitness, tearing down houses and breaking through walls was as easy as drinking water.

Lutt was too frightened to move from the bed.

In a flash, a Mutant Blood Warrior from his tribe was instantly killed by the enemy. Lutt did not dare to act rashly, afraid that he would be killed by a single punch.

He was horrified. He did not expect that after half a year, there would still be someone who would attack him like Jason.

Didn't those dissatisfied hunters leave? Where did this boor come from?

"Knock him out and bring him along," Zhou Jing said without turning his head.

Hearing this, Ross immediately approached Lutt.

Lutt was terrified. Seeing this, he could only save himself. He wanted to stall for time and braced himself to speak.

"Don't... don't do anything rash. Attacking a lord is a serious crime. Don't go down the path of being an offender..."

Hearing this, Zhou Jing turned around and smiled playfully.

Previously, when he fought with the Mutant Blood Guards, his movements were extremely fast. Lutt could not see his appearance clearly. Only now could he see Zhou Jing's appearance clearly under the moonlight.

At this moment...

It was as if a huge hand had grabbed Lutt's heart.

Boundless fear spread from the bottom of his heart.

“J- Jason?!”

Lutt’s eyes widened in disbelief, not daring to believe what he saw.

How is that possible? I saw this person die with my own eyes!

Even if he isn’t dead, it’s impossible for his chin to grow back!

Ghosts! Evil ghosts! They are here to kill me!

The nightmare that he had been entangled in for half a year suddenly appeared in reality.

Lutt’s mouth fell open in a daze. His mind was blank, the cold penetrating his bones, leaving only an indescribable sense of deep fear that almost suffocated him.

Pak!

Ross did not care about his reaction. He faithfully carried out Zhou Jing’s orders and directly knocked Lutt out. Then, he wrapped Lutt in a blanket and held him under his armpit like an expressionless rapist.

“Let’s go!”

Without another word, Zhou Jing called for Ross to jump out of the hole and quickly disappeared amongst the continuous houses of the town.

From kicking down the door to breaking through the wall to kidnapping and escaping, the entire process took less than ten seconds. The efficiency was extremely high as he directly attacked the enemy and stole their tower[1]

By the time the other Mutant Blood Guards and guards on the same floor arrived, they were faced with an empty room and a hole that was constantly blowing cold wind into the room.

“Oh no, the lord has been kidnapped!”

“Chase after the culprit immediately!”

Many of the Mutant Blood Guards were shocked and furious.

However, when they turned to look at their companions’ corpses on the ground, they were extremely afraid and did not dare to chase after the culprits.

To kill a Mutant Blood Guard in such a short period of time was the standard for a Third Enhancement warrior!

They questioned, when did such a powerful person come to White Plains Town?

The lord was gone, leaving the team leaderless. The many guards were at a loss as to who should give the orders.

At this moment, a guard captain from the tribe gritted his teeth and shouted.

“Immediately inform the city guards to search the entire city. Also, guard the city gate tightly. We can’t let them escape!”

This person was considered a small leader of the tribe’s guards. The guards that Lutt had transferred from the tribe were under the command of this captain before.

Seeing that someone had stepped forward to take charge of the situation, the guards quickly followed orders.

The tribal guard captain looked at the other Mutant Blood Guards and shouted.

“We’ll immediately follow the trail and stop this person!”

Hearing this, although the many Mutant Blood Guards were afraid of the kidnapper’s skills, they were emboldened. They immediately jumped down from the hole and chased after Zhou Jing. The other tribal guards were about to take action when this person reached out to stop everyone and whispered,

“You don’t have to worry too much. Your priority is to protect yourself... It doesn’t matter if Lutt can’t be saved.”

A few tribal guards’ eyes flashed as they vaguely understood something.

In the past six months, Lutt had been plagued continuously by trouble. The sun had set, but he still refused to let go of his position as a lord. There were probably many people in the tribe who wanted to replace him...

Whether it was to climb up the ranks or to salvage the “business” of White Plains City... Lutt had become a member of the clan that obstructed their interests.

The tribal guards nodded silently before joining the pursuit.

At the same time, the messenger sent by Lutt’s backer rushed over.

He was also resting in the castle tonight. When the accident happened, he was also woken up, but he did not have time to provide support.

Seeing the current situation, the messenger's expression changed drastically, and he was left in a mess.

Someone really attacked the lord and succeeded?!

was a

The identity of the perpetrator was a mystery. What is his background? What is his motive?

Lutt knew the entire plan. If he was interrogated and revealed, he might implicate the lord. The plan behind the scenes was at risk of being exposed.

The messenger's heart was in turmoil as he turned to leave.

He looked determined, preparing to rush back to the capital overnight.

He had to report the changes here to his own liege immediately!

Regardless of what the kidnapper's motives were, His Excellency's entire plan had to be adjusted!

The messenger gritted his teeth and cursed inwardly.

Lutt... Why didn't this scammer kill himself earlier?!

[1] Moba game reference on destroying the enemy towers while the heroes are distracted.

Chapter 132: Unexpected Intelligence (1)

Zhou Jing led Ross through the streets and alleys under cover of the night and the houses.

The group of Mutant Blood Guards pursued relentlessly, but they could not keep up with Zhou Jing's speed and were gradually left behind.

After running full speed for a while, the bell suddenly rang throughout the city.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

The guard sounded the alarm, alerting the entire town.

Groups of ill-dressed guards rushed out of the barracks and set up defenses.

However, the area of the town was only so big. Therefore, even if the alarm was issued, the pursuers would not be able to reach Zhou Jing. Moreover, the number of soldiers guarding the city wall was limited, so it was impossible for them to intercept him.

Not long after the alarm sounded, Zhou Jing had already reached the city wall.

This section of defense was sparse, and there were only a few guards present. Hearing a commotion, they stuck their heads out of the entrance and discovered Zhou Jing and his companion.

Zhou Jing smoothly climbed up the wall and turned to look at the guards beside him.

When the guards saw this, they brandished their weapons as if they would charge forward at any moment. However, the distance between them slowly widened as they “advanced,” having mastered the essence of the moonwalking.

Zhou Jing grinned and ignored them. He climbed over the wall with Ross and left.

The guards watched helplessly as the two of them disappeared into the thick night, their faces filled with frustration.

After a while, the many Mutant Blood Guards finally caught up to the city wall. When they heard that the thieves had already run away with their lord, the guards were furious.

“Why didn’t you stop him?!”

“Damn it, if you had held them for a moment, we would have arrived!”

The Mutant Blood Guards shouted angrily.

The guards obediently listened to the accusations. On the surface, they looked scared, but secretly, they rolled their eyes.

Funny, why did you think we could have stopped them?

The Mutant Blood Guards seemed to have expected better from them. They scolded the guards and left the city to chase after them for a while. When they felt that it was enough, they returned with a look of disappointment.

On the surface, they blamed the guards for not stopping the kidnapper, but in their hearts, they were secretly glad that the kidnapper was not stopped.

During the pursuit, they had already calmed down from their initial adrenaline.

They thought the enemy had undergone a Third Enhancement... They would never be able to catch him.

Everyone was just putting on a show to show that they had done their best. Then, they went back to their own homes.

As for Lutt... they just wished him luck.

On the other side, many town residents were woken up by the alarm. They walked onto the streets to observe and whispered to each other to ask about the situation. When they learned that the Lord's residence had been infiltrated and the lord kidnapped, they were all shocked.

Wow, there was finally a good man who acted on behalf of the heavens!

The more Lutt existed, the more desolate White Plains Town became. However, he ignored the losses of the residents of White Plains City and continued to be a lord. Many town residents were already dissatisfied with this. However, the Empire did not do anything, so they were helpless to change the status quo.

When they suddenly heard this, most of the citizens were not angry at all. Instead, they wished they could celebrate.

As word spread, the news of Lutt's kidnapping spread through the city like a hurricane.

Many people secretly prayed for Lutt.

— *Please kill the hostage!*

...

After leaving White Plains Town, Zhou Jing ran with Ross for a while before quickly realizing that the pursuers had given up.

"They stopped chasing so quickly. Tsk, looks like Lutt is really unpopular."

Zhou Jing curled his lips and brought Ross to a hidden area in the wilderness. He put the unconscious Lutt down and woke him up.

The moment Lutt opened his eyes and saw Zhou Jing's face, he panicked. He sat on the ground and hurriedly moved back, wanting to get away from Zhou Jing.

"How can you still be alive? I saw you die with my own eyes! What exactly are you!"

He could not understand how Jason could come back from the dead. This had already shattered his worldview. His mind was a mess, and he could not think at all. He had almost been scared out of his wits.

Zhou Jing grabbed Lutt and moved him back to the original position, raising his eyebrows as he spoke.

“Do you think that since the matter has passed, the dead will not return to settle the score?”

Lutt trembled. Faced with Jason, who was beyond his understanding, his mental defenses were completely broken.

He treated Zhou Jing as a vengeful ghost, and there was only fear in his heart.

“W-What do you want?”

“I ask, you answer. Cooperate honestly, or my friend will be happy to do something to you.”

Zhou Jing pointed at Ross and casually added,

“He’s proficient in more than a hundred torture methods. He can definitely help you understand your body structure.”

Lutt turned to Ross and immediately believed him... With such an expressionless face, one had to be a ruthless killer!

Zhou Jing then asked what he wanted to know.

Lutt was so frightened that his defenses were completely gone. His brain shut down, and he basically answered whatever was asked. He did not have the courage to resist.

Not long after, Zhou Jing asked about the truth behind Lutt’s assassination attempt and the deeper details.

“... So, you secretly sent benefits to the tribe and accumulated strength in response to a certain Roman’s call to rebel and split the empire one day to create an independent state?”

Zhou Jing blinked in surprise.

Due to Lutt’s overreaction back then, he suspected that there was an inside story. However, he did not know that a lord of a remote place like Lutt was actually extremely involved in a rebellion plan that seemed to stretch throughout the empire.

The leader of this rebellion plan was a guy called "Roman." He was also Lutt's backer. He had a high status in the Terra Empire, but this was the first time Zhou Jing heard this name.

Those who participated in this rebellion plan were all tribal lords. With Roman's plan as a link, they formed an indirect alliance and waited for a day when they would rise up together.

Lutt only knew a portion of the list, not all the people involved in this plan.

Zhou Jing asked in detail and roughly understood the motives of these tribal lords.

The Empire was established by the joint forces of the tribes, but as time passed, they had been secretly thinking of ways to weaken the inherent tribal forces. The Empire had replaced the original position of the tribes and absorbed a large number of resources, causing latters' strength to decline.

Many tribes felt indignant and thought that it was only with everyone's support that the Empire could be established. However, the Empire was trying to get rid of them after they had served their purpose, so they decided to respond.

The Terra Empire had been established for more than 40 years, and the threat of mutant beasts still existed. However, the living environment had already improved greatly. The various tribes no longer felt that there was a need to unite, and they were increasingly dissatisfied with having the Empire above them. Therefore, under Roman's lobbying and many factors, many tribal lords had the idea of escaping the Empire's rule.

There was no need to overthrow the royal family. That would cause both sides to suffer. Moreover, the various tribes in the Mutant World actually did not value the so-called "Kingship" as the head of the Empire... It had only been 40 years since they entered the Empire Era from the tribal era, and the legitimacy of the royal family's rule had yet to be completely established.

Every tribe that had survived since the primordial era could be considered an "orthodox" rule as well.

It was because of their support that the empire was established. If they were all independent, the empire's rule might be justified.

Due to a similar judgment, the various tribes decided not to listen to the Empire anymore. They planned to establish themselves as kings and be completely autonomous, getting rid of the leadership of the Empire's royal family. Then, through their alliance, they would make the Empire afraid to attack them in retaliation.

"They want to split a unified regime into a bunch of small regimes and make their own decisions instead..."

Zhou Jing sank deep in thought.

In simpler terms, this situation could be understood as... the various tribes, including the current royal family, funded the company together. Everyone was an investor, and the head of the company was the royal family.

But now, the person at the helm of the company wanted to turn the company into a sole proprietorship and dilute everyone's shares. Hence, the various investors could not take it anymore and planned to withdraw their investments and start their own company... Putting it in this manner, the situation seemed to be clear.

Zhou Jing could understand the thoughts of the various tribes. According to the situation in the Mutant World, there might really be a high chance of success.

However, Zhou Jing was curious about what motive this "Roman" had.

He had lobbied so many tribal lords and secretly formed a team planning to split the empire...? *Was this person ambitious? What benefits could he obtain from this?*

Just based on Lutt's description, Zhou Jing could not establish a clear image of Roman without coming into contact with him personally.

Zhou Jing shook his head and put this matter aside for the time being. He then asked about Buzz Cut... In comparison, he was more concerned about his background.

However, Lutt knew nothing about this. He only knew that there was a faction behind Buzz Cut who had a cooperative relationship with Roman. This person was also a secret guard sent by Roman to protect him.

The interaction between Lutt and the mysterious force behind Buzz Cut was limited to providing some supplies every year, such as food, ores, herbs, and so on.

The method of handover was often to transport the supplies to different locations. After Lutt's people left, this mysterious force would send people to take the supplies away. The two sides would not meet.

However, ever since Buzz Cut died, his interactions with that mysterious force had also been cut off.

"Since the handover is on your side, that mysterious force must have a base nearby..."

Zhou Jing frowned and pondered.

Unfortunately, Lutt did not know the location. There was no way to find him. It was like looking for a needle in a haystack.

Even Lutt didn't know about Buzz Cut's true background. At least now Zhou Jing had a clue.

That ambitious man called Roman had a deeper relationship with the power behind Buzz Cut, so he definitely knew more.

Zhou Jing asked what he was concerned about and obtained the information he wanted.

After he squeezed all the information out of Lutt, he was not interested in arguing with him. He directly slit his throat.

A line of blood appeared.

Lutt's eyes widened as he clutched at his bleeding neck. Pain filled his face.

He had always been on guard against the living, but he did not expect to die at the hands of a "dead person"...

But for some reason, he felt relieved.

After suffering for more than half a year, he was on tenterhooks every day, like a walking corpse... Perhaps only by dying in the hands of this undead could he be released from his nightmare...

Lutt fell to the ground, feeling the life ebb out of him. The past appeared before his eyes, but it was like something from his previous life. He slowly closed his eyes.

Zhou Jing did not look at Lutt's corpse again. There was no reason for him to let this person off.

Putting his saber back into its sheath, he began to ponder.

"Someone wants to split the empire... Roman..."

To be honest, it did not matter to him whether these tribes fought for independence or not.

Both sides had their reasons. He did not feel a sense of belonging to the Terra Empire and did not care that much.

What Zhou Jing was thinking was about how to make use of this information he had accidentally obtained. He wanted to find a way to earn resources from this matter...

"In the eyes of outsiders, I'm still a dead man. I can't appear in the surrounding area in case I'm recognized by my former hunter companions."

“It seems that it’s time to leave the White Plains City area... Perhaps I can only use the information I obtained to get close to the core of power in the capital... Furthermore, Roman is in the capital. If I want to contact him, I have to go there.”

Zhou Jing’s eyes flickered.

In addition, the capital had a large number of resources. He could come into contact with more blood potions and hunter breathing techniques, and it was very safe.

—Perhaps it would be a good place for an Eternal Apostle to develop.

Chapter 133: The Journey (1)

Zhou Jing had a plan for the development of the Eternal Apostles.

In his opinion, there were two main targets for the Eternal Apostle upon placement in the astral world.

One was naturally to continue to develop, constantly increase the upper limit of his strength, learn new skills, and provide his main body with a richer inventory of abilities.

The other was to earn resources, such as achievements, Astral Points, and Information State Particles.

This was because the Eternal Apostle did not have any pressure to complete the level, nor did they have a life objective to guide them. He could only use his initiative to determine what sort of “career” the Apostle could perform.

Jason’s “life goal” had been completed. Suppose he wanted to obtain the Information State Particles now. In that case, he could only take the initiative to find an incident to intervene—and the undercurrent of the splitting of the Mutant World Empire, the tribes seeking independence, was clearly a major event that affected the entire process of civilization. With a certain amount of information, his involvement would be able to cause a considerable impact.

As for what role he would play in this storm... Zhou Jing decided to adapt to the situation and wait for an opportunity to act.

The current two factions were the empire and the various tribal lords. He was currently slightly inclined towards the Terra Empire... However, it was mainly because of Lutt’s influence that he did not have a good impression of the tribal lords.

Killing foreign lifeforms seemed to be a way to obtain Information State Particles. However, the risk was too high, and he could not find anyone else at the moment. Therefore, Zhou Jing did not consider it as an option for the time being.

As for the big career plan, Zhou Jing still planned to let Jason develop as a Mutant Beast Hunter. On the one hand, only by being a hunter could he rightfully enjoy the priority supply of all kinds of resources, making it more convenient for him to carry out the subsequent enhancements through Mutant Blood.

On the other hand, he wanted to try to complete the previous milestone that he had triggered, which was [True·Mutant Beast Hunter].

He was still two goals away from completing this milestone— hunt a Fatal-Risk mutant beast as well as the King of Mutant Beasts.

Zhou Jing had thought about it. If Jason could break through the limit of Raven's strengthening or become the first person to kill the King of Mutant Beasts, he would most likely leave his name in history. In that case, he would definitely be able to create a sensational impact and produce a large wave of Information State Particles.

There was also the possibility of failure, but the Eternal Apostle was not afraid of death. It was more motivating to set a challenging target.

Of course, before Jason encountered the limit of the Mutant Blood Strengthening, Zhou Jing did not even consider trying to give the Mutant Beast King a taste of its own medicine. Besides, no one knew where the Mutant King was now.

"Let's set a small checkpoint first; become a Legendary Hunter."

Zhou Jing secretly made a plan.

Because White Plains Town was located in the northern part of the Empire, it would take about 20 days to reach the capital from his current location. With his sufficient endurance, he could greatly shorten this time.

However, Zhou Jing did not intend to go straight to the capital. Instead, he wanted to take a detour along the way to open up his map... At the same time, he wanted to explore the entire world and understand the local customs.

The larger the map, the more areas could be designated for placement. This was important for the subsequent deployment of the s.

Zhou Jing planned to wait until he opened a large map and let Jason gain a firm foothold in the capital before expanding the apostle slot to produce new s. This would save a lot of effort. Moreover, he would then have a deeper understanding of this world and have more ideas about the direction he wanted to take for the new Apostles.

Because his main body had already become a Super, he completed his original plan faster than expected and even decided to migrate. There was still a month and a half before he boarded the spaceship in the main world, so Zhou Jing was not in a hurry.

With this relaxed mentality, he planned to explore the Mutant Beast World and develop his Apostles.

“Regarding the other dimensional life forms... I’ll slowly investigate when I reach the capital. As long as I keep acting as a Mutant Beast Hunter and don’t show any actions that exceed this era, it won’t be easy for others to suspect me.”

Zhou Jing did not forget this. As a “dead person,” he did not leave his name behind when he kidnapped Lutt. Naturally, no one would suspect him... However, the hidden danger was that he would be recognized by those who had seen him before. However, as long as he left the Northern Region, the chances of him being recognized should not be high.

Unfortunately, the Eternal Apostle could not adjust his appearance. Otherwise, he would have wanted to readjust his appearance when he projected it back into the realm.

“I have over 1,000 Taela silver coins on hand, so it’s definitely sufficient for my travel expenses. I still have a lot of money to exchange for equipment and buy the blood potions directly... In that case, if I encounter good equipment or potions in other towns’ hunter workshops, I can also buy them on the spot.”

Zhou Jing stroked his chin and couldn’t help but think of Maggi.

Many of the good mutant blood potions would be reserved, and he did not have a hunter certification in other towns. If he went to another town to buy potions, he might be cut in line like what happened between him and Maggi by the local hunters there.

In that case, it was better to pay attention to the mutant beast crusade missions in the various towns. If he personally hunted powerful mutant beasts, he would definitely have a share of the mutant blood potion based on the beasts he downed.

He did not want to break the workshop’s rule of prioritizing the supply to the local hunters. If he could not buy them with money, he would do it himself.

After thinking about the follow-up plan, Zhou Jing composed himself and opened the achievement warehouse on the interface to count his rewards.

He had saved all the achievement rewards that he had triggered previously. Currently, he had [Aptitude Advancement – Physical Fitness (Small)] x3, [Attribute Advancement – Physical Fitness (Slight)] x2, [Aptitude Advancement – Resistance (Small)] x2, and [Aptitude Advancement – Comprehensive (Small)] x1.

There was still a lot of stock.

If the achievement reward was given to the new apostle, he could become stronger faster at the beginning of the game, and his growth would be faster. It would be easier to clear the level, but there was a risk of losing the rewards if it died... Therefore, Zhou Jing had been saving up the rewards.

On the other hand, if he used it on the Eternal Apostle, the enhancement results might not necessarily play a key role, but it would definitely not be a loss.

Chapter 134: The Journey (2)

Chapter 134 – The Journey (2)

“Speaking of which, kidnapping Lutt actually didn’t even give me any Achievements. This person is even a lord. What an embarrassment.”

Zhou Jing cursed inwardly.

He thought for a moment and chose a [Aptitude Advancement – Physical Fitness (Small)] for Jason to use.

[Usage complete]

[Physical Aptitude has increased slightly.]

Zhou Jing looked at Jason’s (Dark Green] Physical Fitness aptitude and couldn’t help but blink.

Did this... improve?

It was still in the green tier.

He tested with another before a familiar notification popped up.

[Physical Fitness Aptitude Change: (Dark Green] → [Light Blue]!]

It seemed that in the blue tier, he needed two [Aptitude Enhancement (Small)] to increase it by a minor tier... Zhou Jing noted this.

He looked at the remaining Aptitude Upgrade Reward. It seemed like it could increase his resistance aptitude by another tier... He did not hesitate and directly spent two portions of (Aptitude Upgrade – Resistance (Small)]

[Resistance (Light Blue) → [Blue]]

Zhou Jing took a deep breath. He thought his body seemed different, but he could not tell what had changed. For some reason, he felt like he had been “linked up.”

As for the remaining Aptitude Enhancement rewards, there were also Physical Fitness (Small) and Comprehensive (Small). Although it could also increase his Physical Fitness by another minor tier, Zhou Jing did not plan to use it.

The reward for a comprehensive increase in aptitude came from the unique achievement of (Entering Transcendence). It was even more precious since it didn't have a high drop rate.

He did not intend to use it just to increase his Physical Fitness Aptitude. He felt that the use of this thing was to increase some unique aptitude that was difficult to obtain targeted rewards for. For example, some systems with cultivation knowledge or supernatural systems with various rich routes. It would be a waste to give it to muscular people who purely relied on their bodies.

There were also two (Attributes Enhancement – Physical Fitness (Slight)) rewards.

“I wonder if I can break through the limit of having First Order attributes...”

(TL Note: Changing attribute from Level to Order. Hopefully, it will sound better than having just repeating level for everything.)

Zhou Jing muttered to himself and activated one of the rewards.

[Usage complete]

[+1 Physical Fitness Attribute]

(Current Physical Fitness: 40 (+4) (Rank 1 Max))

(Level Surplus has reached 10% of current attributes.)

(Physical Fitness can be broken through to Second Order]

“I see.” Zhou Jing's eyes lit up as he understood the mechanism.

When a certain attribute reached a bottleneck, the subsequent increase would not officially be added to the attributes. Instead, it would become a “Level Surplus”—the “+” in parentheses.

It reflected the accumulation progress during the bottleneck period, recording the increase in attributes that were not included in the official attributes... This part only

counted the Attributes obtained through the increase in skills or in one's superpower system. The Level Surplus would not increase even if he added Attribute points to it through the character template model.

If the Level Surplus exceeded a certain percentage of the current attributes, one could advance... From an ordinary person's point of view, this meant that one would be able to break through the bottleneck with years of training.

And to break through a level, the Level Surplus had to reach 10% of the attributes, which was a (+4) progress.

When Zhou Jing saw the "Advanceable" option appear behind his Physical Fitness attribute, he immediately clicked on it.

[(+4) Level Surplus has been consumed]

(Physical Fitness increased to Second Order]

[Please select a new trait from the following three options.)

(Note: Trait will mean that you are better at one of the directions of this attribute. It has given a special advantage.]

[1] Barbaric Physique—You have extraordinary brute force and are better at strength.

[2] Nimble Disposition —You have outstanding agility and are faster than ordinary people.

[3] Prolonged Endurance — You have amazing endurance and rarely feel tired

"So advancement is not only about breaking through the upper limit, but also obtaining additional bonuses..."

Zhou Jing perked up.

The attributes were a summary of one's overall nature, which included a lot of qualities. There were also differences when two people with the same Physical Fitness were compared. Some were stronger, while others were faster.

Jason took the agile route. He did not hesitate for long before choosing the second option.

On paper, strength and speed seemed to be separated, but according to his actual experience... Speed was strength, and it was more advantageous in battle.

(Selection complete. Trait generated.]

(Current Physical Fitness Attribute: 40 (Second Order)]

[Physical Fitness Trait: Nimble Disposition]

Zhou Jing's entire body trembled as if he had broken through some physical boundary. His blood flowed quickly, bringing with it a sense of fulfillment.

His body suddenly became lighter, as though so long as his feet left the ground, he could float into the air like a balloon.

He made a few feints on the spot, leaving behind afterimages as his speed increased.

Although his physical fitness was still at 40 points, the increase brought by his special trait was quite obvious. He roughly estimated that he was currently about 10% to 20% faster than before... In reality, it was quite astonishing

"According to this range, the limit of Second Order should be 80 attribute points... Hmm, Jason's resistance is already at 31 points. I can prioritize breaking through First Order for that as well."

Zhou Jing was in a good mood.

His main body had yet to advance, so this period was the perfect time for Jason to test the effects of the special trait. When the time came for his main body to select, he would know which route would be better for him.

He casually used another attribute enhancement reward to raise his Physical Fitness to 41 points before closing the interface.

Zhou Jing commanded Ross to deal with Lutt's body while he looked in the direction of Frostwood Village.

"I'm afraid I won't be coming back after I leave this time. Before I set off, I should go to the village to take a look..."

Early in the morning, Frostwood Village.

A group of villagers stood at the entrance of the village. They were divided into two groups and were bidding farewell to each other.

Today, a few more villagers planned to move into White Plains Town. The village chief and the other villagers came to send them off.

The villagers bid farewell to everyone one by one. They led the ox cart and dragged their families onto the dirt road that led them out of the village.

“Someone else has left once again...”

Griff took Reiner’s hand and stood in the crowd to see them off, sighing softly.

Compared to half a year ago, the already remote Frostwood Village was even more deserted now. Although they had not encountered any mutated beasts recently, more and more villagers had decided to move and hide in White Plains Town.

One of the reasons was that the town had no manpower to spare to protect the surrounding villages.

However, the real reason was that Barong had left Frostwood Village. A few months ago, the Imperial Investigation Group had declared Lutt not guilty and had not removed him from his position as Lord. Barong had been furious and had wanted to attack the Lord but was, in the end, persuaded otherwise by Weber and the rest.

However, because he could not accept this matter, Barong did not want to stay in the White Plains Town area. He simply left with Weiss.

From being a stationed hunter, he had returned to being a freelance hunter.

Just as he had once said, only by experiencing a journey would one have a home... He had once thought that he had found a home, but in the end, he realized that home was only part of his journey.

Before leaving, Barong gathered all the villagers and announced his decision. No matter how the villagers tried to persuade him to stay, or even if some villagers tried to employ moral coercion on him, he did not waver.

After guarding Frostwood Village for several years, the villagers were used to Barong’s existence. However, Barong did not owe the village anything and would not let anyone down by leaving. When it was time to leave, he would not be soft-hearted. He would not feel that he was tied to this place for the rest of his life just because he had protected the village for a few years.

However, Barong was still concerned about the safety of the villagers. Before he left, he suggested that the villagers move to White Plains Town.

Without the mutant beast hunter stationed there, Frostwood Village no longer had any protection. Many villagers accepted this suggestion and moved to live in the safer town.

Even Griff himself was planning to move to White Plains Town soon with his family.

After sending off this group of people, Griff brought Reiner to the cemetery. Out of habit, he wiped Will and Jason’s graves clean. Then, he took two steps back and stared at the tombstones of the Wood brothers for a long

time.

After a long while, he sighed deeply.

“Sigh... I wonder when I’ll be back.”

Beside him, Reiner turned to look at him and blinked. “Are we moving?”

“Yeah, we’ll leave in a few days.” Griff patted his head.

Reiner bowed his head to hide his excitement.

This guy had yearned for the outside world for a long time and was no longer willing to stay in the village.

At the same time, on the hill not far from the village, in the forest of the pharmacist’s hut where Gamma once lived...

Zhou Jing stood on the small hill and looked at the village from afar.

He had rushed back through the night to get to the village. Without the villagers knowing, he had already probed the area and discovered that Barong had left.

However, even if Barong did not leave, Zhou Jing did not intend to appear in front of everyone.

As long as the villagers were fine, it would not be a problem where they lived.

He had killed Lutt. The situation in White Plains would slowly improve. The area would return to its former safety after a while.

After a long time, Zhou Jing retracted his gaze and patted Ross, who was standing guard beside him.

“Let’s go.”

He turned and left, walking away.

Chapter 135: This Must Be The Wood Family Taking Revenge! (1)

In a certain town in the north, at the Hunter Tavern.

With a creak, two tall and burly men pushed open the door and stepped into the lively tavern.

The noisy tavern immediately fell silent. The people present subconsciously turned to look at the two of them. When they saw that the two guests were dressed like mutant beast hunters, they regained their liveliness and curiously sized up the two unfamiliar hunters.

One carried a spear on his back and had long, flowing hair. The other carried a huge ax and had... no hair.

It was Barong and Weiss.

They arrived at the bar. The tavern owner was chatting with a familiar hunter. When he saw the two approaching, he nodded and greeted them.

“The two hunters are from elsewhere, right? What do you want to drink? Or do you want to find some work?”

“Two cups of Northern Fire... Also, have you found any clues about mutant beasts or hunters recently?”

Weiss sat down with ease and knocked on the bar.

When the tavern owner heard this, he took out a booklet from the table drawer and handed it to the two of them. Inside was the latest information on hunters.

Weiss took it and flipped through it while Barong watched in silence.

At this moment, a hunter drinking beside them turned to look at the two of them and casually spoke.

“Are you two freelance hunters?”

Barong had been suffering from autism recently and did not speak.

However, Weiss responded with a nod, “I guess.”

This person carefully sized up the two of them and suddenly smiled, “You’re from White Plains Town, right?”

Weiss and Barong turned to stare at him.

Seeing this, the hunter laughed, “Don’t be surprised. We all know what happened in White Plains Town. Most of the hunters have run away. You’re not the first to visit our town.”

Upon hearing this, Barong and Weiss had mixed feelings. They felt that good news never left the house, while bad news spread far and wide.

Although the efficiency of information transmission was extremely low, news of a Mutant Beast Hunter assassinating a Lord had long spread after over half a year. Hunters who ran away from White Plains Town would be pointed at and watched by others.

If they were not involved, they could have happily treated it as a topic of conversation, but now, they did not want to mention it at all.

Their good friend Jason was buried in this storm. The greatest suspect, Lutt, was still safe and sound. The Empire did not deal with him. Every time they thought of this sad past, they would feel indignant.

At this moment, both of them were silent and did not respond.

However, the hunter did not notice it and continued in excitement.

“Speaking of which, that guy called Jason really did something sensational. Why didn’t any hunters attempt to kill the Lords like him in the past? Now, even the Lords of our town were suspicious for a period of time. Originally, we hunters could enter the city as we pleased, but we had to be interrogated during that period of time.”

“If you don’t do anything wrong, you won’t be afraid.” Barong’s tone was neutral.

During the days when the two of them left White Plains Town, they also discovered the impact of Jason’s incident. Many hunters felt that they had a common enemy, but some people felt that this was ruining the image of the hunters.

He did not know if it was a good or bad thing.

At this moment, a hunter at the side interrupted and sighed with emotion. “However, that guy called Jason is really powerful. I heard that he only done his First Enhancement, but he killed six to seven Mutant Blood Warriors alone. What an unbelievable battle record. If he was still alive, he might have become a big shot.”

Barong: “...”

The more they spoke, the more hurtful it was!

Sensing that Barong’s expression was not right, Weiss hurriedly pressed down on his shoulder and whispered, “Calm down, calm down...”

He still remembered that at that time, Barong had picked up his ax and was about to rush to the Lord’s Mansion. It was only after a group of hunters persuaded him that he

was stopped. Weiss was afraid that Barong would be agitated and impulsively run back to try and slash someone.

Seeing this, the tavern owner joined in, "By the way, something seems to have happened in White Plains recently. I heard that someone kidnapped the Lord of White Plains from the heavily guarded castle. Later on, the guards discovered the Lord in the forest, killed."

Barong and Weiss froze at his words.

Someone killed Lutt?

The heavens opened their eyes!

The two of them looked at each other and saw surprise in each other's eyes.

"Who did this?" Barong asked eagerly.

"I'm not sure. The murderer didn't leave his name, nor was he caught. No one knows his identity. I only heard that his strength reached the Third Enhancement." The tavern owner shrugged.

Barong and Weiss looked at each other.

"Could it be our former companions from White Plains?" Weiss whispered.

"Not likely. None of them have been enhanced three times, and none of them intended to kill Lutt."

Barong shook his head, secretly excited.

He did not know if this mysterious murderer had attacked Lutt out of righteous indignation or some other personal grudge... But no matter what, this mysterious person had done what he wanted to do. He even wanted to thank him.

When he suddenly heard the news of Lutt's death, Barong felt the pent-up anger in his chest dissipate as though it had been vented. He felt comfortable from head to toe.

At this moment, Weiss's eyes darted around. "Do you think this murderer is someone Jason used to know?"

"That's... hard to say."

Barong froze, suddenly remembering Jason's rather mysterious background and surname.

During their time together, Jason had always been secretive about this. He never talked about it much and made it quite mysterious.

Barong had only learned the family motto of the Wood family from Griff—to die a worthy death without regrets!

With such a family motto... their entire family should be all fierce people, right?

Chapter 136: This Must Be The Wood Family Taking Revenge! (2)

Moreover, Jason mentioned that his family was born with extraordinary strength.

Therefore, it made sense for the Wood family to have a Third Enhancement expert.

Does that mean that one of Jason's family members heard the rumors worldwide and sought revenge?

Yes, it must be the Wood family's revenge!

Barong sucked in a deep breath. The more he thought about it, the more he felt he had solved the case.

But he didn't intend to say it out loud... If he guessed correctly, he would be causing trouble for Jason's family.

It was better to keep this secret and let outsiders continue being in the dark about the mysterious person's identity!

Barong made up his mind.

As Barong was engaged in intensive mental activity, Weiss suddenly thought of something and spoke hesitantly.

“By the way, if Lutt dies, White Plains Town will have a new lord. Are we going back?”

Barong paused as well, but his face quickly became determined.

“Since I've become a freelance hunter again, there's no need to go back... I'll travel around, just like those old days in the past.”

He was not a man who liked to turn back. He initially thought that he had settled down, but Jason's death made him realize the throbbing still lurked deep in his heart.

Compared to living in the remote village, Barong only wanted to return to his wandering life a few years ago to see how the world had changed in the past few years.

He felt that he had returned to being that unrestrained prodigal son... although his image was completely different from that one of a prodigal son.

Barong grabbed the wine cup and splashed it on the ground under everyone's shocked gazes. As if he was praying for something, he muttered to himself,

"Did you see that, Jason? Someone has avenged you!"

...

"I saw it, I saw it..."

On a wide road, Zhou Jing had a helpless expression as he pressed down on Ross' outstretched arm.

It was such a big town in front of them. As long as one was not blind, they could naturally see it. How could he still point the way...

At the end of the dirt road was a "majestic city." The tall city walls and continuous buildings were incomparable to White Plains Town's size and grandeur.

Tarn City, capital of the Terra Empire!

It had been two months since he left the White Plains area. With Zhou Jing's speed, it would only take about 10 days to reach the capital, but he extended the journey to two months. As long as there were other towns along the way, he would take a detour to visit them and buy a map to add to his interface.

To him, this only took two projection cycles, two days in the main world.

The area of the Mutant Beast World on the interface had already expanded dozens of times. A wide, crooked curve extended from White Plains Town north to Tarn City. In the middle were scattered different towns. Some were ordinary towns like White Plains Town, while others were larger fortress cities.

However, the fortress cities he saw along the way could not be compared to the city of Tarn in front of him.

The capital city of this world's civilized regime was the largest fortress for humans!

The first Fortress City was named after the royal family's surname!

"We're finally here. Let's go, dumb-dumb. Follow me into the city."

Zhou Jing called out and walked along the road towards the city gate. Ross followed behind obediently.

Soon, a long line appeared in front of them. Farmers, merchants, residents, and all sorts of people were waiting to be cleared and sent into the city. The line stretched for two miles.

Zhou Jing arrived at the city gate. The place was extremely congested. At a glance, there were 20 to 30 guards conducting inspections of people entering the city. There were also archers patrolling the inner wall with eagle-like gazes. The security standards were several levels higher than in White Plains Town.

The guards quickly noticed his behavior—not queuing up and observing by the side. The two guards immediately came up to him.

“If you want to enter the city, line up at the back. Don’t loiter around the city gate!”

Hearing this, Zhou Jing directly asked, “I’m a mutant beast hunter. Can I enter the city directly?”

“A Mutant Beast Hunter?” The guard sized up Zhou Jing carefully and waved his hand. “That won’t do either. Recently, there have been orders that anyone has to be interrogated before they can enter the city, especially those who have been strengthened by the Mutant Blood.”

Zhou Jing’s expression did not change even as he nodded.

Ever since the news of him killing Lutt spread, many towns went into panic. Under the orders of their Lord, they temporarily removed the privilege of hunters not being interrogated and allowed free access into towns. Instead, they would all now be strictly checked.

However, there was no problem with the capital doing this. After all, it was the capital. It was too unstable to allow people with supernatural powers to enter as and when they pleased.

Zhou Jing was about to line up at the back when he heard a guard’s reminder.

“Foreign hunters have to go to the Imperial Hunters’ encampment to register before they can enter the city.”

When Zhou Jing heard this, he turned to ask a little more before understanding the situation.

The Imperial Hunters were an important force in maintaining the safety of the vicinity of the capital. However, they were not permanently stationed in the capital. Instead, they

had established a subsidiary city not far from the capital. Training, living, and nurturing newcomers were all conducted in the city. It was similar to a military camp and was the headquarters of the Imperial Hunters.

Only a small number of Imperial Hunters who were absolutely trusted stayed in the capital to protect the safety of the capital on a long-term basis, as well as the royal guards, palace guards, and the guards of the various tribes.

One of Zhou Jing's goals in the capital was to be a hunter of the Empire and obtain the best supernatural resources. The procedures and tests for joining the Empire's hunters had to be completed at the encampment, and the resident hunters present would check if he could join.

He asked for the location and immediately set off. Not long after, a camp appeared in his sight.

It looked like a heavily guarded town, except the people coming and going were all hunters wearing different mutated beast equipment. For the first time, the proportion of hunters present was higher than that of ordinary people.

"I feel strangely at home..."

Zhou Jing shook his head and brought Ross closer. Soon, they were stopped by the soldiers standing guard at the door.

"This is the Imperial Hunter's base. Don't approach casually."

"I'm a freelance hunter. This is my companion. We wish to join the army. I wonder if the Empire Hunters are still recruiting?"

Zhou Jing went straight to the point.

When the guard heard this, he asked Zhou Jing to wait for a while. Then, he immediately instructed his colleague to report.

After about three minutes, a hunter with seemingly a high status walked out and sized up Zhou Jing.

"You want to be an Imperial Hunter?"

"I've this thought in mind, I don't plan to continue drifting outside."

Zhou Jing nodded and spoke as if it was a serious matter.

Barong had told him about the difference between the Imperial Hunters and the Freelance Hunters in the past. The Freelance Hunters were more inclined to be

mercenaries or volunteers, while the Imperial Hunters were similar to regular troops. They were organized and received systematic training. What they learned was the comprehensive training plan summarized by the Terra Empire after integrating the skills of many tribes to nurture hunters.

All kinds of hunting techniques, mutant beast intelligence, wilderness survival, weapon mastery, and hunter's breathing techniques were included.

Therefore, although freelance hunters were a tradition, they were already considered unorthodox now. The Empire's hunters could be considered the orthodox academic faction... Of course, this kind of academic faction had a lot of actual combat experience and was really more comprehensive compared to just being a theoretical academic institution.

Many Imperial Hunters had been chosen to enter the base since they were apprentices. After several years of boring training, they would finally use mutant blood to strengthen themselves.

However, there were also a considerable number of Imperial Hunters who had switched from originally being Freelance Hunters. The Terra Empire had always been keen to recruit such "wild" Hunters.

Therefore, when he heard Zhou Jing's request, the hunter who came to question him was not surprised.

"Alright, come with me. You can call me Cole. I'm one of the stewards of the base... What's your name?"

Zhou Jing raised his eyebrows.

"My name is... Jace."

Cole nodded, then looked at Ross, who was expressionless behind Zhou Jing.

"What about this companion of yours?"

Zhou Jing's expression did not change as he lied through his teeth.

"Rosen."

(TL Note: He basically switched the last characters of their names.)

Chapter 137: Empire Hunter; Undercurrents (1)

“Jace and Rosen... Come with me.”

Cole did not suspect anything. Instead, he led the two of them into the base and led the way.

Zhou Jing looked left and right to observe the situation in the base. The most common facility on the road was the training ground. There were hunters guiding groups of young boys in their training, shouting non-stop.

These youths were wearing the same simple leather uniform. The youngest was eight or nine years old, and the oldest seemed to be no more than 14 years old.

Cole saw that Zhou Jing had noticed these children and introduced them.

“They are apprentices who have yet to receive the enhancement of the Mutant Blood. When they complete the basic course and their bodies grow to their peak state, they will use the Mutant Blood Potion. Those who survive will become reserve Empire Hunters and complete the first hunt of their lives under the lead of a senior hunter.”

“Where did you find these children? If the enhancement fails and they die, will it be okay for them to die?” Zhou Jing asked.

“Some of them are children sent by Imperial Hunters who are based elsewhere. Some are youths found in the countryside, and there are also young people who took the initiative to apply to become hunters... Among them are also the blood descendants sent by the various tribes,” Cole said casually. “Being a hunter is risky to begin with. A group of people will die every year. It depends on luck.”

As he spoke, he turned to look at Zhou Jing.

“You used to be a freelance hunter. After you officially join the army, you can also participate in the Imperial Hunter classes.”

Zhou Jing nodded. This was mainly why he had come. Joining the Empire Hunters was much more efficient than asking for guidance from others.

The two of them chatted as they walked. Soon, they arrived at the base’s archive room, which also served as the registration for new hunters.

“Do you know how to write? If not, I can help you dictate in the records.” So Cole got someone to take out a blank book and place it on the table.

Zhou Jing took it and took a look. There was a simple form on it. He had to fill in the information, including his background, past hunting records, his expertise in weapons, the number of times he had been enhanced, his focus on enhancement, and so on.

He picked up a pen and filled it in himself. During this time, when he traveled over from White Plains Town, he gained a better understanding of the local customs of the Terra Empire. At this moment, it was easy for him to make it up, and he also filled in the information for Ross.

The hunter's records naturally did not record his experiences in White Plains Town. When Zhou Jing opened the map in the past two months, he had especially stopped in a few towns and left behind the hunter's records of a certain "Jace and Rosen" in various hunter's taverns. He had also participated in a few simple mutant beast expeditions and left behind a trail of records... Even though the other party might not send someone to investigate, it was still a good failsafe.

Cole took the information from the two of them and looked at it carefully. Then, he looked at Zhou Jing in surprise. "You've undergone two enhancements?"

"Am I different from the other Second Enhancers?"

"That's not it... Most of the freelance hunters who enlist are those who have only completed their First Enhancement. It's rare to see a Second Enhancer take the initiative to join. They're already considered elites among the Empire's hunters." Cole started to take Zhou Jing more seriously.

Zhou Jing was curious, "How many people are there in the empire? Who is the strongest?"

Hearing this, Cole had no intention of hiding anything. After all, this was information that many Imperial Hunters knew.

"Currently, the Fifth Enhancement is the highest reached among the Imperial Hunters. There are two of them. One of them is the Chief Hunter conferred by the Empire and the current commander of the Imperial Hunters.

"There are 12 to 13 hunters who have undergone their Fourth Enhancements. A portion of them are in the base, and the rest have been sent out. There are 50 to 60 people who have undergone their Third Enhancements. They are the backbone of the force and usually lead a small team of hunters. Those who have taken their Second Enhancements are the elite of the hunters and also the main force of the expedition against the mutant beasts. As for those in the First Enhancement, we should have more than a thousand people."

Zhou Jing blinked.

He felt that the scale of the Empire's hunters... was smaller than he had imagined.

However, when he thought about it carefully, the population of the Mutant World was not that large, to begin with. The active army of the Terra Empire seemed to only have

tens of thousands of people. In comparison, the proportion of imperial hunters with extraordinary combat strength could already be considered very high.

Moreover, most of the members of the Imperial Hunters were sent out to maintain the safety of the cities and towns. They suffered high casualties all year round, and there were also additional casualties if their enhancement failed. At the very least, there would be dozens or hundreds of hunters dying every year. It was not easy for them to accumulate to their current scale.

Although their numbers were limited, their combat strength was terrifying.

A single Mutant Blood Warrior could fight against an army of dozens or hundreds of people, just like a super-soldier. As for one or two thousand super soldiers... On the battlefield of cold weapons, they could probably kill anything that stood in their way. Against the Empire's regular army of tens of thousands of people, the current Hunter Corps could easily crush them.

"With such a huge group of superpowers, if they join forces, won't it be easy to overthrow the Terra Empire?" Zhou Jing was secretly speechless.

He suddenly realized that although the rule of the Terra Empire seemed stable, it was actually sitting in the crater of a volcano—ready to be burned through by the lava spewing out from under its butt.

It was fortunate that the ancient ideological tradition of the tribal era was still in effect. Most hunters had higher moral standards and liked to be swayed by emotions. In their eyes, they only cared about suppressing mutated beasts to protect the people. Otherwise, it would have long become a chaotic world... As expected, Terra was still quite capable in this regard. They did not restrict the group of Hunters and instead allowed them to rely on their own self-awareness.

Zhou Jing did not show it on his face. Instead, he changed the topic and asked,

"By the way, I've always heard that the Imperial Hunter's workshop is the best. I've never seen it before."

Cole nodded and smiled. "That's right. The Empire Hunters have the largest workshop in the country. The craftsmen inside are all elites, including master-level pharmacists and blacksmiths. They study all kinds of new artisan techniques and new blood potion formulas. The latest results are all given to us first."

Chapter 138: Empire Hunter; Undercurrents (2)

Zhou Jing smiled, "That's great. I've always wanted to undergo my Third Enhancement, but I've never encountered a suitable potion. I hope I can gain something here."

"... You plan to undergo a Third Enhancement?"

Cole's eyes lit up as if he had heard that his student would take the Ph.D. exam.

Even among the Empire's Hunters who received the most generous resources, only a small number of them were willing to risk dying to continue enhancing through the mutant blood.

It was always a gamble of life and death, placing one's life in the hands of illusory luck. It was fine if it happened once or twice, but one would subconsciously be afraid after winning a few times. Unfortunately, not everyone had such courage.

Those who dared to continue enhancing were either because they had a firm mentality or the persistence to advance bravely...

...Or they were merely gambling addicts.

Cole was a hunter who had undergone two enhancements but did not dare to continue. At this moment, he could not help but feel a little admiration for Zhou Jing. For those who dared to continue on the path of the Mutant Blood, no matter if they succeeded or failed in the end, the hunters would treat them differently.

The identity registration went smoothly. After filling in the form, he handed it to the others for a simple inspection. Cole then brought Zhou Jing to the training grounds to conduct an actual combat test.

Seeing was believing. This was a necessary part of joining the Empire. The hunter's profession was not about fancy interviews but live combat.

The two of them stood at a distance away from the training ground.

"You've undergone two enhancements, and so have I. Let's fight and see your standard."

Cole smiled and pulled out the special long saber on his back. The blade was longer than ordinary ones, about 1.7 meters long. It had an arc and seemed very useful for cutting giant creatures.

It looked like a two-handed weapon, but he raised it steadily.

"Pick a weapon. You like to use blades too, right? Which kind of blade?" Cole pointed at the weapon rack at the side.

Zhou Jing's eyes lit up when he saw Cole's familiar grip on the saber.

Yo, taichi warrior!

He had finally met an expert who played with blades. So this was a good time to exchange some pointers.

He walked to the weapon rack and took a look. Then, he took out a long saber of the same style and casually waved it around.

Due to the increase in his saber technique aptitude, his cultivation speed was still at its original efficiency despite the increase in level and mastery needed. However, in the two months he was busy expanding his map range, his [Weapon Mastery – Blade Technique] had successfully reached Level 5, and his proficiency had improved greatly.

Moreover, the increase in Physical Fitness and Resistance also slightly increased the cultivation speed of Hunter's breathing techniques. After two months, both techniques were only one step away from leveling up.

Seeing Zhou Jing pick up the blade, Cole's eyes became even more serious.

Although he had received systematic training, he did not underestimate the independent hunters. It was taboo to underestimate the enemy, and the senior hunters rarely made such a mistake.

The shouting on the training ground weakened. The training hunters and apprentices looked curiously at the two people who had begun to confront each other in the corner of the training ground.

"Who is that person? I don't think I've seen him before."

"He should be a new hunter. I wonder how good he is."

Everyone chatted softly.

Cole observed Zhou Jing's posture, looking for flaws. Seeing that Zhou Jing did not show any signs of attacking, he did not hold back and rushed forward.

Whoosh!

The long blade stabbed out, and the cold light at the blade's tip gleamed like a flowing light.

Zhou Jing blinked. Instead of retreating, he advanced. He slid forward with one hand holding the hilt and the other holding the back of the blade. He cut out the shape of a crescent moon as he drew the blade.

The blade deflected the long saber that stabbed forward, creating a spark's trail. Finally, a short and sharp metal scraping sound rang out.

Zhou Jing flicked his wrist and easily diverted Cole's weapon. His eyes narrowed.

Slow, too slow.

Light. Too light.

Both of them had gone through two enhancements, but Cole's speed and strength were too weak in his eyes. He felt no pressure at all.

When one's Physical Fitness reached Second Order, there did not seem to be much difference in attributes. Still, the characteristics brought about by it made their overall physical capabilities completely different. There was a clear gap between him and someone at First Order of Physical Fitness. His agility and dexterity had been greatly enhanced.

Cole's actions were moving slowly in Zhou Jing's eyes.

Jason's attributes were already higher than that of an ordinary Second Enhancement hunter. Coupled with his special trait, he was even more at ease now.

Sensing Cole's strength, Zhou Jing knew what to do. He did not use his explosive bodily strength to crush him directly. Instead, he controlled his strength and speed to Cole's level and purely competed against purely using saber techniques.

On the one hand, he wanted to save some face for the other party. On the other hand, he also wanted to fight with an expert in blade techniques for a longer time... It was not easy for him to find someone to fight with him.

Dust flew everywhere on the training ground as the two exchanged blows, their blades flashing rapidly. The two of them dodged the continuous cold light, brushing past their bodies and stabbing empty air instead.

The blade lights were so numerous they seemed to have formed a closed-loop or lights arcing around, and the whistling sound of air being torn apart intertwined with the clear sound of a collision.

Slash, horizontal slash, sudden thrust, parry, and various other saber moves were displayed in their hands. It was dazzling and incomparably precise.

The exquisite blade techniques of the two of them dazzled the apprentices present. They stopped their training and watched from the side.

The hunters who guided the apprentices did not stop them... They wanted to see it too.

After slashing at each other for a while, Cole keenly sensed that Zhou Jing had restrained his strength, and his expression changed slightly.

As a seasoned hunter, he could sense if his opponent was going easy on him.

“This guy is deliberately controlling his strength. He’s only using his blade techniques to spar with me... But his blade techniques are not inferior to mine. He’s ruthless, cunning, skilled, and precise. Without 10 to 20 years of training, he can’t reach this level. It seems that he’s also a Veteran Hunter...”

Cole’s heart flashed, and he became competitive. Then, he suddenly jumped back and left the battlefield.

Chapter 139: Empire Hunter; Undercurrents (3)

“You’re not fighting anymore?” Zhou Jing was about to stop.

Cole shook his head and pointed the knife at the tip of Zhou Jing’s nose. He said in a deep voice, “I can tell that you’re holding back. Come, use your full strength. There’s no need to worry about anything.”

With that, Cole did not wait for an answer. He directly made a charging gesture, then stomped on the ground and attacked.

The saber was in front of him, slashing horizontally!

Be it strength, speed, or technique, this strike was executed at a high level. It was steady and fast as if it could cut through all obstacles in front of him.

In front of this blade, opponents of the same level would have to avoid it. Cole was very confident.

However, a black shadow that was so fast that he could barely react suddenly entered his line of sight.

Then, a cold light flashed from below.

Clang!!

A powerful force suddenly exploded along with his long saber, producing a vibrating force.

Cole actually lost his grip on the weapon. The long saber flew out of his hand and spun into the sky before stabbing into the ground not far away.

In front of him, Zhou Jing maintained his upward posture. The blade was still vibrating slightly, emitting a buzzing sound.

Cole, who had been disarmed, was left stunned.

In that instant, Zhou Jing suddenly moved. All the muscles in his body twisted, and he burst out with the full explosive acceleration of a Second Order Physical Fitness body, causing the saber to slash out with a whistle. The high speed turned into an extremely heavy force, directly sending Cole's weapon flying.

This saber was fast and heavy!

Moreover, the timing he grasped was even more precise and exquisite. Even Cole, who was good at using blades, could not help but feel the beauty of his saber technique used.

Cole looked at the torn webbing of his palm, then at the relaxed Zhou Jing, and fell silent.

Did he just die instantly?

After being stunned for a few seconds, Cole could not help but speak.

"Have you really only done two enhancements?"

"That's right." Zhou Jing shrugged in response.

"... Impressive."

Cole sighed. There was no such thing as a sore loser. He was impressed.

To have such strength at the second enhancement...

Only by experiencing too many battles at the edge of life and death could he temper his body to such a level.

Hunters had always admired the strong, and Cole was naturally filled with respect towards his colleague.

Seeing Zhou Jing insta-kill Cole, the surrounding hunters and apprentices were all surprised.

Cole wasn't a nobody. He was also one of the few experts among the Empire's hunters. Other than those who had been strengthened thrice or more, he was the best among the remaining hunters.

Being able to defeat Cole was equivalent to being a top-notch expert among the Empire's hunters.

"Seems like we have a very powerful newcomer this time..."

Everyone looked at Zhou Jing with this thought flashing through their minds.

"With your strength, you can be officially enlisted into the elite team," Cole praised. "Commander Keriber will definitely think highly of you."

Keriber was the current Chief Hunter, the commander of the Imperial Hunters.

Zhou Jing smiled. He was also curious about the attributes of the most powerful Mutant Blood Warrior.

At this moment, Cole turned to look at Ross and said, "Your partner is also going to be tested... Speaking of which, why hasn't he said anything?"

Zhou Jing's expression did not change as he lied through his teeth.

"He's actually my apprentice. During a hunt, his throat was infected by a mutant beast's poison, and his head was also damaged. He only has some combat instincts left, and he has already lost the ability to hunt alone. However, he can still cooperate with me, so I brought him along."

"I see." Cole patted Ross's shoulder with admiration and agreed, "We can't abandon any hunter who is injured in order to suppress the mutant beasts."

Ross looked down at the palm on his shoulder and quietly reached for the dagger in his pocket.

"Cough!" Zhou Jing hurriedly elbowed him in the waist to stop Ross from pulling out his weapon. He pursed his lips and said, "Go, show something for him."

Hearing this, Ross gave up on his plan to draw his dagger and give Cole a vicious blow. Without hesitation, he walked to a millstone on the training ground and slammed his head into it.

Crack!

The stone cracked.

Ross expressionlessly wiped the white dust from his forehead.

“What the hell!” Cole was shocked.

A proper hunter’s body was tough, but who would casually use their head as a weapon? Their head would hurt!

What a ruthless person!

“Won’t... won’t his head be damaged if he hit it like this?” Cole could not help but ask.

Zhou Jing coughed and tried his best to explain with a tense expression, “It’s precisely because his brain doesn’t work that this move works.”

...That made sense.

Cole wiped his sweat. He didn’t understand, but it felt awesome.

In any case, for him to hit his head against the rock like that and still be alright, he would definitely have undergone at least one enhancement. He didn’t dare to let Ross continue showing off, afraid that he would have to collect Ross’ corpse later. He had no wish to turn the joyous event into a funeral.

The group left the training ground. Cole brought Zhou Jing to a simple empty residence.

“This will be your temporary residence. When you complete the last test, which is to carry out a hunt under our supervision and show your hunter skills, you can officially become an Imperial Hunter... And with your strength, you don’t need to be led by an older hunter like the reserve hunters. You might as well wait for Commander Keriber to return and let him arrange it. The commander is out hunting, and he will be back in two days.”

Cole explained.

Zhou Jing was busy sizing up the room. When he heard this, he turned to look at him and asked, “What risk level of mutant beast do we usually hunt in the hunting test?”

“It varies from person to person. In addition, it also depends on whether there are any mutated beasts recently...” Cole touched his chin and pondered for a moment before saying, “But some time ago, the Empire’s Hunter Team just cleaned up the surroundings. There don’t seem to be any powerful mutated beasts. With your conditions, they might let you go to the Bestial Battle Arena to find an opponent.”

Chapter 140: Empire Hunter; Undercurrents (4)

“Bestial Battle Arena?” Zhou Jing raised his eyebrows.

“Huh? Don’t you know?”

Cole was stunned. Then, he remembered that Zhou Jing was not from the capital.

“As long as the conditions allow, the Imperial Hunters will capture mutated beasts alive and bring them back for the Beast Tamers to raise. Otherwise, where would we find a stable supply of materials for the workshops to study the various blood potion formulas? And the Bestial Battle Arena is a matching place for some inexperienced Imperial Hunters to train in actual combat... We can also earn some money at the same time. We also need funds and extra income won’t hurt.”

At this point, Cole’s expression was subtle.

“Are you charging ordinary people to watch the show...”

Zhou Jing’s expression was complicated. In an environment where mutant beasts threatened humans, it felt quite strange to see such a bloody facility that used hunters to kill mutant beasts for fun. It should not exist.

He had visited many towns, and only the capital had such facilities... Moreover, it seemed that only this place had large-scale breeding of mutant beasts.

“It’s said that the empire is researching how to domesticate some mutated beasts and turn them into mounts for the army and the empire’s hunters. Currently, there have been some results. Our commander is a Mutant Beast Knight,” Cole said casually.

“Oh, this is a feasible plan...”

Zhou Jing could not help but think of how the Subterraneans had tamed the Violent Tooth Dragon.

Among the existing support functions, there seemed to be a [Pet Function] as well?

Well, since the capital had such conditions, he might be able to try this function the next time he created a new apostle.

Cole then instructed on a few more things to take note of before leaving.

After all, this world was a little primitive, and the various rules and regulations were not rigorous and perfect. He could already move freely in the empire's hunter base... but he could not enter the capital for the time being.

Zhou Jing tidied up the bed. Through the window, he could see the majestic outline of Tarn City in the distance.

He looked in the direction of the capital, his eyes flashing.

"It shouldn't be a problem to blend into the Empire's Hunters. I'm already at the foot of the capital, so I can find a chance to come into contact with the core of the Terra Empire's power... Let's observe the situation first and see how I can use the information that Lutt kindly gave me."

...

At the same time, in a certain room in the castle of the royal capital.

Roman stood at the window and silently looked down at the city as if he wished to step on the entire place.

He was a fat middle-aged man with an ordinary appearance, clad in a soft silk brocade robe studded with jewelry. He looked like a fatty who was greedy for pleasure, but there was an inexplicable aura about him that made people subconsciously reserved in front of him.

On the table behind him were several secret letters. Two of his trusted aides stood at the table, their heads lowered in silence.

After a long while, Roman spoke in a low voice.

"Lutt is dead, I don't know if he spilled anything, nor do I know who kidnapped him... Is this the report you're giving me after investigating for a month?"

The two confidants trembled slightly and hurriedly replied,

"Sir, we really don't have any clues. We've checked all the Mutant Blood Warriors in White Plains City, as well as all the hunters who left White Plains Town, and even the warriors of Lutt's tribe. No one can match up. We still don't know who the murderer is."

"We followed your instructions and went to investigate the so-called Wood family, but there's no blood relative from this tribe at all. It's not that we didn't work hard, but there's no way to investigate at all!"

Ever since Lutt died, a large number of spies had gone to investigate the identity of the murderer.

After a large number of Frostwood Village villagers moved to White Plains Town, there were even spies who secretly dug up Jason's grave at midnight, only to discover that there was nothing wrong with the corpse inside.

No matter how hard they tried, he could not find anything on the "dead" person.

Roman turned to look at the two of them.

The two of them, who were originally chattering and explaining, felt a chill run down their spines when he glanced at them with a faint smile. They immediately shut their mouths.

Roman did not fly into a rage. Instead, he smiled and comforted them.

"Alright, alright. I never doubted your ability to do things. It seems that this murderer is really mysterious and difficult to find."

His tone was friendly, but the two of them did not dare to continue.

Roman rubbed his thumb ring and said, "If you can't find it, continue to search slowly. There's no hurry... Let's put this matter aside for the time being. How's the investigation of that faction going?"

A trusted aide quickly replied, "Sir, we've already found their hideout, but it seems to have been abandoned. There's no one there. We don't know where they went."

Hearing this, Roman revealed an inexplicable expression and muttered to himself, "That group of people broke off contact with me and disappeared mysteriously. They have all kinds of strange abilities... Hmm... Hehe."

The two confidants looked at each other, not daring to speak. They did not know what Roman was thinking.

After a while, Roman waved his hand and ordered,

"Continue investigating the identity of the murderer and the whereabouts of the mysterious force. Also, send some people to secretly contact the various tribal lords and tell them that there might be a change in the plan at any time. Be careful and pay more attention to the movements of the royal family—their actions have been a little strange over the years. There should be someone guiding them from behind. Perhaps they have already noticed something..."

"The court is still discussing the candidates for the new lord of White Plains Town, so let the servants eavesdrop. I want to know the thoughts of every minister... The position of the lord of White Plains Town must be given to the new partner I found in Lutt's clan. With Lutt dead, it saves me the trouble of borrowing the new partner to get rid of him."

After giving his instructions, Roman asked his two trusted aides to leave.

The two of them quickly left as if they had been pardoned from a great crime.

Roman looked away and picked up a few secret letters from the table. He rubbed his fingers together.

The flame of the candlestick beside him seemed to be sucked away by an invisible force, turning into a fire snake that landed on the secret letter in his hand.

Hoomph!

It ignited and extinguished in an instant.

The few secret letters turned to dust in the blink of an eye.

Roman's fingers, however, remained unscathed. He folded his hands back into his sleeves and continued to look out the window at the city, lost in thought.