

C Immortality 411

Cursed Immortality

Chapter 411: Hunting the Epics (3)

Shortly after the mysterious appearance of the small tidal wave, the closed doors of the villa smacked open and powerful people walked out.

Most of them were the black tiger orcs, as these sorts of teams normally formed around their own races because it was far easier to trust their own kind than a foreign one.

However, it didn't mean they won't allow another race to join their ranks. As long as the other person met the requirements, they were welcome anywhere.

There were also three elves and two monkey-faced orcs who walked out of the villa in haste. They all wore stern and furious expressions since they were clearly having a nice rest until the alarms went off, and they were not going to let off the culprit.

As those guys left toward the entrance gate once after another, they didn't pay attention to the empty flower field right in front of the villa entrance door. A pair of cold amber eyes were gazing at them stoically.

"Where is my target?" Jacob asked with a hint of haste as he knew this was his only chance when all of those were occupied by the thought of finding the attacker.

Once they calm down, their attention will shift, and his effort will be for naught. He wanted to complete his task and get the hell away before the enforcers came here.

"Oh, he's coming alright, and he's coming fast! Hehehe..." Immortika wrote ambiguously.

Jacob suddenly had a bad feeling about this because he suddenly sensed a faint tremor under his feet, and the next moment, a 3-meter tall, burly figure came running out with tremendous speed, leaving a blurring image.

Even with his eyes, it was extremely to for him to follow. However, Jacob didn't want to miss this chance as those mercenaries were completely focused on the gate, and they seemed to be aware of their incoming leader, so they weren't worried about him, and that's what Jacob wanted!

Jacob's heart rate climbed like an explosion, and the blurry figure who was about to step outside the door turned somewhat slowly, and he could finally see the guy's ferocious face while his body emitted a faint dark mist.

Nevertheless, Jacob didn't have time to analyze what sort of spell the other was using, and his eyes shimmered in a crimson glow, 'Slumber Hex!'

The next moment, the Black Tiger Fang, a tier-6 epic, abruptly closed his eyes and fell into slumber on the spot!

However, this was just the easiest part because now he had to catch that guy who was still using a movement spell, and his speed was almost at Mach-1!

If he let him crush, there was no way in hell the others won't notice.

So, Jacob moved right in front of a massive figure who had now turned into a cannonball and was about to clash with the entrance.

Jacob's speed with his 20X acceleration was almost at the realm of mach-1, and he knew the moment he broke into 25X, his speed would be mach-1 or even faster.

However, Jacob's plan wasn't to crush that massive guy, as it was the same as announcing his presence—all he wanted was to just come in contact with his unconscious body.

The moment he and the unconscious Black Tiger Fang were only a meter away, Jacob moved his hand, and the moment he felt the terrifying, crushing pressure on his hand, he instantly tried to store Black Tiger Fang into his pendant!

The next moment, when his hand was about to shatter, Black Tiger Fang's body instantly vanished, and so did the force behind him, and what remained were powerful winds brushing past Jacob.

Despite his objective being achieved, Jacob didn't stop, as now was the time to quickly leave this place before someone noticed Black Tiger Fang's abrupt absence.

Twisted his body, with the same speed, he ran back, and the moment he was outside, he jumped, and the gray disc appeared under his, and he vanished in the dark night.

All this happened within five seconds, and even Black Tiger Fang's team members couldn't have imagined that their powerful leader was abducted within seconds!

Well, they will be found out about in a few minutes, and this was just the start of the legendary ghost story of the city no. 543, which will make everyone tremble whenever they discuss it!

In the sky, Jacob smiled in relish as he glanced at his 'massive, slumbering trophy' in his infinity pendant.

But he didn't waste time as he knew this wasn't the time to celebrate yet as a new storage ring appeared on his finger, and thereafter, a ghastly magic core entered his grip.

The magic core then began to glow in his hand as he felt pure magic power start to sink into his body and then enter the hex mana core before mysteriously starting to fill in the infinity pendant.

"Lead me toward this Bronze Barbarian," Jacob commanded Immortika as he wanted to grab both of these targets in this area before leaving toward other districts.

As for the last two targets in this district, he decided to leave them and only looked for these targets alone. He was not greedy enough to try grabbing a tier-8 epic when there was a chance that one might notice his movement. This was simply too suicidal. He knew his limit and wasn't a match for such an opponent yet.

Jacob was planning to hunt in this manner for three hours until Immortika's summoning time was over before calling it a night and returning to enjoy his hard earn 'meal.'

"Hehehe, that was really entertaining to watch. How about we tone it up a bit? Why don't I lead you to a target with the densest legendary bloodline in the entire city? That guy will give you about 2.5% alone.

"Furthermore, he happened to be alone and coming in this exact direction as we speak. Hehehe, are you interested?"

Jacob was surprised as this was unexpected, but this was definitely a rare chance. Yet right then, he was instantly vigilant as he questioned sternly, "Some with the densest legendary bloodline in the entire city? What is such a person doing here in the middle of the night and alone no less..."

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Chapter 412: The Shadow Elf

Upon Jacob's stern questions, Immortika wrote, "Who knows? Your guess is as good as mine. Besides, does it matter? The real question is whether you want to do this or not?"

Jacob frowned, but no matter how he thought about it, Immortika's words made sense. Since all he should be worrying about is the cursed blood condensing, the target should be much easier to grab as it was out in the open.

But he was hesitating because this person might be a high-ranking individual, and his disappearance might draw unwanted attention.

'Well, I've already abducted a B-class mercenary and planning on abducting another one with the same status. So, there is no point in hesitation...' Jacob thought before replying, "Where is it?"

"Hehehe, now we're talking. It's a tier-7 epic shadow elf, and she's walking..." Immortika revealed and then started to guide Jacob toward the shadow elf.

Jacob flew according to Immortika's direction, and just a hundred meters in the southeast direction, he found his target.

It was a tall, cloaked figure walking in the shadows, and there was no one around the vicinity. Jacob couldn't help but feel glad after seeing this shadow elf walking alone.

But he didn't approach her since his hex mana was still not fully refilled and followed her from a safe distance. The shadow elves were part of the dark elf race, and they were extremely proficient in assassination, and it was almost impossible to sneak up on them.

Furthermore, their senses should be extremely sharp, so Jacob didn't want to give away his position, or he wasn't sure if he could chase after her if she sensed danger and active some movement skill.

However, after following her for some time, Immortika suddenly wrote, "Oh, well, you look at that...hehehe..."

Jacob almost stopped when he read this, "What?"

"That shadow elf seemed to be moving toward the two tier-8 epic Pugilist Giants' direction. They are now just two blocks away, and if she's really meeting them, then it means... hahahahaha..."

"I'll miss my chance." Jacob's expression soured. Because if this elf were really meeting those two, then this means once she entered their base, it would be nigh impossible for him to get her.

"It's very strange. Two such high-level Epics are here, and if this woman is really here for them, then this means something is up. But I guess we won't be able to find out if it is true or not..." Jacob gravely stated as his mana was finally refilled.

Although he could sense something was up, but it had nothing to do with him. Even if he ends up ruining someone's plan, he can live with that as long as he gets that elf!

Jacob then didn't waste more time and used the slumber hex again while there was still no one around, and the moment he did, the cloaked elf suddenly fell down!

In a small villa two blocks away, there were no guards or signboards here. Within the main hall of this villa, two 4-meter tall giants, one male, and the other female, were sitting as they were enjoying liquor.

"Do you think the City Lord will accept our meeting proposal?" The female giant asked with uncertainty with a tingle of redness on her toned oval face.

The muscular male giant with a handsome appearance replied matter-of-factly, "Heh, with the information I sent her way if she didn't come, then this means she is not ambitious enough."

The female giant nodded, "Well, you are right. Who can resist the venture of hunting the fabled Vile Witch's treasures? Once we had the city lord on our side, it would be far easier to recruit some high-level cannon folds without revealing our identities. For once, you have finally done something praiseworthy." The female giant teased.

"Hmph. Who do you think I am? It's just our mother who insists on suppressing us, or I can do so much more." The male giant grumbled before his expression went grave, "But don't underestimate this Vile Witch Layer. There should be a pretty good reason that our clan never used this map despite possessing it for decades. Besides, after the city lord joins us, we still need to figure out a way to open that detestable door!"

The female giant's expression also clouded as she sighed, "True. If not for that damn door, we could've already acquired everything in that place and don't need to lower ourselves to seek an alliance with a mere medium size city's City Lord. Oh well, as Mother taught us, always use the others around you, even if it's a pig."

"You got that right." The male giant snickered, "Speaking of which, do you think we can acquire that Atomic Grenade in the next auction? If our plan still does not work, that is our last resort."

Gloominess suddenly surfaced between the two, as the female giant ground her teeth hatefully as she spat, "If those bastards don't interfere, then we could've acquired it in the first auction. But who could've thought that everyone was crazy for that Faceless Ancient technology? Even if we had the funds, I'm doubtful that damnable Anonymous 1 would back off. It was probably one of the three leaders. If these guys interfere, it would be quite difficult to acquire it even in the next auction."

The male giant pursed his lips as he completely agreed. They had already witnessed the craze brought about by the first Atomic Grenade auction, and now everyone was even more crazy for acquiring those grenades.

"Sigh... let's see what happens when the next auction starts. First, we need to meet with this city lord and then discuss with her what she has in mind. We can even ask her to contribute the funds to buy the atomic grenade and spend a little of our own money." The female giant stated matter-of-factly with a sly grin.

"Heh, how stingy little sis. But I like it. Cheers!" The male giant laughed as he performed a toast gesture.

Both of them were drinking while scheming without even realizing that someone had thrown a wrench in their plans!

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Chapter 413: A Wastrel Cook

"City Guard Commander came in a wee hour. Why?" Sofie couldn't help looking at Curtis with a hint of surprise which brought this unusual news of the City Guard Commander visiting the guild.

It was quite strange because a person like City Guard Commander won't just come and go without any reason, and he was a very busy person because he was in charge of the city's security and preventing criminal activities.

Furthermore, no one dared to cause trouble in an Alive City since it is akin to provoking all the living things, and these cities were teeming with powerful surveillance systems. So, if someone is discovered doing anything suspicious, they can forget about ever entering an alive city with normal means.

Curtis looked somewhat pale as he quickly replied, "Something very strange has been going on for the past three days. According to the city commander, the powerful people of the bank and the alliance has been vanishing every night without even any trace behind them.

"The attacker is like a ghost who comes and goes without any noticing it. Up until now, 13 people have vanished, and there is no trace of them being found yet. But what caused the City Commander to move is the City Lord, Zodiac Sorceress Dark Mistress, also seemed to have fallen victim to these disappearances!" Curtis was filled with fear when he mentioned it.

Even Sofie was startled, and her expression turned grim since this matter was really too serious. She knew better than anyone that a city lord was no ordinary person, especially a City Lord appointed in the Alive Alliance Cities. These guys were simply monsters, and taking them down takes a small army.

But now, the City Lord had vanished without even leaving any trace. This would send chills down anyone's spine. Furthermore, only people like Curtis were told about this truth while this news was completely blocked to the public not to cause mass panic.

This kind of thing had never happened in the history of any alive city.

However, this entire situation was simply too spooky, and everyone was now on guard, and the city guards were now on the streets with all sorts of devices at their disposal while the city surveillance system was fully activated.

"I think you should leave, Elder; this place is no longer safe. Mr. Nobody will also understand the gravity of the situation." Curtis gravely stated.

He wasn't doing this for the kindness of his heart. Instead, if anything happened to an Elder Grandmaster like Sofie within his branch, it would spell certain doom for him as well.

Even the city lord was not safe, so it was better to send Sofie back before something happened to her. His life and career were more important, after all.

Sofie also understood the gravity of the situation and nodded, "Thank you for the heads-up. Do you purchase all the materials?"

Curtis nodded before taking out a space ring and handing it to Sofie and couldn't help but ask, "If you don't mind me asking, why do you need some much Epic Titan Iron?"

'I also wanted to know this.' Sofie depressingly thought before stiffly replied, "This is a secret, so please don't ask this. Just continue to collect more until I tell you to stop. As for going back, I'll discuss it with Mr. Nobody."

Done saying her piece, she left toward the top floor where Jacob was occupied.

Curtis sighed in confusion as he muttered, "Why do I feel like she's not acting like herself but like an errand girl? Just who in the world is this guy? I can't find anything on him. If I could get his start ID..."

Sofie entered the workshop with a grim expression as she still thought about what Curtis just said, but her thought process was instantly disturbed when an appetizing whiff suddenly drifted in her nose the moment she opened the door.

'Who's cooking? Am I hallucinating?' She thought with disbelief.

But as she walked toward Jacob's location, that aroma became stronger and stronger, and when she finally reached her destination, she was completely baffled by the sight.

There was a large worktable which, once filled with all sorts of blueprints, was now filled with many different dishes, and all of them were pipping hot as steam was emitting from them.

Furthermore, all of those dishes were made with meat as their core ingredients, and she had to admit they were indeed look and smelled delicious.

At this moment, she finally spotted the cook when she heard a sizzling sound not far away from this table filled with delicacies.

She almost didn't believe her eyes when she spotted Jacob roasting meat on a grill placed above the precious Mana Flames that used to heat up cauldrons to perform epic-rank alchemy.

Jacob noticed eyes on him, and he long knew that Sofie had entered the workshop and continued with what he was doing.

"Since you come in time of a meal, take a seat. I'm about to be done with this last chilly barbecue." Jacob coolly stated without looking at Sofie's dumbfounded expression.

Sofie finally snapped out of her stupor and couldn't help but retort, "W-what are you doing?"

Jacob dismissively replied, "Are you blind?"

"No. That's not what I mean." Sofie pursed her lips, "Why are you cooking in a workspace? It's unethical, and Mana Flames are simply too precious to use for mere cooking!"

"Heh, you sound like something I used to know a very long time ago." Jacob chuckled, "But do you actually believe I give two shit about ethics in the place I literally own? For you, these meals might be petty, but for someone like me, they are probably the only sources of gratification I could enjoy once in a blood moon. So, I don't care about the cost at all. So, stop nagging and set down, or just scram!"

Sofie was speechless before anger surfaced in her eyes as no man had ever treated her like this, yet this guy not only made her a slave, but he was extremely churlish. She wanted to storm out but that aroma...

'I still need to discuss with him... I'll stay!' Telling herself that, she harrumphed coldly and took a seat!

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Chapter 414: A Fine Dine

Sofie speechlessly watches Jacob gobbling down one dish after another and wonders if he is a giant in disguise. No, even giants can't eat that much, especially when the table is filled with high-quality meat.

She could tell that after she took a bit and she felt a massive energy in the meat, which even shocked her.

'Don't tell me he hunts some high-tier epic beasts? Just how strong is he?' She thought as she elegantly cut a tender steak and chewed on it.

Everyone aside, she really enjoyed this foreign taste and flavor Jacob brought out. But speechless nonetheless about Jacob's appetite.

But it was just the start of her shock; as time passed, Jacob didn't appear to be stopping at all; instead, he was becoming faster as if a hungry ghost possessed him.

'How can he eat so much without bursting his stomach?' She wondered with a fearful gaze.

The more she knows about this 'barbarian,' the more she feels she knows absolutely nothing about him.

Half an hour later, the entire table filled with delicacies was swoop cleaned, and not even a bone was spared, and 98% of it was devoured by Jacob alone!

"Sigh... now that was delicious." Jacob sighed in bliss as he finally felt his bland taste buds were finally rejuvenated.

Then he looked at gobsmacked Sofie, who was looking at him as if he was a monster but couldn't care less about what she thought and asked, "Do you have good liquor?"

"W-what... you can still consume more?" She asked in bewilderment.

"What this nonsense? Do you have it or not? Since I treat you to a meal, you should return the courtesy by treating your host with good alcohol. I'm pretty sure an Elder Grandmaster like you has a pretty high-quality one. Don't make me order you." Jacob coldly stated.

'Just say you're robbing me!' Sofie ground her teeth and took out a beautiful ruby bottle, and threw it towards him with pursed lips, "It's a Basic Epic Rank Hell Fire Whiskey, fermented with pure fire element herbs of basic epic rank. Just one bottle costs 10,000 ZC!"

With a hint of astonishment as he looked at the ruby bottle and, within the crimson blood-like liquid and popped its diamond cork. A strong scent of alcohol instantly filled with air. But it wasn't just that, but that scent left a burning sensation as it was on fire.

Jacob's eyes lit up, "I say you guys really know how to brew alcohol here. Let's include a few hundred cartons of this thing as well in the materials I made you found."

Sofie was startled before spiteful spat, "Do you think that is seawater? Even I can only buy ten cartons each year with my status, and you want a few hundred, dream on!"

Jacob didn't seem angry at all after hearing Sofie's blunt rejection and smiled slyly as he said, "Alright, leave everything you have here then, and buy as many as you have when you leave."

He took out a glass and poured himself the blood-like whiskey, completely ignoring fuming Sofie, who he had doped.

Then he took a small spit of Hell Fire Whiskey, and his eyes went wide when he felt the strong charred flavor, followed by a fiery sensation as if his mouth was set ablaze and he was holding lava in his mouth.

If he hadn't had an epic body, he would've died by this drink of hell!

Nevertheless, he swallowed and left intoxicating about that damn flavor and praised sincerely, "This is probably the best whiskey I ever drink. You really made my day. Tell me, why were you here?"

'I remember when I first drank that thing, I threw it out instantly and didn't dare to drink it out of sheer fear. Yet, this detestable man...' Sofie felt even more rage bubbling up as she watched Jacob enjoy the Hell Fire Whiskey with great relish.

Nevertheless, she knew she was just a slave, not his friend, and Jacob made this boundary absolutely clear with the way he treated her. Although he gives her leeway. But in truth, he was controlling her every move and calculating it before she could even make it.

"I was here to report some matter to you and also give you the second batch of materials you required. Here." She coldly said as she threw the space ring that Curtis gave her to Jacob.

He caught it with his unoccupied hand and then checked the materials inside. It was a basic epic rank space ring with 100 cubic meters of storage space, and it was 90% filled with all kinds of epic materials, especially the epic titan iron.

'This would last me until I reach the full extent of the Rune Artificer, and then I can start creating titian tears as it is far more useful in many ways.' Jacob thought as he stowed the ring away.

"Good work, I guess." He nodded before returning to enjoying the drink.

Sofie wasn't done, though, as she said, "I'm also running out ZC to buy those materials. If you don't believe me see my account. I've already spent almost all of my earnings on those materials. I'm afraid there is nothing left for you to rob from me."

"Is that so?" Jacob looked at her with scrutiny and didn't find her scornful words to be a lie, "How much do you need to supply me the same quantity for, let's just say, thrice a month for about 12 months maximum and nine months minimum."

Sofie narrowed her eyes as she made some quick calculations and answered, "30 Million ZC should be sufficient. Do you have that much money?"

Jacob dismissively nodded, "I'll give you 40. Use the extra 10 to buy nothing but titan iron from any and everywhere. But when I transfer you the money, you can't talk about my Star ID even with me or write about it. If you do, you will die before you even perform that action."

Jacob, this time used the parasite gem to thoroughly impart this exact command which made Sofie astonished since Jacob only used the parasite gem when it was absolutely a grave matter.

She wondered with uncertainty, 'What's so special about his Star ID?'

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Chapter 415: The Legends of Vile Witch

Not revealing his Star ID to Sofie before was for obvious reasons, but it can't help anymore since he needed those materials to create weapons in the next year to be fully prepared for the trial.

But he enslaved Sofie, so it should be safe. After making up his mind, he said, "What else?"

Sofie then moved to the other matter, which was obviously the matter Curtis had discussed with her. She told Jacob about all the disappearances of the people all over the city and also the city lord being involved in them.

"... just to be safe, I think we should leave for No. 492. It's also more convenient for I can gather materials there much faster." Sofie stated gravely.

Jacob's eyes shimmered with astonishment, "The City Lord was also one of the people who got abducted? What were her species?"

Sofie frowned at this peculiar question, "The Zodiac Sorceress Dark Mistress belonged to the Shadow Elf Clan, which is one of the strongest clans present in the Epic Plains, and those guys are known for their terrifying assassination skills.

"That's also my point. Even someone like her vanished without a trace, so we should leave before whoever is doing this starts to target the guild as well." Sofie said matter-of-factly.

'Shit!' Jacob couldn't help but curse in his mind since he never expected of all the people he hunted; he hunted the city lord herself.

Furthermore, he looked at Sofie with a strange glint as the steak that she enjoyed so much was exactly the Zodiac Sorceress Dark Mistress's!

He had already consumed those people's hearts yesterday, and he started to feel lethargic, which was a sign that his body had grown stronger, so today, he treated himself to this feast made with every person he hunted in the last three days.

But it wasn't the most important point, 'If that woman were the city lord, then no wonder she has so many good things in her space ring. Furthermore, then it also means that the letter I found in her ring was also legit, and that's why she was meeting those two giants that night!'

Jacob had naturally found many good things in Zodiac Sorceress Dark Mistress's space ring, and one peculiar thing that caught his eye was a letter that only had one single sentence.

'We know the location of the Vile Witch's true layer! Meet us in this location XXX! PS: A.T.L.A.S!'

This was the only thing written in that letter. Although Jacob didn't know what this A.T.L.A.S was but he knew that it had something to do with those two giants.

Nevertheless, he didn't put many thoughts into this since it could be just some random search party who were after the fabled Vile Witch inheritance like many people who come here.

Yet, now Sofie told him that the shadow elf was the city lord, which completely changed this situation.

Because someone like her won't just move by some random treasure hunter so it has to be something to do with A.T.L.A.S, which made her approach those two giants alone.

Jacob's interest was finally piqued, and he questioned, "Tell me about this Vile Witch? Why do so many people want to search for her inheritance?"

Sofie was again perplexed by this irrelevant question, yet she had no choice but to reply, "There are many legends about the Vile Witch in epic plains. But only two of them held some truth. The first is, before the three hegemonies were in full control, the Vile Witch was the strongest being and owned the most Plain Shares!

"But she was extremely vicious. She used people as her test subjects, and the deaths on her hand were in hundreds of thousands or even millions. But no one was strong enough to do anything about it.

"Even the Dark Beings were no match for her and never dared to provoke her. Until the First Alliance Chairman appeared. According to the records, he was sent here by higher plains to put an end to Vile Witch's cruel reign.

"And he did exactly that. He was extremely powerful, known as the Flaming Halberd. But the Vile Witch wasn't weak either, as she retaliated in full. Their fight lasted for a full day, and they destroyed anything that came in their path.

"In the end, the Vile Witch perished, but Flaming Halberd also didn't come out of that fight unharmed. One of his hands was lost, and the Vile Witch seemed to have left some curse on him, which stopped any medicine from working on him.

"That heroic alliance chairman was only able to live two years before dying in agony." Sofie's face was filled with respect as she spoke of the Flaming Halberd and fear for Vile Witch.

Jacob was also surprised as this was his first time hearing about this, and he noticed many points that he was completely unaware of, but he remained silent and let Sofie finish.

"While the second legend is, in her final fight with the Flaming Halberd, the Vile Witch somehow managed to escape, but she was simply too wounded and on the verge of death.

"She escaped to this place and took her final breaths here. Furthermore, her dying place was also where her lab was located, where she does her revolting experiments and has all the treasures she collected in her lifetime by being a tyrant. So, people called it Vile Witch's Layer, and this region was named Vile Witch Valley.

"That's why many come here to search for her treasures here, but to this day, not a single one of them has ever succeeded. The Alliance also never made any comment on this while they took over this region.

"Until a person found a strange key of her layer and a parchment written in blood by the Vile Witch herself. It was at that time everyone took it seriously, and the Vile Witch Valley teemed with the treasure hunter.

"Yet mysteriously, that person, the key, and the parchment vanished, never seen again or heard about again, and no one has ever discovered the Vile Witch's Layer to this day or any more clues."

Sofie's eyes shimmered with a hint of excitement, "But it is speculated that if someone is ever able to find the Vile Witch Layer, they will be the richest person in the entire epic plains!"

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Chapter 416: Plain Shares

Jacob now had some idea of what the name Vile Witch signifies. But those legends were somewhat overexaggerated in his view. Because legends were made by people, and people tend to exaggerate things.

Nevertheless, there were some points he was quite interested in, especially if there was any truth in those legends.

"First, tell me about these Plain Shares?" Jacob asked, as it was his first time hearing about this term, and it drew his attention.

Sofie pursed her lips and replied, "You don't even know about Plain Shares? Like a business company, a plain also has shares from 0.01% to 100%. But unlike a company, a plain share is priceless, and they seemed to be divided 50/50 between the living and dark beings by default.

"Because as long as you had even 0.01% plain share, you can open start your own village in any territory of the life faction, and the three hegemonies won't be able to do anything against you as long as you had nothing done wrong. At least not in broad daylight.

"Furthermore, the more plain share power had, the more they had say in the matters of a plain, and the bigger they could increase their scale of influence and power without being worried about anyone obstructing their way.

"Contradictory, if you built up a village or town without having a plain share, the life faction has full authority to deal with you with everything they had. Or why do you think all three size cities are called Alive Cities?"

Jacob's eyes shimmered with astonishment, "So, having a plain share means having a permit to start your own city? Is that it?"

"In layman's terms, yes. But it's far more complicated than that since I never owe any plain shares, and dark beings made it even more complex. But from the information I had, the more plain shares you had, the more you have the power to change a plain in accordance with your own wish.

"Like, right now, the three hegemonies should have all the plain shares divided between themselves, and they had developed the epic plains to new heights. The Dark Being, on the other hand, didn't seem to follow this rule as they all united under a single dark being.

"Then there is also the dark city which seemed to have no plain share, yet they are so unfathomable that no one dares to mess with them so easily. So, they should be the only power who didn't want plain share at all, or my assumption could be wrong as well." Sofie stated with a hint of uncertainty.

Jacob thought it made sense, especially about the part of Dark City, and these plains shares seemed to have more purpose than just getting permission to open a new city. Or why would those hegemonies be hoarding them?

"How many plain shares had Vile Witch owed?" He questioned.

"I have no idea about it should be enough that she has created a Witch Empire, and everyone who lived on those lands had to pay her taxes, even the three hegemonies.

"But once she died, those plain shares returned to the plains and became available for anyone with the qualification to buy them. Before you ask, I'll tell you that only those with Star Authority can buy those plain shares whenever they are available, and the only way to earn Star Authority is to win a plain trial!" Sofie declared.

'Star Authority? Didn't I also earn 1-Star Star Authority with Star Privilege when I completed the rare plains trial?' Jacob's eyes widened ever so slightly as realization dawned upon him.

At that time, he only thought that the star authority was only limited to the three unique choices for a plain, but now it appeared there was far more to it, just like the star privilege.

However, it was Jacob who was clearly not interested in ruling the plains, so star authority held little importance to him unless there was some advantage that could help him.

But Sofie's knowledge was quite limited, and he knew if he wanted to know more, he needed someone like Ellie, and that was quite impossible at this moment.

Still, he raised another question about the Vile Witch, "You say she put some curse on this Flaming Halberd? Was she proficient in hexes or cursed magic?"

This was probably the biggest thing that truly attracted Jacob's attention, curses!

Although he didn't know if the curses were similar to his own hex magic, he sure knew they were completely related. Since he couldn't open that damn book he found on the altar. He didn't mind finding other sources to learn more about hex magic.

Because hex or cursed magic was something that everyone liked to avoid since they were nefarious by nature and almost undetectable and sometimes incurable. Just like Jacob's three hexes, he has yet to find something that could break them or detect them.

Not to mention the hex magic was awakened from the Cursed Immortality, so he doesn't believe for a second that it was just run-of-the-mill hex magic. But the problem was he had no clue when to start his research or how since his hex mana seemed to be harmless unless used with the three hexes.

But if this Vile Witch could shed some light on it, he didn't mind taking some risks to unearth her layer since his objective here was to become as stronger as possible before he was dragged into the trial plains by his own body.

Since he already had clues about that mysterious inheritance, why miss it?

Sofie replied with uncertainty, "I think so. She was infamous for her mysterious cures. Why do you think she was called a Witch in the first place? That's why she struck terror in everyone's heart, and her research was all about those curses, and many perished by her hands."

Jacob couldn't help but smile coldly, "Is that a fact? Last question, do you know anything about A.T.L.A.S.?"

Sofie's eyes went wide as deep horror surfaced in them. She blurted, "Where did you hear about A.T.L.A.S.?"

Cursed Immortality

Chapter 417: A.T.L.A.S

"Where did you hear about A.T.L.A.S?!"

Jacob was astounded by Sofie's strong reaction to A.T.L.A.S and replied coldly, "Why are you questioning me instead of answering? Do you think just because I treat you to a meal, you can talk on equal ground with me? Do you forget who is the slave between us?"

Sofie shuddered slightly as she felt a chill down her spine. She almost lost her composure. She quickly settled down and said, "Forgive me, I was surprised by the name A.T.L.A.S. Since only the upper echelon members of the three hegemonies are warned about them.

"A.T.L.A.S is actually behind the infamous Star Hackers! They had been active even before the Vile Witch's reign. Whenever a Star Hacker hacked someone's Star ID, they would always leave A.T.L.A.S's name behind like a symbol to let everyone know it was their handy work.

"But, to not give the Star Hackers any fame, the three hegemonies always hide anything related to them, and those outlaws also didn't seem to be interested in fame. They only target high-level targets, and once they succeed, they steal their information and then use it to cause havoc.

"To this day, the only clue about the Star Hackers is ATLAS, nothing else," Sofie revealed with a hint of trepidation.

Jacob, on the hand, was shocked by this unexpected revelation. He never thought he had found such a big fish unknowingly. He was warned by Captain Free Sword to be aware of Star Hackers and not get involved with him, or he will suffer unimaginable consequences.

At that time, Jacob thought a newcomer like him wouldn't be able to provoke Star Hackers or even crossways with them. Yet, now, he had not only crossed ways with them, he even discovered two of their possible members!

Furthermore, if those two really belonged to the notorious group of star hackers, then this means they might really know about the whereabouts of the Vile Witch. That's probably why the Dark Mistress decided to meet with those two.

'If they are star hackers, then why in the world are they flaunting their identities? Aren't they afraid of SAAI spying? Because according to Captain Free Sword, those star hackers are absolutely taboo, and if anyone were caught red-handed, it would be over for them.

'But those two had sent this letter and claimed themselves to be affiliated with this ATLAS, yet no action was taken against them? Or do they actually not belong to them but are using their name to bait the City Lord out?

'Or it could also be that as long as they won't use items related to Star Hackers or their abilities, SAAI won't act against them. Just like right now, we are also talking about Star Hackers, but it didn't mean we are part of them...'

The more Jacob thought, the more he understood how SAAI works and what the criteria for it acting against someone. Although completely understanding a complex being like SAAI was not possible for Jacob at this point. But he could still guess how it acts.

In the end, he only reached the conclusion that without hard evidence, or something triggered SAAI's reaction, it won't do anything or interfere with the plains business no matter what.

But it was still his assumption, and he had to wait and see to find solid ground. Yet one thing was sure the Star Network was completely natural, and unless someone provoked it, they wouldn't interfere with anyone.

"Alright, I get the picture of what is happening. You can retune back to your city. I have something to take care of before I will find you later. In the meantime, you can keep collecting materials for me. Once I take care of my business, I'll contact you through Star Network. Leave your Star ID behind. I'll transfer the funds as well." Jacob solemnly stated, and Sofie had a sigh of relief since Jacob agreed to move from this place.

Although she didn't know what business he had but she didn't care as long as he didn't put her life in danger.

"My Star ID is Crownless Alchemist89!"

Jacob nodded, "Noted, just remember what I said about my Star ID. If anyone saw it, even if that's your closest kin, you have to kill that person right there and then!"

Sofie couldn't help but frown as Jacob again used his authority over her to install this command.

In the end, she had to ask, "Why are you so worried about your star ID? Are you by any chance a Star Criminal?"

She knew only those fellows would hide their Star IDs like this, and Jacob matched their profiles quite well. But at the same time, it also didn't make sense since a Star Criminal can't access their bank accounts.

"See for yourself. But you can't reveal or even say it out loud!" Jacob coldly stated before he used his magic to operate the star watch with his mind.

After searching for Sofie's Star ID, Crownless Alchemist89, he directly transferred 40 Million ZC to her Star ID and also added her as a friend for convince sake.

Sofie, at this moment, received a notification, and she knew it was Jacob's doing. She curiously saw the name of Jacob's ID, and the moment she laid her eyes on it, they went wide with disbelief and then terror!

"Faceless Ancient has sent 40,000,000 ZC to your (Crownless Alchemist89) Zodiac Bank Account!

"New Balance: 42,400,109 ZC

"Faceless Ancient, send you a Star Friend Request!

"Accept/Ignore/Reject"

Sofie thought she was hallucinating, and this was another Star ID with the same name as the most infamous person on the Epic Plains right now. However, there was no number or anything, and it was the same Star ID that struck terror in many people's hearts, and almost every power was looking for its whereabouts.

She then trembled and looked at Jacob as her entire demeanor changed now that she looked at this man who had enslaved her. She never imagined that the person who was making waves in the epic plains would be right in front of her all along, yet he was not the Golden Elf, or his eye were maimed!

The Faceless Ancient was playing everyone like a fiddle by hiding right where anyone least expected him to be!

Cursed Immortality

Chapter 418: Reporting Progress

Sofie left with a complicated and pale expression as she no longer had words to describe what she was feeling right now.

On the other hand, Jacob didn't pay any mind to Sofie at all, as he had already expected this much. The current him was not just anything but a symbol of terror, so Sofie's reaction was not uncalled-for.

But what important was the information he had gotten from Sofie about the Vile Witch and ATLAS?

'What to do... go after those two giants and investigate further about this vile witch inheritance or leave them be since I might draw the Star Hackers irony if they found out that I've killed their members.

'I still have no idea about the depths of their abilities. But if this Vile Witch was really proficient in curses, then it's a massive opportunity for me to learn about my own unique magic....' Jacob mused as he was in a dilemma.

On one side, there was a possibility of gaining knowledge about his magic, while on the other, there was a massive risk of giving away his location and putting the Star Hackers on his tail.

Furthermore, if he goes with the former option, he would have to waste more time and might not have a chance to make ample preparation for the Plains trial. But the hex magic was simply too unfathomable to ignore it.

Right now, the three hexes were his biggest trump card, but they could only be used once a single epic rank being. At the same time, he didn't have any suitable scripture for his water magic.

But the epic plains were vastly different from the rare plains. Almost everyone was proficient in magic. Especially the upper echelon of the three hegemonies, as those guys would also have mysterious abilities as well.

He couldn't always just rely on atomic weapons since they were simply too powerful and caused massive collateral, and they couldn't be distinguished between enemies or friends. Not to mention, the other guys would also have treasures not any less destructive than his own.

Not to mention, now that his specialty was exposed, someone might make arrangements to render his atomic weapons useless.

There were many ways to stop an atomic weapon from exploding, and this was the biggest flaw of his technology right now.

'If I don't make a decision, then it might be late since those two might escape once they discover the abduction of the City Lord. That letter has their location in it so that they won't take risks.

'Right now, the city enforcer department is hiding this news but not for long. I need to act as quickly as possible...' Jacob thought grimly.

However, right at this moment, his hand suddenly moved on his own, and his expression changed, and he cursed, "This blasted slave mark!"

The next moment, the Vermin Transponder appeared in his hand. He quickly covered it with his mana and then waited for the connection with a dark expression.

He didn't have to wait long, though, as Captain Free Sword's jolly voice sounded, "Mr. King, I've been waiting for your call. So, tell me, how many slaves have you collected for me?"

Jacob impassively spoke, "I'm still working on that part. Right now, I still only have the Elder Grandmaster as a slave that I reported to you the last time."

"Oh? Mr. King, I must remind you that you are behind schedule, and you must acquire three more such slaves within three months and then infiltrate the No.1 Alive City!" Captain Free Sword's voice was somewhat cold.

"I'm doing my best. But it's not easy to enter the No.1 right off the bat, especially when I just joined their ranks. I need to increase my alchemist, and only then will I be able to enter the No.1 City.

"Furthermore, Elder Grandmasters are all eccentric, and they seldom come out. I'm already pressuring our slave Elder Grandmaster to draw more into my trap. But it will take some time since each region only had 1 Elder Grandmaster.

"That's why I would like to suggest something." Jacob impassively stated as a peculiar glint appeared in his eyes as a flash of inspiration shimmered within them.

"You sound indeed very reasonable, but this plan is only doable if we have at least 50% control over the upper echelon of the alchemy guild, and the time is very short." Captain Free Sword muttered and said, "Let's hear what you have to say, Mr. King."

"I think we should change our priorities from acquiring slaves to acquiring treasures. Thereby we used those treasures to bait those upper echelons into our trap, and from there, they will be our pawns." Jacob stated.

Captain Free Sword fell into a contemplated silence before he chuckled with a hint of disdain, "Hah, don't tell me you are planning on using the resources I've provided you to use as bait. Let me remind you, Mr. King, that if you show those things, I can assure you that, not to mention our targets of interest, even greedy people, will be coming after you. Are you confident in handling them?"

Jacob replied impassively, "This is indeed risky, and that's why I'm seeking your permission to let me go on a venture. I've just found a very interesting place where I can draw many people without even revealing my identity."

"Oh, pray tell?" Captain Free Sword asked with great interest since treasure was something a pirate like him couldn't ignore. Treasure hunting and plundering were the things a Star Pirate lived for!

Jacob then told Captain Free Sword about the legends of Vile Witch while omitting the details about the star hacker's involvement and turned them into 'lucky people' who he stumbled upon.

Furthermore, he also described his plan to rob that place clean and then use the empty place to set traps and draw powerful people before enslaving them in one fell swoop.

Captain Free Sword was naturally astounded, and he spoke with a hint of uncertainty, "Does this Vile Witch by any chance belong to the Witch Race?"

Cursed Immortality

Chapter 419: Opportunities Exist in Risks!

"Does this Vile Witch by any chance belong to the Witch Race?"

Jacob's eyes lit up at this moment, "I have no idea about her race. But I'm interested in knowing about this Witch Race since there might be a chance she had such a background."

He knew there were many races in the Zodiac Plains, and by Captain Free Sword's tone, he could easily guess that this Witch Race might be a Unique Rank Race from the Unique Plains.

But it also meant if he headed that Vile Witch's layer, then it would be far more dangerous than he had initially thought. Nonetheless, if this could benefit in the long run, then he would not back down.

Captain Free Sword replied jeeringly, "Heh, you are way out of your league, Mr. King. If this Vile Witch is really a descendant of the Witch Race, then her background is no less than grand. You can say, like your predecessors, the Faery Human Race, the Witch Race stood at the top of the Unique Plains' hierarchy.

"They are proficient in a unique magic called Curse Magic, and they can get off their opponents without even lifting a finger while sitting in their cozy lair. There aren't many countermeasures if someone is unlucky enough to target by their curse. Death is only a matter of time.

"But, if there is an inheritance of Witch Race here, even I'm interested in getting it since it would sell for an insane price in the unique plains. So, I will go with your suggestion, and you have my permission to go search for this Vile Witch's layer."

Captain Free Sword's voice turned icy at this moment, "However, if you end up wasting our precious time, then I have to reconsider your competence Mr. King, and you might have to take huge risks whether you like it or not.

"You no longer need to report to me every week until you reach a conclusion with this Vile Witch matter. But you only have 120 days, no more or less. Furthermore, once you've done, and I hope you succeed, I'll interest you with another matter. Now, good luck, Mr. King, and Godspeed; I'll wait for your good news!"

Done imparting the new commands, Captain Free Sword directly cut off the communication without giving Jacob any chance to back down.

Jacob stowed away the Vermin Transponder, but he won't look any worried or anxious at all. Instead, he seemed somewhat elated.

'So, this Witch Race is really proficient in curses...' He mused, as this was nothing but good news to him.

Furthermore, he was confident in getting out of this unharmed because that Vile Witch had to be an Epic Rank since she had been active in the epic plains, and her curses won't work on him unless they were unique ranks just like poisons, enslavement items, and such.

But he would never underestimate his opponent again, so he had to plan, and he couldn't go alone since he was still new to the world of curses, and the Vile Witch won't be kind enough just to leave everything for anyone just to come and take.

Besides, he had Cursed Immortality as a danger detector, so he was 60% confident in getting the Vile Witch legacy. Now, the problem was how to handle those two giants.

"They are more useful alive than dead..." He muttered as a nefarious plot hatched in his mind.

In the evening, Jacob left the guild after collecting everything he needed and making some preparations. Once he was in the area around the Pugilist Giants' hideout, he summoned Cursed Immortality!

"Are those two still here?" He questioned.

"Hhahahaha... how interesting. A member of the Witch Race, huh? Are you really going on this venture?"

Jacob wasn't surprised by this question. He knew this book knew almost everything, and it clearly knew more about the Witch Race than the Witch Race itself.

Furthermore, his question was also a confirmation that he was doing the right thing and was on the right track.

"What? Are you worried? Then how about you tell me more about this witch race? Can I use their curse magic with hex magic core?" Jacob inquired.

"Hehehe, you know I can't tell you anything until you meet with the race. Furthermore, do you think the Hex Magic Core is some petty magic core?" Immortika wrote with full of meanings.

Jacob instantly knew it was a confirmation and was ecstatic, "I need to do this if I want to win this damn trial. I need as many trump cards as I can get. The Cursed Blood Condensing would take too long, and even if I leave everything and solely focus on it, I don't think I can reach the standards of a peak epic rank expert.

"But you know quite well that I can't just focus on it since it will alarm many people if I start wantonly hunting City Lords of every city. Even if I'm crazy enough, I have too many things to sort out before I enter the trial.

"So, I can't focus on it and have to take some risks. It's far better than going to the trial unprepared just like last time. I can also condense more cursed blood in the trial as well. Besides, with you here, I can always run away. So, just tell me where those two giants are?"

"Sigh... it took you so long to realize this fact. I'm really emotional since it's like seeing your child grow up. What a terrible feeling."

Jacob's eyes went deadly cold, "Stop spouting nonsense, or I just go myself. If our relationship is going in the right direction of late, don't ruin it with your shitty, shenanigan personality!"

"Hehehehe, jeez, can't you just let me have my moment for once? Tsk, tsk, no one appreciates warmth these days. Oh well, since you are cold as an ice block, I'll be the warm fire. Those two are still there, so you better make it entertaining for me, hehe..."

Jacob completely ignored the first part and sneered at the last one, "Don't worry, I'm planning to suffocate you on this damn entertainment!"

Cursed Immortality

Chapter 420: Art of Bluffing (1)

Within the pugilist giants' villa, the atmosphere was quite gloomy as two giants sat in the hall.

The male giant name, Frugal gloomily spoke, "Something is not right. We should change our hideout."

"Hmm, it's been three days since we sent the letter to the Dark Mistress, yet she hadn't approached us at all. Furthermore, there are far more patrolling guards than usual. Since they didn't come here, at least our cover is not blown yet.

"Let's wait another day before leaving. There might be something important that binds the Dark Mistress for now. But if she doesn't show up tomorrow, let's leave this city and head towards the core region directly." The female giant name, Aven, stated.

"Alright..." Frugal was about to say something when suddenly a bell rang, alerting both of them.

Aven looked vigilantly at the door and said, "A 1-Star Epic Core?"

Frugal's eyes also shimmered in a faint gray light before he relaxed a bit, "He's alone. Do you think someone sends him?"

"Heh, let's find out." Aven chuckled darkly before she stood up and headed towards the door while Frugal remained in his position.

They both could easily tell that the other party was a mere epic-tier-1, and such a person was akin to an ant in their eyes. Furthermore, they hadn't rented a villa with a security system because they were extremely confident in their strength.

That's why whoever this was, he was able to reach their door easily.

At this moment, a cloak appeared over Aven's slender figure and her face before a mask appeared. Only then did she open the door!

When the door opened, a barbarian appeared there with scars on his tattooed face. It was none other than Jacob!

Jacob looked at the tall, cloaked giant, and he could feel a faint threatening aura from her, 'She's way too powerful for me...' He thought as he became even more careful about how to proceed from this point on.

Aven also gauged Jacob and instantly lost interest when she confirmed this barbarian only had just a 1-star epic magic core.

"Are you lost, little guy?" Aven coldly questioned while she faintly released her magic aura.

Jacob felt a chill down his spine, but he maintained his calm and coldly replied, "I am here because of this."

Then he flipped his hand, and a letter appeared, which instantly caught Aven's attention, and her eyes widened ever so slightly. Without even waiting for Jacob, her hand moved like a blur, and the next moment, the letter was in her hand.

Jacob was even astonished after experiencing Aven's movement. Truth be told, he didn't even notice until the letter was already leaving his hand.

'So, this is a powerhouse of the Epic Plains. Furthermore, the giants are at the top of the hierarchy of the epic plains, and I can imagine why.' Jacob gravely thought.

Furthermore, now he was worried because the move he had just played was extremely dangerous, and if things went south, he might not even get the chance to use his retaliation plan.

Nevertheless, he knew he couldn't back down now and remain on full alert while Aven did confirm the letter's contents.

She then looked at Jacob, but with naked killing intent as she questioned, releasing her suffocating aura, "Where do you get this letter?"

At this moment, Frugal's cloaked figure appeared beside Aven, and then he glanced at the letter and was astounded when he saw it was the same letter they sent Dark Mistress three days ago!

Now, Jacob was bearing an insane amount of pressure from both giants, and their bloodlust was covering his very being, giving him goosebumps. He never felt so alarmed and terrified before. It was like death was staring right at his face, and with just a single mishap, he will fall into death's embrace.

However, for some reason, deep within Jacob's heart, he felt a strange excitement arousing from this deadly situation. This was completely out of his expectation since it had never happened before, not to mention this feeling was also giving him bone-chilling calmness, which increased his calculation ability tremendously!

Bearing that pressure, he replied with an icy tone, "You two incompetent shits, dare to ask me why this letter is with me?"

Both giants were startled by Jacob's unexpected reply, and he didn't seem to be bothered at all by this pressure, which made them baffled and vigilant all of a sudden.

"Quite a foul mouth for an ant! Do you think I can't get the information out of you and make you wish you were never born in this world?" Aven coldly threatened as her eyes shimmered in a gray glow.

But to her surprise, Jacob was still looking right into her eyes without any fear, and the next moment, he pulled a strange pale smile.

"Ant, you say? Heh, first, you two fools dare to use the organization's name without prior permission, putting not only yours but even higher-up identities at risk. Then you two idiots didn't even investigate why no reply has come and sit on your massive asses and waiting for your maker?

"Last but not least, you two didn't capture me when you two saw the letter in my, some unknown fellow's hand and instead questioned me right in the open? What if my forces were surrounding this entire villa, and I was just waiting for you to bite the bait by simply admitting this letter belonged to you?

"You fucking morons didn't even bother denying it for a moment that it didn't belong to you just because you sense that I'm weak? Now, tell me how I should punish you two on behalf of the organization!" Jacob's words were icy and said without even a sliver of doubt or weakness.

This exact attitude gave both giants a strange feeling, and this weak person turned into a mystery. Furthermore, from his confident tone, as he reprimanded them, they became even more sure that this person might be someone who belonged to their organization.

The moment this doubt appeared in their heart, they didn't dare to make any rash move, and this was the exact result Jacob was aiming for!