

Mystical 281

Chapter 281: Future 1

As he snapped back into focus, the employee had already taken out the keys and opened the door.

"This time, the Governor's manor took out a grand total of 100 White Dragonhawks as the large scale appendment reward for the mission. One can say that they really hauled their assets. But even then, the missions' acceptance and completion rates haven't not increased all that much either." The employee sighed, "The missions' difficulty recently is really hard to determine, most of the totem users do not dare to simply pick up a mission. Furthermore, the amount of people accepting mission have also reduced greatly. That's why there was the White Dragonhawk being given out as a reward."

She looked at the checklist.

"But there's none for you to be amused for, that is primarily the reward for the Hurricane Group. Your reward is at the lowest rank."

Garen was stunned.

"The main completer of the mission is Hurricane Group? What do you mean?"

The employee gave him a weird look. "Of course they are the main force of this mission's completion. The Hurricane Group annihilated this terrorist totem users' hideout, exploded massive amounts of white totem bombs, they have already pick up their reward yesterday. You small fries are lucky, not being sucked into the midst of the battle and yet qualify for the rewards, that's one hundred thousand Silver Rumbs for each of you."

Garen's heart sank.

"You mean, this mission is mainly completed by Hurricane Group?"

"Like this, there was actually a form 1 totem user inside, I saw their mission process, they completed with blood sweat and tears. What's up with you?" The female employee looked at him weirdly.

"One form 2 totem user...? Haha..." Garen laughed coldly, such blasphemy of saying three top ranked form 2 totem users from Obscuro Society was said to be one, it was obviously the explosion of the kinetic furnace, but they said it was the white totem bomb. This Hurricane Group is so talented, they can make up any stories.

He walked into the wooden room.

"This is your reward." The employee gave Garen a small black bag.

Garen did not budge, and did not take up the black bag.

He glanced, and he saw that three middle-age men standing on the right side on the window, quietly looking over here.

He knows, in the situation where Goth was is absent, whatever he said carries no weight. Nobody would believe a group that has no form 2 totem user, to be able to kill three form 2 totem users, and yet being able to walk out of the hideout without any deaths.

Comparatively, everyone would definitely believe Hurricane Group's lies better.

It's believed that even Hurricane Group were not entirely sure about what happened, and not knowing the changes on Goth's body. That's why they would simply make up the story.

Garen admitted that even though he has an additional Howling Wererabbit and that his defenses are slightly stronger, but in a frontal confrontation, needless to say that he still could not break through form 2 totem user's totem light.

"I'm sorry, but I feel that this reward was not calculated properly."

"Not counted properly?" The female employee frowned, she is also a totem user, even though just a form 1 totem, but her time was not to be wasted recklessly. "Which part did we not calculate properly? You point it out, I want to be responsible to my work."

Garen smiled politely.

"I actually want to say, in this mission, there were some minute details that the Hurricane Group did not explain properly. That would be something my group leader personally experienced, so I hope that when my group leader gets discharged, he can come over to amend the process of the mission."

The female employee looked at Garen for a while

"If you insist, I can stop this reward claim, but you have to understand, it may happen that these rewards may be claimed by others."

She stopped and frowned.

"Or, if you think Hurricane had inaccurate recount of the missions, then you are wasting your effort. The people from the guild have already sent people to check it, everything is normal."

Garen realized, the man by the window had left unknowingly. He had some plans, so he didn't say too much to the employee.

"It doesn't matter, soon our group leader will come personally to speak, saying anything now serves no purpose."

He did not plan to iron this out, the Hurricane group can be left to Goth, who can erupt his talents. That dude can even take on three form 2 totem users from Obscuro society, nevermind the tiny Hurricane Group.

"Up to you." The lady shrugged her shoulder.

Both of them turned around, left the room and walked back.

A few passers-by workers saw that Garen had come back with nothing on hand, they couldn't help but to look at him a few more times.

Back in the mission hall, Garen politely said thank you to the female employee. And asked her for a name card.

"Tavi Nesser" Garen looked at the name card, then carefully kept it.

The mission hall at the time it was bustling with more people, among them was a sturdy, looking tall man, staring at Garen with a smirk.

As he saw Garen walking out, he slowly stood up.

Garen frowned as he glanced at these people. He exited the mission hall, walked down a few steps, and headed straight towards the Chialunar Hospital.

As he expected, there were a few people tailing him.

He realized that these people are wearing a hurricane badges around their chests.

Garen picked up his pace and walked along the streets. The three people behind him followed closely.

Two people walked in a single file and mixed into the crowd, walking against the current of people.

Garen turned his head around occasionally.

"I'm just reconnaissance, not a combatant, these things are best left to the professionals." He mumbled as he moved faster.

The footwork of his secret ability was used without sound, the speed got faster and faster.

Soon they were left behind in dust.

He hadn't received the rewards. He took a huge detour around town, and in the end he still decided to go back to the hospital. He was prepared to tell Goth and Andy about the rewards being taken by Hurricane, so that they, in turn would be mentally prepared.

He rushed into the hospital. By the entrance of the white, five-story building, stood a few people with hurricane badges.

Garen was about to walk over, but he stopped short, standing at the back side of the of the building.

"Now I'll have no choice." Garen waited outside the building for a while, he soon saw two young nurses walking out of the hospital building.

One of them was 14-15 years old. It was indeed the nurse who got her lunch.

He suddenly had an idea. He waited until the nurse approached, and walked around the two of them to stop them.

"That.. Wei Xi!" Garen stopped in front of them, loudly screaming that sentence.

The two nurses were just chatting softly suddenly heard themselves being called. They lifted their heads and got scared so badly, their faces paled.

A bald, browless, beardless scary man blocked their path, this man had a perverted smile as he stared at them, his mouth had hints of violence and cunningness.

Garen did not expect that his kind smile have scared the two brats this badly... he quickly reduced his smile, trying his best to show a peaceful look.

"Wei Xi, I am the guy whom you sent lunch to, remember?"

Wei Xi immediately recalled this patient who left strong impression, she stood in front of her friend.

"You.... You need anything?" her tongue tied. She's motivated.

"Could you help me out?" Garen smiled, scaring the girls that she shuddered.

Two minutes later, Garen looked at the silhouettes walk into the hospital, his heart calmed.

He turned around, and caught three Hurricane people blocking his rear, quietly staring at him. On the opposite side of the left street, one man wearing a white hat with golden bezel walked towards him, on his chest was the same black-white hurricane badge.

On the man's badge was two silver horizontal lines.

"Form 2?" Garen suddenly understood the meaning of the horizontal lines.

"Good eyesight.."the young man walked within five meters from Garen, stopped his movements, and picked up a cigarette from his shirt pocket. He slowly lit the cigarette and took a puff.

"Honestly, you ran really quickly. If I wasn't guarding here coincidentally, I may not have necessarily been able to catch you. Nice to meet you, the name's Casey."

"I'm just a nobody." Garen smirked and laughed. He just realized that on the roof, not far from him, stood a sparrow. It's eyes had a hint of silver.

Alright, no more bullshit. I am here to align our verbal records." The young man Casey said calmly, "This time's mission, only our Hurricane group and your panther group survived, there were two other groups who died inside. I don't know what happened inside, but to get any mission reward, our records have to be aligned, understood?"

"What do you mean?" the smile on Garen's face calmed down.

"The moment you received the reward, send it to this address, you can keep one third of it." Casey puffed a smoke, spewing a white smoke ring, his eyes seemed calm. "Think of it as the reward for us Hurricane group for protecting you.

"The mission was completed by us."

Garen said calmly, quietly looking at the other party.

"You completed it?" Casey shook his head, "I was the one who exploded the white totem bombs, I killed the only form 2 totem user, you said you completed it? What are you?"

"Haha." Garen only laughed.

"Laughing? You're happy?" Casey looked angry. "I'll make you laugh!" His slap swiped towards Garen.

"Pap!"

Suddenly, Casey's hand was caught.

"You're so full of yourself, brat." A red silhouette came flying, a man wearing a ref bib stood in front of Garen, facing Casey with a bright smile.

"Let go!" Casey's face turned dark.

"Nope."

"I said, let go!" Casey screamed. His face twitched,, obviously he was angered to the brink.

"I don't wanna let go, hit me if you can." Goth smiled snarkily, pushing his face towards Casey.

"You are seeking death!" Casey finally burst into anger, one tight slap flung towards Goth.

Pap!

A burst of harsh crisp sound was heard.

Garen was stunned as he looked at where the two were. Although he already noticed the arrival of Goth and the team, but he did not realize that Goth, who had a wire loose in his head, would ever use this method.

Casey was seen holding his face, filled with disbelief, as he stared at Goth.

"Hit me, come one, hit me!!" Goth had a face that was asking for a beating. He pointed at his hips, twerking his buttocks "Here! Kick here, use some force!!"

"Fuck!!" Casey is incredibly angry, and rushed forward to get a good kick.

Ouch!!!

A painful scream was hurt.

Casey knelt down to the ground, his body shining with an inconsistent light film, but this layer of light is clearly was not able to stop this fatal blow.

Chapter 282: Future 2

Andy shook his head and walked over, standing alongside Garen.

"Poor thing... There would be no reason to provoke anyone else, much less Goth. You okay, Garen?"

"I'm fine." Garen had already realised the oncoming presence of the two other people much earlier. Thus, he allowed the Hurricane squad members to do as they pleased. He never expected that it would turn out so well.

As for the three remaining Hurricane squad members, the moment they saw their leader collapse, a terrified look appeared on their faces at once, and they didn't know whether to advance or to escape.

"Go! We're leaving!" Casey yelled loudly, looking at Goth as if he were a monster, with his face all twisted like that.

"You dare think of leaving?!" Goth spat as he rubbed his hands together, rushing forward in a fit of rage.

"They stole the reward for the task we completed!" Garen quickly reminded him at this crucial moment. "They impersonated us!"

His words enraged Goth even more. Every one of his slaps that landed on Casey's face brought on rays of black light that caused a prickly sensation, making it seem as if countless sharp thorns had grown on his body.

These sharp thorns pierced through Casey's totem light easily. Furthermore, Goth's speed and strength had grown to the point where it was now terrifying to others.

Garen watched Goth's movements. The speed at which Goth rotated his arm and pushed it downwards always made Garen's heart jump slightly.

It seemed like this guy had already achieved the strength and speed he was only supposed to possess after his successfully using his Godlike Accomplishment skill.

Although he had known from the beginning that certain appraisal geniuses could get an increase in strength from their core totems, he never expected Goth's improvements to be of such great magnitude.

Moreover, Goth had only recently awakened his potential, and had not fully released it yet. Before his full release, there was no telling how more powerful he would be in his final stage.

"No wonder he was able to reach the level of single-handedly winning a fight." Garen was still in shock. He had practiced his Secret Technique just to achieve the Godlike Accomplishment skill, and had gone through many difficulties and hard times such as having to kill others in order to reach his goal.

Apart from his fighting skills, Goth's physical body and fitness levels were also vastly different from before as well.

In Garen's mind, everything seemed somewhat unbalanced.

Casey and the other three members of the Hurricane squad were beaten up and forced to the ground by Goth. He had easily thrown them against the wall as if they were merely objects. The scene frightened off the passersby on the street and they ran away quickly, worried that they might become casualties in this fight.

As Casey looked over at Goth, his own expression changed from embarrassment and fury into fear and dread. He was certain that his opponent's strength surpassed that of a regular Form 2 totem user. Ultimately, he had no choice but to release his own totem and fight to the death. But the moment he released it, his plan was foiled instantly. Goth would eventually destroy his totem, completely ruining his many years of hard work in the process. Without a Form 2 totem, he wouldn't be able to defend the Hurricane squad for long.

If his opponent possessed the ability to break through a totem user's totem light, judging from the current state of his totem's defenses, wrecking his totem would be a piece of cake.

In the end, Casey could only endure Goth's vicious attacks silently. He wrapped his arms around his head and crouched into a ball as he was too afraid to retaliate.

In the corner of the street, the both of them looked like a couple of gangsters. Goth single-handedly beat the three of them up without having to put up much of a fight, then forced Casey to return both of the White Dragonhawk rewards. He also made him pay compensation in the form of a mental loss fee,

safety threat fee, loss of reputation fee as well as a series of other payments totalling to 820,000 silver rums.

Both parties signed a contract and stamped their fingerprints with a blood seal. Casey finally understood that this man, Goth, had truly possessed a strength that would be able to defeat Form 2 totem users. If someone provoked him again with the outskirts of the city currently in a state of chaos, so long as he found a desolate place to intercept them, his enemies could call on the whole world for help, but no one would be able to save them.

Once Casey and his group had left, Goth wiped his hands and hid the contract in his clothes carefully, and patted his pocket.

"Let's go. We'll find somewhere we can sit."

"Yes," nodded Andy. "According to what I've heard, we should leave this place quickly since we've already completed the task. We should also follow the rules while we're at it."

Garen nodded as well.

The three of them turned the street corner and came across a coffee shop where they found a table against the wall and sat there, before ordering a cup of milk coffee each.

The atmosphere inside the coffee shop was calm, as there were only five or six other customers, sitting around in different spots. Everyone spoke in hushed voices when they conversed.

There was a white piano in front, where a man dressed in white played the soothing melody of an unknown song.

On the left corner of the wall where the three men were seated, the latest edition of the calendar had been hung up, and all the dates which had passed were ticked off with a little red check mark. The last unmarked date was the 24th of the second month.

"We're entering spring already," said Garen before he lifted his coffee cup and drank from it. "This year's winter hardly seemed as cold as the years before."

"I kind of agree. It still felt like autumn to me, I hardly felt any difference," nodded Andy. "The situation at the guild has been worsening recently. One of my acquaintances came to see me recently and I asked him about it. Two of the largest employment squads in the Luminarist guild, Black Light and Blue Leaf, encountered great difficulties in completed their most recent task, and the Black Light squad even lost two of their members. They were Iron Tank City's strongest totem user employment squad! Both the captain and vice captain are Form 3 final stage totem users, yet they still lost 2 members. The current situation is really dire."

"When I went to the guild, I noticed that there were less people inside as well," said Garen quietly.

"My friend is in charge of preparing the statistic reports, and according to him, there are about eighty to a hundred lower rank squads like ours in the guild. But in the most recent month, a lot of the smaller squads left and never returned. Some of them were even middle range squads with one or two Form 2 totem users, and even they suffered serious injuries. Currently five guild points have become significantly quieter."

"Don't worry. You guys still have me, remember? I'll protect you," said Goth lazily, as he drank the remainder of his coffee in a few gulps.

Both of them shook their heads and flat-out ignored him.

Andy continued, saying: "The casualties sustained by the guild in the previous year is still higher, but the ratio would never be more than ten to one, meaning one death would occur in ten tasks on average. Meanwhile this year, the ratio had already risen to five to one. I assume that the higher ups in the guild would have taken the necessary measures already. Right now, I'd suggest that we nurse of our wounds for the time being. Once our bodies have healed properly, we can absorb this task's reward, and by then, the situation would be pretty much clearer. Whether or not we continue accept tasks after that will depend on how we feel in the future. How about that?"

Garen nodded quietly. He understood what Andy was thinking. They were only trying to earn a quick buck, and train themselves while they were at it. They weren't trying to place their lives on the line, so there was no need for them to accept tasks that were unnecessarily dangerous. Even if a totem user merely decided to join a security organization, their livelihoods would still be at least three times better

than that of an average person. They would be able to lead a good and simple life. Those who undertook tasks from the guild were mostly thrill seekers that wanted to improve themselves at the same time.

"These are important national matters. As long as the higher ups are worried about it, it's none of our business," said Andy as he sighed in relief. He smiled and continued, saying: "No matter what, Goth, this time both Jessica and I owe you our lives. If you ever need any help in the future, just feel free to say it without holding back!" He patted Goth's shoulder as he said.

It was rare for Goth to be quiet, and now a look of concentration had appeared on his face. "Actually, I just want a simple life. As long as I have good food and drink, and a gentle girlfriend, all I'd have to do is to work hard so that all the other bastards will not look down on me anymore. Then we could leave our homes just like we're doing now, and I could still lead a happy life. After that I'd want to have two sons, and name one of them Andy, and the other one Garen."

"Why you little!" Andy could not stop himself from punching him. "But my old man has already ordered me to never return to the guild again because of the scars on Jessica's face, which made my mother cry for two whole days. After this... After this, I don't think it's likely that I'd be able to accept tasks anymore," he said as his voice grew softer. "I've gained almost enough experience, and since I've gotten the proof of my mission from the guild, once I've applied for a position in the national institution, my well being will increase significantly. Who knows, I might even get a job as a junior officer."

His words were tinged with a sense of parting.

The three of them became quiet for a moment.

"Since you already have the qualifications from the last two tasks, what department are you thinking of joining? Just choose one, and I'll submit the application for you. Any department will do. There's a Mercenary's Guild in every part of the East Continent, and with your qualifications, you'd get a good position even if you were sent to the imperial family," said Andy with a smile. "Or if you'd prefer, you could go to a college or somewhere like that and work as a security officer, or even a specialized speaker. There are tons of beautiful girls in the school, you know."

Goth lowered his head, and stopped speaking for a short while.

"I'll do it at my own pace..." he replied quietly. "What about you, Garen? Any plans?"

"I don't even have a home to return to, what plans could someone like me have?" said Garen as he shrugged. "I'm planning to wait and see. I don't even have any plans or arrangements on my mind at the moment."

"You're 21 years old already, right? You aren't young anymore, you should be making plans for your future by now. Why don't I introduce you to a girl, but definitely not someone who lives a promiscuous life on her own," said Andy earnestly. "Start your own household earlier, then you'll finally have someone to depend on in your heart. You'll also have a goal to fight for."

"We'll see," Garen shook his head. "I'm not thinking of that at the moment." He was certain that not long from now, the city would be filled with danger and trouble. Goth and the others would have no choice but to contribute by joining the movement to get rid of the surrounding dangerous creatures.

Almost all of the totem users would not be able to rest during that time.

Obscuro Society's major course of action was about to begin soon. This peaceful period of life would only last for a few more days.

He was unlike the two others because he wasn't a local in this world, he was merely a passerby. His goal was actually to find the secret that he had brought over with him. This whole time he had been trying to control his fate.

Life was hard and short, and after about a hundred and ten short years, in order to continue living, one would need to have something of value to pursue.

A vague idea began pounding at the back of Garen's mind. He no longer wanted to just go with the flow. In his personal experience, he had too many doubts that he wanted to understand.

In this universe, what could truly be considered eternal...

"Don't think too much about that," said Andy as he patted his shoulder.

Before Garen, Andy, and Goth went their separate ways, they made sure to exchange contact information and addresses.

Garen left the coffee shop on his own, and walked down the lane for a distance, before stretching his arm out and hailing a passing horse carriage.

"To the trade area," he said as he got onto the carriage.

The coachman was a middle-aged man with a short beard.

"The trade area huh... That's quite a distance from here. We'll have to exit this area, sir. And distances further than ten kilometers require additional charges as well. Which part of the trade area are you heading towards?"

Garen nodded, showing the man that he knew the price. "To Wellington Street. Do you know where that is?"

"I need to go deeper into the area if it's Wellington. Are you perhaps going to the pet market, sir?" asked the coachman in an experienced voice.

"That's the place."

"How's eight silver rums?"

"That's fine," answered Garen at once.

Once he had seated himself inside, he leaned against the right side of the carriage and felt as if the front of the carriage had fallen off. Moments later, it hobbled forward and off they went.

Outside the window, the roads rolled past continuously, and out of the rows of white living quarters, shops could occasionally be seen.

As the carriage galloped towards the trade area, the roads outside the carriage gradually became dirtier. They began to pass by an increasing number of horse carriages, including a beautifully built one at one point. Ox carts that sold fruits also passed them by on the lane, but were quickly overtaken by the carriage.

Calming his emotions, Garen began to look forward to the types of wild animals he would be able to purchase soon.

As long as there were no accidents, Goth would not need the White Dragonhawk. He was currently undergoing his power explosion stage, and would definitely be faced with an abundance of stronger totems in the future. However, the same did not apply to himself. He had already waited until the eleventh hour. He needed to decide on his core totem as soon as possible, and then evolve it quickly. If he failed in doing so, he would not be able to fight in the upcoming Great War.

Garen finally had a plan in his heart. His next step was to decide on which creature to evolve as his second totem. He also needed to increase his strength to the best of his abilities, so that he could hunt more totem users in the Great War, and attain more potential points.

Chapter 283: Market 1

The Pet Market.

On both sides of the road, pet cages were arranged and packed closely together. There were rows of them in various heights, sizes, and colours. Most of them were either light coloured or white.

A few elegantly dressed ladies and young female aristocrats shielded themselves with white parasols as they strolled through the market, observing and purchasing the pets that were for sale.

Horse drawn carriages stopped beside the entrance along the lane as new customers alighted and entered the market.

A bald man walked out leisurely from one of the black carriages. He had no hair on his head, no beard, and no eyebrows, making his face seem like a freshly carved white wax figure. There wasn't a single strand of hair on his face, and his whole head was completely bare. His peculiar look caused the surrounding passersby to look over at him with curious glances.

This man handed the transport fee to the coachman, before tidying the white casual garments he wore.

"Sir, do you need a scarf? It's only five copper rums," said a child as he rushed over to sell a sun-shading scarf to the man.

The man bought the scarf and wrapped it around his head.

Starting from the the left side of the market, he observed the animals as he strolled through the street slowly.

A man in grey clothes carried a grey owl on his hand and spoke loudly but slightly inarticulately, attempting to promote his wares to two aristocratic women. The owl on his arm would turn its head occasionally, a sign that it was in reasonably good spirits.

Up ahead, a plump man wearing a turban with a white gemstone patted the large metal cage beside him and began to introduce the clouded leopard pacing inside. It was obvious that the lynx was feeling restless because of the heat.

Further in front, a group of upper class women gathered around a little pet shop that sold rabbits and squirrels, giggling softly from time to time.

Garen inched forward slowly as his line of sight grazed over the various cages. His mind was constantly filled with thoughts.

"Empowered totems cannot be kept inside storage tools, but must be left outside. They also need to consume food and excrete. Could these things empower human beings as well?" the thought crossed his mind suddenly.

His face remained expressionless, as Garen continued to move forward and look at every single one of the cages.

Eagles, cheetahs, wildcats, hounds, pythons, and spiders were among the many other pets that could be found here.

Suddenly, his feet stopped moving. He stood in front of a large aquarium.

Inside the blue water tank, a large great white shark swam around nonchalantly.

"Sir, are you interested in buying this great white shark? If you purchase it now, I'll also throw in a gift. Every great white shark purchase comes with a free aquarium," said a friendly, thin man who smelled like the ocean.

"I have other kinds of aquatic creatures here in my shop, and a few types of amphibians as well. You can feel free to have a look. Crocodiles, wolf fish, decorative goldfish, black-headed prawns, cylindrical snails, and jellyfish. Anything you want, we'll catch it for you!"

"Oh?" Garen declined to comment. "I'd like to see the crocodiles."

"Please come inside, sir," said the slim man as he enthusiastically led Garen into the dark, damp part of the shop. He had opened his shop here a long time ago, initially thinking that the rich lords and ladies would have an affinity towards strange aquatic creatures. He never expected his business to flop the entire time. It was rare enough for him to come across a customer who was actually interested in buying something, thus it was only natural for him not to let this chance escape.

Garen entered the shop. He saw a deep pit in the left side of the shop, where two short-tailed crocs were crawling around lazily. One of the crocodiles stretched its mouth wide open, as its sharp teeth snapped at a flock of little white birds.

"On its own, the crocodile has a strong defensive armor. If it was empowered into a Silver Totem, I'm not sure how much stronger my Totem Light would become because of that." Garen wanted to buy the crocodile for its full body of tough armor. Even if he decided to just raise it at home, the Totem Light that he would gain from the crocodile was probably more than what he would gain from most living creatures.

"I'd like a crocodile, so how much would that cost?"

"Just thirty thousand, thirty thousand silver rums. Hehe," The skinny man was happier beyond his wildest expectations. He never thought that he'd be able to seal a deal for a pet with a customer that just walked in.

"Done. Please send it to this address later." Garen took out a pen, and was about to write down the hotel's address, before stopping himself abruptly. "Hold on. I'll come back later and confirm the location with you. Here's the deposit."

Garen took out a thousand silver rums and counted them for the skinny shopkeeper, before leaving his name and informing the man that he would return later.

After leaving the aquatic pet shop, Garen continued journeying forwards and took his time looking around.

In a short while, he decided upon three giant desert monitor lizards from a different pet shop. All three of them were lizards with dark blue coloured backs, and had each grown to be more than one meter in length. Their skin felt like a kind of rough cloth when touched.

Garen pressed his finger against the giant lizard's skin and realised that it was actually quite tough.

These three giant desert monitor lizards had only cost Garen ten thousand silver rums. However, it was rumoured that these creatures could be used to form a blood relation with the legendary dragon. Garen was interested to try this out, to see if it was possible to evolve them into a similar type of living totem.

But of course, everything depended on the requirements for the core totem's foundation to be met first.

This kind of blue back lizard excelled in drilling holes and possessed swift movements. Furthermore, they also had highly poisonous glands that could cause paralysis. They were extremely unsuitable as domesticated pets. A moment of negligence would allow them an opportunity to drill holes and escape. Thus, the shop owner was unable to sell them for their full price, which caused their value to decrease rapidly. Never had he expected a customer like Garen, someone who was so entranced by these creatures. This shop owner was also delighted beyond expectation, and decided to sell all three of his giant lizards to Garen.

Next, Garen also purchased three grey feathered hawks. These hawks were extremely fierce despite their small stature. This particular female hawk was especially impressive, as it was often found with leopards in the northern highlands. This was another creature that was superb even at its foundation level.

One short-tailed croc, three grey feathered hawks, and three giant desert monitor lizards. A total of seven animals, and when Garen's current howling wererabbit was added to the list, that brought the grand total to eight. Garen still planned to leave two empty spots in case there were better choices for him to substitute later.

These creatures cost him a total of seventy thousand silver rums.

He decided to give up on a getting custom-made totem. Custom-made totems were definitely more suited to totem users compared to standard totems, and the better suited a totem was to its totem user, the easier it was to evolve it. However, Garen had already acquired excellent abilities, making it redundant for him to pay the exorbitant fees just for a custom-made totem.

After paying the deposit, Garen followed the crowd into a different street.

He looked at the relaxed aristocrats that passed by him, every one of them oblivious to the upcoming chaos.

Most of these people were unaware of the existence of Luminarists. They lived in a fabricated world of pretend, naively believing that the cavalry, archers, patrol guards, swordsmen, and musketeers were all there was to war. Unbeknownst to them, the real war was the one that was fought by totem users and Luminarists, and they were in charge of the actual decision-making.

Totems were banned from meddling in wars between normal people, and this was a rule. But people who were the slightest bit knowledgeable were already aware of the importance of totem users. Both war and peace were controlled by the hands of these few people.

"General Wellan recently led Anita's third legion of nearly a hundred thousand men out to battle, who knows how long it will take before the war ends. My husband is part of that army as their logistics

officer," said an upper class lady with an anxious look on her face, holding a white rabbit in her arms. "I don't even know if he's taking care of himself properly while he's out there."

"Don't worry. Brother-in-law will be fine. He's a man. Big sister, look at my squirrel. Isn't it cute?"
Nearby, a red-headed young lady stroked the squirrel in her palm happily.

Garen passed by the two ladies, and heard bits and pieces of their conversation.

In the eyes of the average person, General Wellan had led one hundred thousand soldiers out to battle, and had three of the bravest and fiercest army captains under his command.

However, the people who truly decided the outcome of the battle were not these hundred thousand men, but the other thousand over totem users who had left a long time ago, but whose whereabouts and statuses remained unknown.

The wars of totem users and normal people were vastly different, and they always selected their battle sites individually. The moment one sector of totem users was defeated, their commander would automatically declare their surrender.

The majority of totem users would not slaughter normal people, but this resulted in a lot of predetermined outcomes, many of which concluded with the weak beating the strong. The difference in soldier numbers resulted in a wide disparity between both sides, but this was ultimately caused by the totem users' unanimous surrender when defeated in battle.

Garen's train of thought began to deviate, so he waved down a horse-drawn carriage and headed towards the outskirts of the city quickly.

He needed to find a house that would solely belong to him, or else it would be impossible for him to house this many Silver Totems.

He returned to his hotel and packed his belongings, before rushing off to the nearest home rental center.

In the home rental center, he chose a house with a big courtyard on the outskirts of the city, which included a lake and man-made grassy mountains, which amounted to its huge perimeter. The house was somewhat decrepit, but the rental was only required to be paid once every two years, and each payment was twenty thousand silver rums.

This was a considerably cheap price.

Currently, Garen did not have much money left, and once he had totalled his remaining bits of money, after the purchase of his pets, he was left with less than three hundred thousand silver rums. At the request of the landlord, he was led outside and brought to see the courtyard. After that, he paid the two-year rental fee in one payment.

Next, Garen went to the pet market street again, and gave his new address to the shop keepers.

He had no plans to visit other pet markets. To be honest, most animals could already be found here, the remaining ones were merely lions, tigers, bears and other ferocious beasts. He hardly cared about these common creatures, because as far as their defense was concerned, lions and tigers did not have the armor the crocodile possessed. The most important factor was that for large carnivorous animals, one was definitely enough. If you empowered more than one, their daily meat intake would definitely increase to an insane amount.

Once the Great War broke out, there would definitely not be enough meat to sustain all these creatures.

On the outskirts of Iron Tank City where people were scarce, a few courtyards stood spaciously away from one another.

One of the courtyards was surrounded by a grey fence, and on the green grass stood a mountain shaped double-storey building. The little building had white floors and black sides, and looked somewhat unkempt on first glance. Certain parts of the windows had wilted yellow vines growing all over them.

A gust of wind blew over, blowing the grass and causing the yellowed leaves to roll away.

Garen alighted the carriage, and stood in front of the gates of the courtyard.

He turned his head and looked in the opposite direction and saw a similar looking courtyard, except that there were flowering fruit trees growing in the other courtyard, and a young woman who was holding a watering can and watering the flowers.

The girl also noticed Garen standing opposite her, and her face immediately broke out into a friendly smile.

Garen smiled back at her too.

Garen looked for the key and unlocked the latch on the fence, before walking into the courtyard that he had just rented for himself.

Woof woof!

The sound of a dog barking could be heard from the courtyard on the opposite side.

"Teller! Damn you, don't you dare pee there! Do you hear me?!" The girl yelled loudly from the opposing courtyard. "Teller! Teller!!!" She threw her watering can down and chase a golden retriever into the back of the house.

Garen turned to look in her direction, before removing the key from his pocket. He stuck it into the keyhole of his front door and turned the handle.

Ka-chak.

The door creaked when it was pulled open towards the outside, as a mouldy smell that came from inside the house began to waft towards him.

Chapter 284: Market 2

"Cough cough," Garen muffled his nose as he walked inside.

The first floor was completely empty as all the furniture had been moved out. In the hall on the first floor, there was a corridor on the left side which led to the backyard, kitchen, and other rooms. There was a wooden spiral staircase on the right side which led to the second floor. The red paint on the staircase had mostly faded, making it obvious that this place had aged.

Garen opened all the windows and doors, and noticed that the place was covered in dust.

He coughed as he walked out of the house, before coming across an advertisement on the wall for cleaning services.

Immediately, he left the house for a short while, and came back with four middle aged women holding cleaning supplies behind him.

The four women entered the house and began cleaning noisily, while Garen stood at the side with his arms folded across his chest, waiting patiently.

Once everything settled down and his pets had arrived, he would then be able to begin the totem empowerment process. After a few days, until the White Dragonhawk finally returned, and once he had obtained his core totem, he would finally be able to go to the War Guild to begin hunting. As for the grains that he was currently hoarding, it would only be a matter of time before he would profit greatly from that.

He mentally counted the days until the arrival of the Great War. Everything had been arranged accordingly, and he only had to make sure that he followed his plan step-by-step to ensure that it would go smoothly.

"Hey."

A young woman's voice called out behind him.

Garen turned around and saw the woman who lived in the opposite house walking towards him, carrying a golden retriever.

"Hey there, I just moved in today, and I'll be living here from now on," said Garen with a smile and an outstretched palm. "Garen. Garen Lombard."

"Alice. Alice Weller," said the girl as she reached her hand out and shook hands with Garen. "Are you renting or..."

"Renting. But I might be buying," said Garen, smiling. "How long have you been living here, Alice?"

"This is my grandfather's house, and I like reading books and relaxing here. I've been living here for almost three years," Alice recalled. "The environment here is not bad, and it's pretty far from the city area. No one else is living in the surrounding courtyards either, and it seems like both our courtyards are the only ones with tenants. Many years have passed while these houses remained empty. There are a total of twenty-three courtyards in the Yellow Wind district, and it was once filled with people, but currently it seems as if there are only five households living here."

She shrugged her shoulders as a restless expression appeared on her face. "Did you know, that the distance between this place and the city is unnecessarily far? It's extremely inconvenient when you need to go out to buy groceries or vegetables, and the only water supplied to us comes from a few deep wells nearby.

"But it's quiet enough," Garen added, "This was the criteria I was looking at when I decided to move here. My job on its own is noisy enough, and I wouldn't be able to handle it if my living space was noisy as well."

"True enough," agreed Alice as she nodded her head. This young girl, who looked no more than twenty years of age, definitely possessed certain intellectual abilities. She wore a white top and a matching pair of white trousers, making her seem like a simple but generous person. Her long blonde hair was tied in a ponytail, and her figure was not perfect, but not bad either. She didn't have a gorgeous face and was better described as average. However, she had an unusually sharp mind and a mature sense of understanding.

She didn't seem the slightest bit afraid of Garen's lack of eyebrows, beard, or hair. When she noticed Garen's doubtful gaze, she smiled and started to explain.

"My grandfather used to look just like you. A big fire burned off his eyebrows, beard, and even half of the hair on his head. Thus, the moment I laid my eyes on you, I knew that you were just like him. When I look closely, I can see that you're actually quite handsome."

"Thank you for your compliments. I guess I should be thanking your grandfather as well, as he helped me avoid scaring you," said Garen with a laugh.

"Okay, I'll head off first. There are still some things over there that I've yet to finish,"

"Alright."

Garen watched Alice turn around and walk back into her own courtyard before turning his gaze away. He continued to wait as the cleaners finished their work.

The four women went to take water from the deep well nearby and washed the courtyard. The trouble they went through to get the water ended up costing Garen an extra five silver rums.

The sun had started to set before the courtyard was finally cleaned.

Garen arranged the wooden mailbox outside the courtyard properly and noted down the address and house number written there, before visiting the district's post office and registering his new residence.

He went out and hired a horse drawn carriage before piling various kinds of everyday items into his house. Next, he wrote letters to Andy, Jessica, and Goth respectively to inform them about his new address.

Dinner consisted of breadsticks dipped in strawberry jam.

Once everything had been arranged properly, it was already late at night.

Before long, the shop keepers from the pet stores arrived with his pets. The pet market was run by a single management, thus various sellers from the market helped move seven metal cages from the ox cart into Garen's house, one at a time.

Standing in the garden, Garen held a glass lamp and watched the ox cart from the pet market leave, disappearing from his field of vision almost instantly.

He turned and walked towards the garden behind him.

Seven different pets were waiting to be empowered by him.

After checking his surroundings carefully, Garen realised that this place was just as Alice had described it. It was very quiet, and the closest house in the vicinity was at least a hundred meters away.

He stood in front of the seven differently sized cages. He stretched his arm outwards and picked up the first cage, before walking towards the back door.

He closed the door and hung the glass lamp from the right door handle.

Garen lifted the black cloth on the cage, and looked at the blue back lizard that was crawling around inside.

He placed the cage on the floor and carefully took out a red crystal ball from the inner parts of his cloth bag. The crystal ball was a palm-sized Derivator.

Gingerly, he placed the Derivator next to the metal cage.

The crystal ball began to glow, and a red light illuminated his face. A line of words began to float up from it.

'Are you empowering the nearby creature?'

"Yes."

The blue back lizard became restless immediately, and started to pace around in its cage, as if it was trying to avoid the red light shining on its body, but to no avail.

The crystal ball slowly changed the colour of its light to a silver hue, as the silver light began to envelop the giant lizard. The lizard seemed as if it was paralysed when it stopped moving suddenly, and remained in its original position.

Tch!

A ray of silver light shot out of the crystal ball and landed on the giant lizard's head.

Exactly five seconds later, the silver light disappeared quickly, and the crystal ball became red once again.

"Empowerment completed. The creature's appearance is being recorded. The main body is being linked and transferred... Please do not move," announced the crystal ball suddenly as it shot a ray of red light towards Garen.

Just as before, a warm, pleasant feeling could be felt on the areas that were illuminated by the red light.

A 3D icon of the new totem also appeared in the skill pane in the bottom of his field of vision.

'Blue back lizard: First form living totem, can be upgraded. Evolution success rate: 66% (The smaller the size, the higher the success rate). Potential points consumption: 300%.

Abilities: Venom, drilling.'

"Three points, huh... This thing apparently consumes three points..." said Garen as he furrowed his brows.

He let the giant lizard out of its cage and repeated the earlier process. He brought all of the cages into his house and used the Derivator to empower every one of them.

Three blue back lizards, three grey feathered hawks, one short-tailed croc, as well as the howling wererabbit. A total of eight Silver Totems.

Garen stood on the walkway at the back of his house and lifted his arms, looking at the endless blue, grey, and black Totem Lights that covered his hands.

The three colours finally merged together into a blue-black colour.

He held the crystal ball Derivator and looked at the message that was displayed there.

'Your Excellency Garen, your current Totem Light ranking is: Form 2 normal. Your Totem Light consists of eight different types of Silver Totems that have been overlaid with one another.

"I've achieved Form 2 Totem Light already?" Garen's heart was overjoyed. Although he had yet to learn the ways of a Form 2 totem user, and did not have the multitude of special abilities of an average Form 2 totem user, but the fact that his defence level had reached Form 2 was reason enough for him to celebrate.

The pets that he selected, other than the howling wererabbit, were all creatures that excelled at defence. The blue back lizard had skin that was highly resistant to corrosion, and the grey-feathered hawk had feathers that would naturally take the blow when it was bitten or attacked. Meanwhile, the short-tailed croc had a full body of armor, and was unusually strong. All these aspects were factors that Garen had already thought about earlier.

He clenched and unclenched his fists, feeling the Totem Light cover his entire body. It felt like he had put on a thick layer of clothes that was still unexpectedly airy and not restrictive at all.

He looked at the skill pane at the bottom of his field of vision, observing the two different types of icons that had automatically appeared there.

The evolution success rate of the grey-feathered hawk was also about sixty percent, and its abilities were flight and eagle-vision.

The short-tail croc's evolution success rate was slightly lower at only fifty-something percent, and its abilities were biting and camouflage.

On the newly bought sofa on the first floor, Garen sat there with a grey-feathered hawk on his head and one on each shoulder, while a short-tailed croc crawled near his feet. There were also three blue back lizards on the couch next to him, constantly sticking their red tongues out.

He felt like a lion tamer in the circus.

Wordlessly, Garen let the Silver Totems leave his side, as he contemplated what to do with the new powers in his hands.

Silver Totems and regular totems were different, because they could not be kept inside storage tools. The ones that could be brought around were only limited to the three grey feathered hawks. The short-tailed croc required water and constant care, while the giant lizard's hunting abilities were only sub-par, making them redundant when taken outside. Only the grey feathered hawk, a type of predatory bird, could be carried around easily, as well as participate in the hunt.

"Now I'll just have to wait for the White Dragonhawk to become mine. In the meantime, I'll just go collect some potential points for now."

A grey-feathered hawk was perched on Garen's shoulders, while the other two stood on each arm. He walked straight out of his house, and past the fence that was now darkened by the night sky. In the dimness of the night, he walked towards the city.

War Guild

Garen held a glass of foamy alcohol but did not drink it. He merely sat in his usual spot and furrowed his brows at the quest scrolls in his hands.

The receptionist, a plump woman took a large bite of the chicken thigh in her hand while placing some quest scrolls on Garen's table with her other hand.

"You can choose any of the quests here, they're all form one. Your quest completion rate is not bad, keep up the good work," she said before she turned around to face the other customers.

Garen scanned his eyes across the quest list before him. All of them were form one quests, and their hunting targets were all form one totem users, with the majority being from Phantom Light.

These totem users who believed in the survival of the fittest were merely scum who killed others without batting an eye. They were extremely harsh with themselves, and possessed adept fighting skills. They could not be compared to the Seraph Light totem users of the past.

Garen had asked to look at so many form one quests because he was looking to find the most suitable one. He took a quest list and noticed that it said: Kill Therese Angel. This totem user is psychologically twisted, and fled from the north to Iron Tank City. Although she is only form one, she already possesses four different totems, and is very difficult to provoke.

"This is the one."

Garen decided on his quest, and stood up before walking towards the counter in the hall.

This opponent would be able to test his current strength properly, to finally decide whether Silver Totems or original totems were stronger.

Chapter 285: The Eve of Chaos 1

As he left the guild, Garen walked from the narrow street into an alley. Whore houses were abundant on both sides of this alley, and beautifully made-up women leaned against the doorways of shops, illuminated by red light, as they stroked their hair flirtatiously and exposed their legs to passersby from time to time.

A few guild members walked out from behind him, and stumbled drunkenly into one of the prostitution joints.

Garen picked up his pace and exited this street. From far away, he could see the high, white walls of Iron Tank City standing up straight in the distance.

He stood underneath one of the street lights to avoid blocking the people who were coming out from behind him. He began to recall the contents of his last quest.

"Looks like I'll need to go back and return with some help. A totem user with four totems cannot be defeated easily."

He arranged his shirt collar properly, and began walking in the direction of his newly rented house.

It was located in the same location on the outskirts of the city, and the distance between here and there was not far away.

Two hours later.

Outside Iron Tank City, on a lane a few kilometers away from the city area.

Tch!

A bloody corpse was pressed against the ground underneath the claws of a Black Clouded Leopard. The Clouded Leopard was biting and tearing the skin off the corpse's neck. Blood flowed out of the neck wound and hot white steam began to escape from it.

Moonlight fell on the clouded leopard's fur, and reflected rays of pale, silvery light.

A voluptuous woman in red stood beside the clouded leopard, as she played with a frayed silver badge in her hands that had been stained red with streaks of blood.

"How many have there been?" she said softly, in somewhat incorrectly accented Kovitan language.
"Why are there always so many who like sentencing themselves to death?"

"Sentencing themselves to death? Haha," said a black silhouette as he walked over slowly and stood in the moonlight, finally showing himself. This man was tall but his body seemed skinny and frail.

A White Python was coiled around his body, and it stuck its tongue out frequently.

Instantly, following his appearance, a few more human figures walked over from the side, and surrounded the woman. Alongside them were two Black Wolves, a Leopard and Brown Bear.

Howl!

The Brown Bear let out a low growl and eyed the Black Clouded Leopard by the woman's side ferociously.

"Therese Angel, we've renounced your ranking," announced the person who was controlling the Brown Bear. She was a petite young woman with a strange sounding laugh.

"What a cute little girl. I'm going to rip you up into shreds and cook your flesh into soup for me to enjoy slowly later..." said Angel as she stuck her tongue out and licked her fingers.

"How repulsive," said the young woman as she removed her purple cloak and step backwards. "Go!"

Roar!

Two Black Wolves and the Leopard charged in front at the same time, but were dragged down in mid air by three Black Panthers. They rolled on the floor as they fought viciously.

The White Python and the Brown Bear charged forward at the Black Panther from two different directions respectively.

"Destroy her totem!" yelled the petite girl. Both her hands flew upwards at the same moment as she drew a shapeless gesture in the air. "Go!"

Suddenly a glowing grey dot flew from her fingertips and merged into the body of her Brown Bear.

The Brown Bear roared loudly and stood up on its hind legs. Its movements speeded up suddenly as it dashed towards the last Black Panther on the field.

"Grey light?" The black clothed woman looked slightly astonished, but did not show any signs of panic. Her slender fingers drew a line in the air at lightspeed, as a green flame ignited on her fingertips, and danced in the air like fire.

At the same moment, the claws of the four Black Panthers that she controlled also began to glow green as well.

Tch!

The Black Clouded Leopard used its claw and scratched a line across the White Python's body, and the wound immediately began glowing green.

"Speed up the elimination. She has poisonous toxins!! The reports were false! Fall back!!" yelled the petite woman with a panicked expression on her face.

"Trying to escape?" The woman in black glanced at her lightly. "The War Guild here is apparently really weak."

Ten minutes later...

The ground was covered in severed limbs and bloodied flesh, as blood began to seep into the grass and ground and dyed them red.

The woman in black, Angel squatted in front of the girl's dead body and stuck her hand into her collar and pulled out a pendant.

"One of the Duke's people, huh? The nearby area must be the White Dragonhawk's territory then, right..." she said as she knitted her eyebrows together.

She stood up suddenly and looked towards the forest that was not far away.

"More people from the War Guild again. You guys really have no fear of death, huh. I never expected that the central War Guild would be so weak. They don't even make up half of the northern territory. Even if you guys aren't bored yet, I sure am."

A man with a shining bald head walked out of the forest slowly. He removed his black cloak, and the contrast between the colour of his shawl and his milky white skin became very obvious.

"Is the central War Guild really that stupid? One dies, and two more arrive. Two more die, and the third one comes along," Angel mocked.

"I'm not the same as them,"

"The three people before you said that too," said Angel impatiently as she took a few steps forward. She continued to hold the pendant from earlier in her hand lightly. "Every one of the people I killed had the same kind of self-confidence. Unfortunately, they were all idiots. Do you know? In my eyes, you and the stupid pigs in your garden are one and the same. You've never seen the outside world, and you think you're the greatest thing in your small town."

The bald man smiled, and reached his hand out.

A Black-nailed Crocodile crawled out slowly from behind him, while three Grey-feathered Hawks descended from the sky and began flying circles around him.

"The number of my totems are the same as yours, a perfect pair for each of them."

"Idiot," said Angel as she rolled her eyes. "Out of the totem users that I killed, five of them were so-called geniuses who had more than four totems each. If the number of totem keys were equivalent to the quality of totems, then everyone would just stockpile them and that would be it. Whatever, I don't have time for your nonsense," she said as she took out a gold pocket watch and looked at the time. "We're almost out of time."

"Almost out of time for what?" asked Garen as he looked at Angel curiously.

The thing that he was actually relying on was not the totems, but the Form one totem. Any stronger and it would not be a threat to the current him at all. As he currently possessed Form two defense strength, he was now standing in undefeatable territory for now. He had brought the totems along with him for a different purpose, to see if there was really a difference between primitive totems and Silver Totems if they both belonged to the Form one category.

"It's the totem cooling-off period, you idiot!" Angel grinned. "Moments ago my quick-acting poison was still in its cooling-off stage, but since you didn't make a move, I'm afraid it's too late now."

Her fingertips were lighted with a green flame again, as she suddenly pointed towards Garen.

"Kill him!"

In a blink of an eye, the four Black Panthers beside her leaped upwards suddenly and became like four black lines that dashed towards Garen's myriad of totems. Their speed was much faster than earlier, and they rushed towards him like arrows, bringing a hissing sound with them as they tore through the air.

"Bringing along a totem of no quality is like carrying a burden, idiot," Angel said as a mocking expression appeared on her face.

Suddenly, the Crocodile and the Clouded Leopard squared up against each other, while the three Grey-feathered Hawks went up against the three Black Panthers. One of the Grey Feathered-Hawks got scratched, and a big pile of feathers had now fallen unto the floor.

Garen scrunched his eyebrows together and attempted to speak. Suddenly, Angel's expression changed and the green flame on her fingers lit up again, before the four Panthers leapt back to her side.

"Count yourself lucky today! If only..." She had yet to finish her sentence but cut herself off abruptly, before climbing onto the fastest Clouded Leopard and turning in the other direction.

Hum...

In the sky above his head, a strange noise began calling out in the air. It sounded like a cow's moo, but at the same time felt as if something was quaking.

Garen lifted his head and looked at the giant white bird circling above his head.

"White Dragonhawk?" he said as he furrowed his eyebrows.

Inside the forest, shards of moonlight scattered into pieces and fell unto the grass and the tree trunks.

Angel rode the Clouded Leopard and raced frantically through the forest. She was going at an incredible speed, and the trees on both sides of her had now become blobs of blurry black shadows. Nothing could be seen clearly, except for the scene before her that continued to grow bigger the nearer she came.

"I've gotten rid of him," said Angel when she finally felt as if the feeling of someone staring into the back of her head had disappeared. She sighed in relief.

Suddenly her eyes widened in shock. She stared at the trees surrounding her, and stopped her Clouded Leopard instantly.

Hiss!

The remaining three Black Leopards stopped as well, and deep skid marks appeared on the ground. They kept watch at her side, looking on vigilantly at the forest before them.

"What did you want to say just now?" Garen's voice rang from in front, tinged with a sense of doubt.

"Although I don't know how you managed to catch up to me, but it seems like you're really looking to die... Apparently you didn't even bring a single totem with you," said Angel in a low voice as she glared at the bald man in front of her.

"Go!!" Once again, the green flame lit up her fingertip.

The three Black Panthers sped up and formed three black lines that rushed towards Garen. Six pairs of sharp claws were pointed towards Garen's throat.

After the three Black Panthers had undergone skill improvement, their venomous claws became a part of their totem Light defense. They were also able to use corrosive Totem Light, which would then increase the speed of their defenses.

Angel rode the Clouded Leopard to the field, and looked at Garen with a pitiful expression.

"I had originally planned to spare you, but you chose to die on your own..."

Bang!!

A dull crashing noise suddenly rang through the air.

Angel widened both of her eyes, and an unknown sense of fear began to grow in her mind. She stared dreamily at the figure before her with a shocked and dazed expression on her face.

Garen moved his right leg backwards as he looked at the two leaping Black Panthers. His right hand grabbed one of the Black Panthers by its throat, as if he was holding a little chick in mid air.

Ka... ka...

The Black Panther tried to escape by scratching at Garen's arms wildly, but it was utterly useless.

"Its speed isn't bad, and it almost caught up to me," said Garen, full of praise.

But before he finished speaking, he noticed that there was now no one in front of him.

Angel desperately commanded the Clouded Leopard she was riding to run faster. She kept turning back to look behind her, afraid that man had finally caught up once again.

Her forehead was dripping with sweat.

"Where did this monster come from?! A totem user who went up against a totem in direct combat! I've definitely just seen a ghost!"

In most cases, although a totem user possessed a Totem Light to protect themselves from getting injured by totems, their own speeds and strengths were greatly different from the totem's own, and they were of a whole different level.

Of course, those who practiced martial arts may have been able to keep up, but since totem users were already racing against time to study and evolve their totems, who else had the time to study these low-levelled martial arts like wrestling?

Activities like wrestling were equivalent to sailing against the current, it was something that would not benefit you, but was more likely to push you backwards. In that sense, a totem user's control of a totem and understanding of fighting skills also held the same principle of sailing against the tide, and was something that would result in regression if the totem user lacked concentration.

Only those who did not have Luminarist qualifications would practice wrestling. The rest were individuals who were not qualified, or those who came from poor families.

Angel frantically ordered the Clouded Leopard she was riding to run to the point where it reached its limits. Her mind continued to flash images of the scene she had just witnessed before. She was too afraid to believe what she had seen, and continued to speed up her Black Panther, worried that it would be sent flying or captured by the totem user from earlier.

"Skills of that degree would only belong to someone who was at least General-level! But how could a General-level totem user be that young? This world is starting to become insane..."

Chapter 286: The Eve of Chaos 2

After guessing her the level of her opponent's strength, Angel's mind began to calm down slightly.

"General-level is still alright. As long as I use the right moves, I should be able to counter it. But how did he manage to do it exactly? Seeing that he wasn't afraid of the toxins on the Black Panther's claws at all?"

Thinking of this, her fingertips suddenly lit up with a green flame, as she quickly drew a gesture in the space in front of her.

"Shared Vision."

A smile appeared on her face, as she saw that there was still one Black Panther that had not been destroyed yet. Her vision immediately transferred to look through the creature's eyes.

Suddenly, her face contorted into an extremely ugly expression.

Hiss!

The Clouded Leopard beneath her crotch stopped abruptly, its four claws scratching black marks into the grass below.

In front of the woman and the Panther stood a bald man who had both his hands stuffed inside his pockets, looking at her and smiling.

"Hey," he said as he rushed towards Angel and waved his hands at her.

"You forced me to do this!!" said Angel as she finally exploded with anger. She glared at her opponent's legs as he stepped on her Black Panther. All ten of her fingers on both hands began dotting the air rapidly with spots of green light.

Immediately, thirty dots were placed together in close proximity, and began floating in mid air.

She clasped her hands together and combined all the dots, forming them into one gigantic ball of light.

"Triple Speed!! Go!" she said as her fingers pointed towards the only unharmed Clouded Leopard left.

The green dots of light rapidly shot inside the Clouded Leopard's body.

Roar!

The black coloured Clouded Leopard howled loudly as every trace of it disappeared in a blink of an eye.

Bang!

Garen stretched his right hand outwards, barely blocking the Clouded Leopard's black claws that were pointed straight at him. Between the claws and his palm, a blue-black light has begun to pierce through, and caused shards of black light to fall towards the ground.

Crash!

A black shadow surrounded Garen and attacked him from all sides, its speed exceeding the limits of a normal living creature. With every attack, the green claws began to rip out shards of black rays from the blue-black light.

Garen began to have trouble keeping up when the Totem Light on his body began to violently break into smaller pieces. But moments later, it seemed like he had gotten use to the black Clouded Leopard's attack rhythm, elbow and fist movements, as well as the sweep of its legs, as the Clouded Leopard continuously rushed at him.

He decided to close his eyes and feel the Clouded Leopard's rapid attacks carefully, as it hit against his Totem Light agitatedly. While in a trance, he felt something suddenly, and realised that if he took the initiative and accepted the attacks, the consumption of Totem Light would be significantly less than if he moved or attacked.

If he merely stood in his spot, it would take two minutes before the Totem Light on his body was completely broken through. However, if he came forward on his own to accept the attack, it would take at least two hours for his Totem Light to be depleted.

Furthermore, he could vaguely feel that under this high pressured attack, his Totem Light was beginning to elicit a tightening sensation around his body

"This feeling..." he said as he shut his eyes and concentrated on this rare sensation.

Suddenly, everything on the outside stopped, and the Clouded Leopard's attacks faded away in a blink of an eye.

"Huh?"

Garen opened his eyes and looked at his surroundings, before noticing that the woman had escaped again.

Angel rode the weakened Clouded Leopard as it staggered through the forest.

"Die! Die! Die!" she cursed angrily. "The Triple Speed move... I've definitely just seen a ghost!! Even a mere totem user could withstand three minutes of the Triple Speed. That monster!!"

Three of her totems had been destroyed by that baldy, and now only one remained.

The other totems had cut off all communication from her. This also resulted in her Totem Light defense decreasing from Form two totem user's level, to a Form one totem user's level.

Once a totem was destroyed, its Totem Light would also fall apart instantly. She was only left with a layer of black totem light on her body.

For a totem to be killed by a totem user, this was definitely a strange phenomenon.

A totem user on their own was only capable of defense. Therefore, even if a human had undergone extra training, they could still never catch up to a totem that had already been equipped with extra moves, right? Besides that, a totem user's attacks were considered as physical attacks, and were not supposed to be able to inflict serious harm on totems, much less destroy them.

Angel's heart beat wildly inside her chest, she had been escaping the north for so many years and had encountered numerous powerful, prodigy Totem users during her killing sprees. However, she had never come across someone like this, who could match the speed and strength of an Improved Totem, and could even use his flesh body to kill a Silver Totem.

The time ticked away, and soon two hours had passed...

As she raced through, suddenly a yellow bonfire could be seen in front, where a caravan of people were sitting around two bonfires, cooking something to eat.

Beside the caravan, a young man and woman who looked like aristocrats were talking quietly to each other. Both of them had the totem user's special short storage stick hung around their waists.

Angel's face began to light up. There were so many people here, including Luminarists. According to the rules, the guy from earlier who worked for the War Guild was not allowed to start a fight where in a place with so many people.

Suddenly, she felt that something was wrong, and decided to climb back up unto the Clouded Leopard and turn tails.

Scratch...

The grass on the ground was torn up badly.

"Damn! You again!!" Angel's face was extremely haggard, as she looked at the young man strolling out from the forest. In her eyes, the gentle smile on his face seemed as frightening as the devil himself.

"What are you trying to do?!!" said Angel in an exasperated voice. She was mentally and physically tired. No matter where she escaped, this person would always find her again in a matter of time.

"You have lots of experience, I would like to learn from you," said Garen, smiling.

"Like to learn, my ass!!" said Angel, sounding as if she was about to cry.

Bang!!

Garen's fist landed against Angel's small abdomen, as he forcefully propped her against the tree trunk behind him. Next, he swung his left arm, causing the Clouded Leopard that charged towards him to be sent flying.

He straightened his palm, allowing Angel to clearly see the side of his hand.

"My hand has been laced with my totem's specialised poison and toxic powder. Therefore, I may not be able to hurt totems, but I can still catch up to them, and place the poison on their bodies. That's how I got rid of three of your Black Panthers. Obviously, I'm going to do the same thing to you."

Angel was held tightly down. Her pale face glared at Garen.

Cough cough...

As she was let down from the tree trunk, her face began to turn blue, as if the symptoms of the poison were already starting to show. She hurriedly took a little black bottle out and opened it, before pouring some medicine into her mouth.

Seconds later, her bluish complexion began to become slightly better.

Garen returned to his original spot.

"To punish you for your potty mouth," he said with a wave of his hand.

A grey shadow descended with a hissing noise before violently scratching the body of the last Clouded Leopard.

Immediately, Angel felt the last layer of Totem Light on her body fall apart. She looked at the deep gash in the Clouded Leopard's forehead as it turned into a pool of silver mercury, and an unknown sense of despair washed over her.

Bang!

Garen kicked up a stone, and it hit Angel's right arm precisely.

A soft cracking sound could be heard. It was the sound of bones breaking. Angel let out a low moan as she held her right arm and crouched down.

Garen did not move again. He truly wanted to learn something from this woman.

From the acceleration tactic in the beginning, to the poison curing tactic, and finally to Triple Speed and Shared Vision.

This woman had grasped at least four different types of impressive tactics. Furthermore, out of all the totem users he had met, she was probably the strongest, aside from Goth.

"Don't worry, I'm completely useless at tactics. I think that the tactics you use are extremely practical, and much better than the ones used by other totem users. That's why I'm hoping that you'll teach me," said Garen earnestly.

"You should have said so earlier..." said Angel as she leaned against the tree trunk and sat down, her emotions running wild. This was the first time she had encountered a totem user who could suppress her speed. She was currently facing what the totems users who fought against her in the past went through.

"Only when a person is in a state of serious danger, will they unleash their true potential. This is what I've believed all this while," said Garen as he walked over slowly. He moved his right arm and deflected the Black Panther that had snuck up behind him.

This Black Panther had been hiding all along, and was the fifth Black Panther in the pack. It rolled on the ground after being hit, and crashed into a tree trunk violently. The strange thing was that after it got hit, the supposedly unharmed Black Panther began to howl in pain, and after tumbling a few times on the ground, began to stand up with much difficulty, looking as if it was unnaturally weak.

Angel backtracked, and with moved a step backwards each time her opponent came closer. She noticed that on the surface of Garen's Totem Light, there was a light layer of glowing blue dust, and within that layer hid pools of sticky green liquid. Apparently it was the poison and toxic dust that her opponent had spoken about earlier.

"I'll give you all the tactics you want!! I stole all of them!" Frantically, she took out all the little scrolls that she had kept on herself and threw them at Garen.

"And how would I know that all these are authentic?" said Garen as he shook his head. "You still have substitute totems on you, right? Just take them all out."

"You want this too?" Angel swallowed her saliva and stared at Garen. Without saying anything else, she removed the little purse from her waist quickly, and threw it on the ground. "These are all of my assets that I have on hand. I have savings of up to twenty million stored in one of the Kovitan Empire's banks. As long as you swear to let me go, I will give you the password for all this money."

"Twenty million..." Garen's heart began to falter. This sum of money would be enough for him to do a lot of things. However, he was now worried that he had run out of time...

He stared at Angel who stood before him, and his heart wavered on whether or not to kill her.

"I still have three sets of totem orders at the Rafelia Workshop. The money has been paid in full, and as long as you promise to let me go, I'll tell you the password to collect my orders! Or I could take you there to get them too!" Angel continued to sweeten the deal. She could tell that her opponent was hesitating.

"You have so many totems, and their Appraisal is definitely of the highest rank, but why have you not evolved even one of them into Form two?" Garen opened his mouth and asked suddenly.

Angel did not expect him to ask this question, and a confused look appeared on her face immediately. "I..."

"Have you heard of the Code of Elya?" Garen continued to ask.

"Code of Elya?" Angel looked dumbfounded. She stared at the man in front of her, her mind racing uncontrollably. "I've killed too many people already..."

Chapter 287: Chaos 1

"It's alright; the favor can be returned soon." Garen grinned, seemingly able to understand Angel's heart. "Being someone who controls four totems, with no lack of money, how can you not even have evolve one to second form? No, you actually can control five?"

As he abruptly lifted his arms, a blue ray of light emitted from behind his back, consolidating on his finger tips to become a blue butterfly the size of a basin. The butterfly steadily flapped its wings, glowing in blue fluorescence.

"You!!!!" Angel was finally moved completely. She looked cautiously at Garen, dumbfounded by the scene in front of her eyes. Including the previously summoned short-tailed croc and the three hawks, together with the neon butterfly, the person in front of her was also someone who could control five totems!

"This world is always unfair." Garen spoke faintly, "Geniuses like us have talent and wealth. But lacking inherited knowledge, there is no way for us to progress. While those mediocre, useless aristocrats can have it easy. With whole sets of evolution theories, there is no need for them to go around working and laboring for others."

Angel stayed silent, but there was solemnness in her expression. What Garen said was spot on. Being born in a humble family, excluded in the association, without money and resources, she had to depend on herself for her own development. It was through hard work and labor that brought her to where she is today.

Seeing Garen, who could also control five totems standing in front of her, she instantly developed a strong sense of resonance.

"We are alike. Why should those low-aptitude trash get to enjoy everything without any effort? We are far better than them, yet have to laboriously struggle for what we have. Do you know how much effort I had to put in to be at the level I am today?" Garen roared defiantly. He was so into the act that it nearly warmed his heart.

Being an impulsive person, Angel clenched her fists tightly. As she heard Garen's words, she remembered the humiliation and discrimination that she went through all these years.

"What is your plan?" She asked with a glimpse of hoarseness in her voice.

"Join me. Your appraisal is the best I've seen. Once you have a complete set of evolution theory, you would be able to step into the realm of a second form totem master. We have the same objective." Garen said sincerely.

"Do you think I'll believe you?" Angel frigidly asked. "Sooner or later, I myself would be able to obtain the knowledge of cultivating a second form totem."

"Is that possible? Without basics, without a complete set of theories, and requiring special materials on top of that, do you really believe you can figure out second form evolution yourself? Perhaps it is possible. But how long would it take you? Two years? Five years? Ten? You are a murderer hunted by the Royal Alliance of Luminarists, not an innocent genius."

Garen was undoubtedly intending to gather some underlings for the next step of his scheme. In the upcoming chaos, individual ability will seem more and more insignificant, unless someone was with remarkable ability. However, he evidently knew that he was currently not at that level.

To elevate himself in the shortest time, the best way was to find a battle-tested veteran to understand the ins and outs of a totem user battle. At the same time, a group of helpers would surely increase the efficiency of hunting.

Moreover, regarding the war guild, Garen roughly knew a thing or two. In a war guild, with the existence of war chain and war hall, it could create a secure leader follower relationship.

Not to mention, dealing with the entire Obscuro Society on his own would be an impossible task.

Looking at Angel, he knew that although she looked innocent and impulsive, she was a ruthless girl. However, she possessed a strong understanding of tactics, and had immense potential as a totem user.

"What now? Have you made up your mind?" Garen calmly took a glance at the burning campfire behind him. "Do you plan to continue being hunted for the rest of your life? This time it was merely first form totem users, but it might not be that simple the next time. Rather than being hopelessly hunted, you might as well join my crusade. Let's hunt other totem users together. You can repay your sins, while I have my own desires."

Angel crouched down. "My enemies are not just first form totem users. Are you sure you want get yourself into trouble?" She spoke harshly.

"It's alright, I'm never afraid of problems." Garen snickered, "Essentially, my problems far surpass yours"

Angel bowed her head quietly. Garen wasn't anxious, instead he patiently waited for her reply.

"According to the Elya Code, any convict can join the War Guild for a shot at redeeming himself. For every man killed, the same number of criminals have to be killed, as redemption. For the totem users that were hunting you, most likely it would have been because of this rule. Of course the premise would be someone has to refer you." Garen grinned, "This is nothing big to me. With my high mission completion rate, entering the war guild is a piece of cake. Once I'm in, I could refer you. That's what many convicts do, relying on their comrades' referrals to redeem their sins."

Angel closed her eyes. Her core totem had been obliterated, the three supporting totems had been destroyed, even the last summoned Black Panther was paralyzed by poison. It was evident that she was at an absolute disadvantage. Giving such an offer in this situation definitely showed sincerity.

Truly, as someone constantly being hunted, cooperating with him would be far more prospective.

"How could you be sure that I wouldn't abandoned you after I'm free from danger?" She didn't believe anyone would trust an enemy without a reason.

Garen walked towards a towering tree and leaned on the trunk.

"We are the same kind of people. Joining another group might put you back in the same spot as you were. Equality will only happen with like-minded people. I plan to gather people like us, combining our strengths. The strongest among us will become the leader. But it's still too early to say these things. This ideology sounds similar to Phantom Light. Saying less would be better."

Angel fixed her eyes on Garen, gently nodded her head after some time.

"I promise you. With the war guild's war chain and war hall, we will benefit together, share information with each other and reach a certain level of cooperation."

"Excellent. You are my first comrade." Garen extended his arm to pull her onto her feet. "Once I return I will apply to the war guild. To buy a war chain costs at least five million Rumbs, and that would be of the lowest grade. If we hunt together, should be able to earn it in a short time."

Angel nodded. She understood that cooperating with the man in front of her was the best path she could take.

The War Chain was a fixed, permanent solidifying tactic.

It was like a long chain, connecting the core totems of everyone participating together. Anyone who wanted to leave the chain would have to pay the price of losing their core totem. To a totem user, it was indeed a severe punishment. The higher the level of the totem user, the more painful it was to him. Totem users commonly devoted a lifetime of effort into their core totems.

Besides maintaining the stability of the alliance, the war chain brought other benefits.

A war chain was like a special totem, where it could be cultivated, and strengthened by embedding external components.

Angel pondered for a moment, and then whispered. "If a war chain without any additional abilities already costs five million, wouldn't one with some abilities cost billions?"

Garen nodded. "After all, the abilities of the war chain perpetually affects every member. I haven't seen other totems, but in Iron Tank City guild there is a chain with abilities called the Chain of Healing, which benefits the members. Any injuries sustained by all totem users in the chain would activate the minor healing abilities in the chain. The power of the tactic would then heal the injured totem user." He explained.

"Of course, we can only start from scratch. Once we obtain sufficient solidifying tactics, then the effectiveness of the war chain would be heightened."

"Easier said than done." Angel shook her head without saying much.

"The war hall instead is a platform of sharing evolution knowledge. We can transfer all the knowledge we loot, and this special totem allows equal exchange of knowledge. Of course, the knowledge learned by yourself can be included as well. Whether it is the exchange of knowledge, exchange of resources or using it increasing the effectiveness of the chain, all of these can be done through the war hall.

However, it might take a long time for us to reach this stage." Garen lightheartedly explained. He could see that Angel wasn't very familiar with the war guild structure.

Sure enough, Angel's eyes brightened up with every word she heard. "Why are the guilds here much weaker than the ones in the North? Each one of them was swift and could easily track me. It doesn't matter how far I left them behind, they would be able to catch up"

"There is a possibility that their war chain has a tracing ability. Compared to the Iron Tank City Guild, they are more aggressive and their chains have more varied effects. It is very normal." Garen nodded. "That's it, it's time to go. Next, I would go back to take up missions. Then I would inform, include you on the mission list, and apply to suspend the missions that hunt for you. As we collaborate to complete missions, our efficiency should be pretty decent.

Angel nodded.

As he returned to complete the formalities, Garen easily obtained the lowest level member certification, called Greyhawk. He was named after the grey hawk totem on his shoulder.

Through Garen, Angel paid a million Rumb's bail, as proof that her kill-orders were suspended.

This amount of money could only buy her two days time, and Angel would be not be allowed to leave the boundaries of Iron Tank City. It would automatically lapse if she broke the rules. They had to complete at least one hunting mission in two days.

As for the two special totems in the war guild and war hall, the cost of tens of millions was not something they could afford at this stage.

The sky was overcast.

Dense, grey clouds clumped together, tarring the sky. Droplets of rain began to fall and they looked like transparent thin lines in the wind.

On the vast green plains, a squadron of caravans was travelling leisurely on the carriageway, heading towards White Stream City.

Majority of the caravans were grey and yellow, while on some of the goods had white, coarse cloth as shading.

In the middle of the squadron, a double-black-horsed carriage slowed down. The side window of the splendid carriage swung open, exposing the faces of two young, fair aristocratic girls.

One of them inquisitively fixated on the goods on the middle carriage.

"Is this the Palas Caravan? Lala." The young girl asked her companion.

"It should be, I think I've seen the emblem." The girl named Lala seemed disinterested. She held her chin with one of her hands, staring at fleeting horse hooves, appearing to be in a state of trance.

"Lala, Lala?" Her companion, Vecil's voice seemed to be from afar.

"So boring..." Lala sighed in her heart, halfhearted replying her companion. Vecil was always bubbly and full of energy, never running out of things to say.

Lala vacantly stared at rain droplets falling on the caravan.

She was soon going to White Stream City to continue her legal education. Although she had no interest in the law, she had no reasons to decline.

This is the society she was in, being born, then study, work, get married, growing old and eventually death. Day in day out, year in year out.

The industrial revolution has begun, and everything was booming. New ideas and gadgets were popping out in the market everyday. The world was like a seedling, continuously growing and developing without a set direction.

Lala signed in her heart again. She was turning 18 this year, the year she comes of age. But looking at her same-aged playmates, they seemed extremely immature. She likened them to parameciums, lowly and ignorant.

"Ignorance is bliss..." Lala breathed a sigh of relief. Very quickly, Vecil's voice was ringing in her ears again.

"I heard Uncle Cornell's son is being enlisted in the military. I wonder how is it like?" The thought lingered in Vecil's mind. "Some time ago, Cornell Jr invited you for a horse ride. Why didn't you go? It was so obvious he wanted to confess to you before he left. "

"Aunt wouldn't allow." Lala calmly stared out of the window. "Moreover, I do not want to think about these at this young age."

Chapter 288: Chaos 2

"My God, Lala you're already 18! You could have a kid at the age of 18 in many places! Still too young?" Vecil made a fuss. "Maybe instead of Aunt Vera not allowing, she already has someone for you."

"That is not something i can accept." Lala frowned. "That is why i chose to go to White Stream City to study law. Perhaps becoming an imperial lawyer is not a bad option." At least i can make my own decisions this way. She commented in her heart.

"I really envy you. It's a pity I do not have talents like yours..." Vecil groaned. Suddenly, there was a loud commotion coming from the forepart of the squadron.

"What happened?" "Don't know?"

"It looks like some people are blocking the road ahead."

A group of men instantly came down from the caravan to investigate. The women and children beside the caravan looked ahead, murmuring among each other to guess what happened.

Finally, a sense of interest stirred up in Lala's heart. "Wesley, what happened up front?" She roared at her coachman.

"Thousand apologies my lady, there are some people blocking the road, looks like we have to wait for a while." The voice of the elderly coachman sounded.

As the carriage continued to moved forward, in a brief moment, Lala could see the episode upfront.

Right in front of the squadron, on the greyish-white carriageway, there was a young man and a young girl sitting on the rocks and the roadside. They stood up and directly blocked off the squadron.

Both of them were dressed in long, grey robes, covering their whole body. The man was bald without an ounce of hair. His eyebrowless face left a bone-chilling impression on others.

The girl tied her gorgeous blonde hair into a ponytail, and had a good figure. There was a glimpse of coldness in her pretty face. She followed closely behind the guy, locking her eyes on the caravan squadron. In her eyes, the over hundred people in the squadron were like livestock that were waiting to be slaughtered.

Seemingly noticing someone was peering at her, the girl switched her glare and caught Lala's line of sight.

In that instance, a cold shiver ran down Lala's spine. She fervently retracted her head, hiding herself in the carriage. She could feel droplets of cold sweat as she swept her fingers over her forehead.

In the split second their eyes met, she could feel an intense murder intent deep down in her counterpart's soul.

"What's wrong?" Garen gave Angel who was behind him a short glance.

"Nothing much." Angel shook her head. "What do you plan to do? With so many people present, war prison cannot be used. It is certain that the three totem users are hiding among these commoners, using war jail as a cover to escape Iron Tank City."

Garen laughed.

The crisp sound of hooves in the vicinity caught Garen's attention as he looked towards the grass plains. A white-robed girl riding a beautiful white stallion was strolling on the plains, as if she so happened to bump into them. From the horseback, the girl ignorantly looked towards them, expressing curiosity on the happenings.

He returned his gaze towards the caravan.

"Since last night, how many have we killed?" He murmured to Angel.

"Maybe three..." Angel said with hesitation. "I can't really remember."

"Forget it, lets go." Garen rushed forward, throwing out a black coin.

"Hey!" Angel was stunned. "Are you insane, there are so many people here!"

Cheehh!!!

As the coin landed on the ground, it emitted a transparent ripple which expanded instantaneously. It swallowed the whole caravan and everything within a hundred metre radius into the cocoon, forming a enormous dome-shaped cage.

"Soon we do not have to consider this anymore." Garen smirked, seeing three grey-robed figures rushing out from the flank of the caravan squadron. He pointed to the front with his right hand.

Whizzzz!!!

A few grey blurs shot out of his back continuously, heading directly to the three figures.

Angel dashed forward, pointing vigorously. Thirty luminous green dots instantly formed out of thin air.

"Three times speed!"

The thirty dots converged into one, abruptly turning into a ray of green light, blasting at the black panther leaping out from behind her.

Whizzzz!

The black panther became a black line in the blink of an eye, rushing towards the three figures.

The black blur overtook the grey blurs, throwing one of the figures onto the ground.

"No!!!"

The three grey blurs formed three grey hawks, swooping down to capture the black python of the fallen figure. Strangely, after the python struggled for a brief moment, it speedily came to a halt, then stiffly hanging on the sharp claws of the hawks. The three grey hawks pierced at the python with their beaks, forming three bowl sized-wounds. Eventually, the python became a pile of silver liquid, seeping into the ground.

As the python was obliterated, the black panther went right for the throat of the man on the ground. Within a split second, there was blood splattered all over the ground.

The other two opponents turned pale when they saw the scene. They fell onto the ground and tried to scramble back.

"No...No!!! You cannot do this! The war guild has rules and there are so many commoners here! So many humans!" The girl on the left sobbed.

The guy on the right shivered as he tried to draw up an unknown tactic, but because of overwhelming fear, he failed after a few tries. Beads of cold sweat formed all over his face, eventually dripping from his chin.

"Weakling." Garren shook his head. He walk forward and grabbed the man by his collar. "A brat who just entered first form. Would catching him alive reap better rewards?"

"Why not think how to settle the matter at hand?" Angel pouted as she headed towards the carriage.

Garen looked at the caravan squadron.

Every merchant from the caravan were silent and the mouths of the kids were clutched to stop them from uttering any noise. The men held various kinds of weapons in their hands, while the women and children shut the curtains tightly as they retreated into their carriages. Around ten mercenaries nervously looked at each other as they drew their swords.

To them, looking at Garen and Angel was like looking at monsters.

Garen ignored them and lifted his head.

Whooshhh....

Suddenly, a massive flock of blue birds flew towards them from the south.

The blue birds were like a bunch of pimples and their reflection appeared as large black spots onto the ground. The sound of their chirps continued to ring in the vicinity.

"It's here... Finally..." Garen mildly breathed a breath of relief.

His heart skipped a beat.

A grey hawk darted up to catch one of the blue birds with its beak. Then it swooped down and landed on Garen's shoulder.

Garen took the blue bird from the grey hawk's beak, retrieved the note strapped to its leg and gently opened it.

"Emergency from the south! Agac City requesting for assistance!"

There was a stain of blood on the sides of the note.

"We have to go." Garen whispered. He lifted his hands, and all three grey hawks took flight, circling on the top of his head.

Unknowingly, one of the hawks picked up the black coin and held it in his beak.

"What should we do with these two?" Angel gave the two paralyzed totem users a glance. Their totems, a black wolf and a white hawk, was swiftly annihilated by the black panther in the fight.

Garen didn't utter much, instead gave them a light kick on their thighs.

As a tremendous force instantly entered their chest, their heads snapped and blood started flowing out from their mouths, dying a quiet death.

"Let's go."

"Garen looked at the attribute pane on the far bottom his vision, the potential bar has finally recovered to 15 points. He was initially left with only 13 potential points after using them up on the howling wererabbit. But now with Angel as his aid, he no longer has to do much. Angel was the one dealing with enemy totem users, while he only had to deal the final blow.

Without lifting a finger, three totem users were killed in one night. Including this three, it would bring the total to six.

The potential points used on the wererabbit have been instantly recovered.

This time he returned, it would be the opportune time to try evolving the giant lizards. Garen was eager to see their evolved form.

"What are these blue messenger birds up to?" Angel had a gut feeling that something was wrong.

"Those are all distress messages. Most probably the southern kingdoms have fallen completely." Garen continued to withdraw the war prison without looking back.

"That's impossible! There are thousands of second form totem users under Ender Kingdom's General Veron. All of them are elites!" Angel was struck with disbelief.

Meanwhile, Garen had already strutted to the front of the caravan squadron.

"We... We can afford to pay ransom!!" Their leader, a plump man pleaded with a shaky voice. "Do not kill us! Please..." He knelt on the ground.

"Both of you are hunters. The war guild does not allow the usage of the war prison amongst humans." A white-haired elder stood out among the crowd and spoke softly. He evidently knew a thing or two about the war guild.

"Laws are set by men. But they are no longer of use." Garen shrugged. "Heed my advice. Return to Iron Tank City instead of heading to White Stream City. Otherwise, there will be far worse things in store for you."

He was warning them out of kindness. The Silver Totem army of the Obscuro Society would be arriving any minute. As swarms of Silver Totem flood in, running into them in the open would be a nightmare. If that happened, it would mean certain death for these commoners as even Garen himself wouldn't dream of staying alive. Only a sturdy city would have the capacity to defend.

Among these Silver Totems were all kinds of strange creatures, like a rare creature exhibition. It was indeed a horrifying sight. These creatures, with high contamination abilities were the result of the Obscuro Society's unsuccessful breeding. On top of that, they were empowered by the Phantom Light, which amplified their ability by many fold.

"Let's go." As he spoke, Angel had chopped off the heads of the three convicts, wrapping them with some cloth.

Two of them, one after the other, hurried towards Iron Tank City.

The people in the squadron could finally breathe a sigh of relief. Most of them were baffled, and ignored Garen's advice. A minority of them who could see that Garen was speaking the truth, were willing to follow his words and leave.

"Go! Wesley, let's turn back!" Lala, sitting in her carriage, was flushed with in inexplicable excitement and passion. There was finally some spark in her boring life. She believed her judgment, as she always did.

The bald man didn't have a trace of lying. She believed his words.

"My lady..."The elderly carriageman hesitated.

"Turn around!" Lala raised her voice.

"Okay." Wesley helplessly agreed, slowly leaving the carriageway, making a turn on the grass plains.

"Lala are you mad? Do you really believe a word the weirdo said?" Vecil finally dared to speak again. She covered her head, hid at the bottom of the carriage, afraid that she would be noticed by others. As she lifted her head, her voice was as soft as mosquitoes.

"I believe him, and the big sea of blue messenger birds." Lala nodded solemnly.

Suddenly, the sound of crisp horse hooves could be heard outside the carriage.

Lala pulled open the curtain and looked out. She saw the white-robed young girl on the white horse following the baldy and the ponytailed girl in hot pursuit.

Lala could see from the young girl's face that they had the same adventurous expression.

"Hurry up! Let's follow the two people upfront!" Lala yelled.

Chapter 289: The Outbreak of War 1

The sky was awash with shades of grey. Large clouds moved rapidly to form clusters, then dissipating into thin air.

The earth trembled. On the green, grassy plains, numerous black cysts surfaced, as if they were tumors of the earth. They were like the beating of a heart, like actual organs.

Whooshhh...

A few white-golden giant hawks soared across the sky, carrying silver armor-laden riders on their backs. The riders who wielded huge, long spears, were stained with dried blood all over their body.

A grey apex hawk spread its wings, flying below one of giant hawks.

There was a faint silver glow in the grey hawk's vision, as it clearly surveyed everything that was happening below.

On the plains below, each one of the black cysts started to squirm. They had four mouths full of sharp teeth located at their sides. As their mouths continuously opened and shut, they spat out full-black, single-horned creatures.

The creatures were built like giant crouching lizards, each with a single black fang-like horn on their foreheads, accompanied with a pair of humongous black wings.

They spread their wings, emitting peculiar noises. Shaking off the mucous on their bodies, they leapt into the air, heading right at the white-golden hawks.

The grey hawk silently flew away, diving towards the ground below.

As it flew over a dark green forest, observing from above, it could see a huge number of wild beasts battling with the giant, lizard-like abominations. The roars of the wolves and bears could be heard as they were torn apart by the giant lizards.

Crossing the forest, the grey hawk let out a light cry, gently flew towards the grey carriageway located at the other side of the forest.

On the carriageway, a bunch of grey-robed riders were dashing forward on their horses. A bald male in the front lifted up his hand, allowing the grey hawk to swoop down from the sky, landing on his arm.

Gah!!!

A series of weird noises could be heard in the distance, like the howling of beasts before their demise.

"It's like a crow, but also like a bat. Disgusting indeed" The grey-robed girl behind the baldy frowned as she spoke. "Garen, are we returning to the war guild immediately?"

The baldy shook his head.

"There's no time. We absolutely should not return now to avoid being recruited as guards to defend the city, which would limit our freedom. Let's go to my place. The guards won't be able to defend for long."

"How about the three brats behind us?" Angel turned her head to look at the girl on the white horse, and the luxurious carriage following closely behind. The curtains swayed open to reveal the faces of two young girls.

"Let them be. We do not have the responsibility to protect them." Garen muttered.

Their two black stallions galloped swiftly on the path, but the white horse and horse carriage did not fall behind, easily keeping up with them.

Woo!!!

The lengthy cry sound a horn could be heard in the distance.

Garen's expression changed slightly. He slowed down abruptly and looked far ahead.

"It's the city's horn! Let's go this way!"

He tugged tightly at the reins and headed to the right. Angel followed closely, but the girl on the white horse continued to stare into the distance, in the direction of the sound of the horn. Worry and doubt was evident in her expression.

Garen continued riding, disregarding the two parties behind him. He bent his body to lie on the back of his horse, being extra vigilant towards his surroundings.

Suddenly, a glimpse of darkness flashed over his head. A black shadow passed him, landing instantly on the path ahead of him.

Bang!!!

A three-metre long, unihorn lizard landed on the ground, flapping its bat-like wings. He roared at Garen, emitting air flow from its flared nostrils.

The startled horses raised their front hooves in fear, giving off sharp cries.

"What kind of abomination is this!!?" Angel tried her best to stable the horses. She made a futile attempt by applying pressure on the horse's belly, while uttering comfort sounds.

Before the voices came to a stop, Garen sprung into action. He leapt from the horseback into the air, right at the giant lizard.

His right hand instantly transformed into a reddish, translucent texture. It looked like slow motion, but in fact he pressed his palm onto the lizard's forehead in light-speed.

Bang!

Garen somersaulted onto the back of his horse.

"Move!" He tugged on the reins, passed the lizard and continued forward.

Angel hesitated for a moment, but continued to keep up. The white horse and horse carriage initially had some doubts, but were too afraid to stay away from Garen and Angel. They passed the lizard and hurried forward.

The unihorn lizard lay still in the middle of the road, its whole body enveloped with hints of blue. Evidently, it had been paralyzed by poison.

Suburbs, At the edge of the City

At a deserted courtyard in the district, a few unihorn lizards swept across the sky. They headed towards the location with the most people, leaving dark shadows on the ground wherever they went.

A handful of riders scurried into the courtyard. They gently slowed down, comforting the frightened horses.

The riders quickly stopped at a premise in the middle of the courtyard.

The bald man who was leading got down from his horse.

"Give me a moment Angel, let me grab something. Then we can clean up the unihorn lizards in the vicinity."

"I'll wait for you outside." Angel nodded, rewearing two black rings. These two rings represented two new black panthers, different from the ones that were destroyed by Garen. These two panthers were her back ups.

Garen took a glance at the girl in the white horse and the carriage who have just arrived.

The white-robed girl came down from her horse and approached the two girls from the carriage. They had a combination of hopelessness, doubt, fear and worry written on their faces. Only the elderly carriageman was standing by their side, comforting them.

"Angel, let them enter the city by themselves. I have no energy to protect them."

"Leave it to me. I will talk to them." Angel lightly nodded.

Garen dipped his head, turned his back and entered his yard.

He opened the door with a key. Everything seemed safe and sound, just like it was when he left. Three blue-back giant lizards lazily crouched on the counter, trying to pose as statues.

Garen shut the door and heaved a sigh of relief.

"I must strengthen myself as soon as possible."

He stood at the door, watching the three blue-back lizards leisurely crawling towards him.

"Let's try. I'm going to give evolving these creatures a shot." He was distinct from other totem users. The rest of them relied on external stimuli to evolve their totems, while he could use his potential points, which is a unique ability, to evolve his totems.

He wasn't aware of the difference between these two evolution methods. But his gut told him there would a substantial difference between evolving with potential points and the usual methods.

He examined the attribute pane just below his vision.

The short-tailed croc and blue-back lizards both needed 3 potential points to evolve. The only difference was that the blue-back lizards had a higher probability than the short-tailed croc.

He had 15 potential points left.

"As I need something that can be of use right away, I shall start with the short-tailed croc."

He looked at the skill pane, finding the short-tailed croc's icon among a myriad of other totem icons.

"Short-tailed Croc; First Form: live totem, can be upgraded. Success Rate: 54% (The weaker the totem, the higher the probability of success). Potential Points Consumption: 300%.

Abilities: Bite, Guise."

"54%, still acceptable." Garen's heart skipped a beat as a black-armored crocodile crawled out from his bedroom. At one glance, it might be mistaken as a long, black plank.

His gaze fixated on the short-tailed croc for around three seconds.

At that instant, the white-tailed croc's icon turned blurry, turning into a ball of red light. Consequently, the accompanying explanation signs blurred out as well.

For the attribute pane, the potential points dropped from 1522%, all the way down to 1222%.

As the adjustment of the potential points took place, the short-tailed croc started having shivers all over his body.

His figure expanded rapidly, growing longer and bigger.

From two to three metres, it grew to exceeding five metres, almost filling up the whole hall on the first floor.

As the crocodile's hide on its back grew dark and darker, a line of black, sharp spikes started forming in the middle.

The giant crocodile opened its jaw, emitting a horrible stench.

Within ten seconds, its size grew from two, three metres to exceeding five metres. Other than that, there weren't much changes to its appearance.

All of a sudden, Garen noticed something peculiar. The giant crocodile opened its big jaw, as if it wanted to show him something.

He peered into the crocodile's mouth. It startled him when he saw a red, snake-like tongue. On the top of the tongue was a needle-like, meaty organ.

"What is this?"

Garen muttered to himself. He looked straight at the skill pane where the totem icons were located.

"Deep Swamp Croc; Evolved form of Short-tailed Croc, Second form live totem, can be upgraded.
Success Rate: 24%. Potential Points Consumption: 500%"

Abilities: Explosive Strike, Iron Hide, Parasitism."

"Parasitism?" Garen examined the final ability. At his gaze, an explanation sign appeared behind it.

"Parasitism: The deep swamp crocs in the olden days contained a huge amount of various parasite larvae in their body. Once an enemy is bitten, the larvae can be injected into its body. In a short span of time, the enemy will experience excruciating torture, which will eventually lead to death. After dying, a swamp parasite will emerge from the corpse to fight for the crocs. Note: A deep swamp croc can only cultivate three parasites per day."

Garen was delighted. The parasite was like buying one for three. Just by looking at its size, a croc evolving to this stage, is an immensely strong presence. Without considering the totem light, the physique of the totem creatures was a huge factor in battles. The physique determines strength and speed, and even lethality.

Of course this is without considering the totems special abilities. A good example would be the most sought after black wolf. After evolving into its second form - the fire wolf, it could generate vigorous, scorching flames.

Chapter 290: The Outbreak of War 2

The deep swamp croc swayed its tail gently, dragged its heavy body across the floor quietly, and quickly crawled out from an open window. Garen was dumbfounded by the fact that it did not make any noise.

He grabbed his necessities, and some things that might be of use, stuffed them into the leather bag he brought, then hid it under the bed. Then, he made his way out of the house.

On the path outside, Angel crouched beside the corpse of a unihorn lizard, attentively examining the abomination.

The lizard, who wasn't there when Garen entered the house, was obviously destroyed by her.

"What's up? What's its strength like?" Garen went over and crouched beside her.

"Troublesome." Angel said with a solemn expression. "I initially thought it's a common, mutated creature. But in fact, it had totem light. If I didn't use accelerate, I'm not that sure if my panther could handle it. It should be at the level of an elite first form totem."

"Be careful." Garen patted her shoulder. He valued this companion who worked well with him.

He glanced at the trembling horse carriage on the other side. The three girls seemed like they wanted to come closer, but it was evident that they were a little afraid.

"Sir." The elderly carriage man carefully walked over and stood in front of Garen with some hesitation. "I guess both of you should be completing some form of mission? I'm wondering whether we could temporarily hire you to send us into the city. We can pay you some wages!"

"Wage? How much can you pay?" Garen muttered. He didn't think they could offer much. When totem users speak about money, usually tens of thousands of Rumbs. To a normal human, it would already be their lifetime savings.

"A hundred thousand!" The elderly carriage man blurted out a figure. "A hundred thousand Rumbs!"

"Barely acceptable." Garen nodded. "Angel, send them into the city. Then meet me at the war guild." He looked at a silver pocket-watch that he had just retrieved from his pocket. "It is 1.15pm now, let's meet after lunch at 4pm. Okay?"

Angel nodded and said: "No problem. A hundred thousand just for a trip is not a bad deal. Let's go ladies." She shouted at the three girls as she mounted her black stallion.

"I got to check on how my friend is doing." Garen casually mentioned. "There might be a possibility...." he suddenly grinned.

At the attribute pane at the bottom of his vision, there was a sudden jolt in potential points.

The potential points spiked from 1222% to 1287%, then quickly spiked again to 1356%. The two consecutive spikes surprised Garen.

It was the deep swamp croc! It suddenly came to his realization. He had just released the newly evolved croc to hunt the unihorn lizards. He did not expect the effects to take place so soon. Even more out of his expectation was that killing the unihorn lizards could lead to an increase in potential points.

From the figures, it was evident that the deep swamp croc was single handedly battling and defeating two unihorn lizards. That should be the reason for the two spikes.

After sending off Angel's party, Garen stood silently on the path, looking at his yard. Inside, the deep swamp croc was silently crawling past the fence into the yard. It was holding one of the lizards in his jaw, obviously as a snack and parasite for itself.

Garen noticed that there was a fresh, bleeding wound on the forelimbs of the deep swamp croc, seemingly sustained during the clash. Garen shuddered.

The deep swamp croc as a second form totem, could actually be harmed by two first form unihorn lizards.

"Now it's only a first form totem. There would certainly be stronger creatures in the nest that have not revealed themselves. No wonder the Obscuro Society dared to go against the whole world. With powerful bioweapons like that, they wouldn't have to worry about military strength.

He pondered for a moment, suddenly felt something and he turned to look at the yard across his own.

The yard of his blonde female neighbour was peaceful, except the window curtains which were swaying slightly. It was clear that someone was spying on him.

Garen was about to leave when the door from the yard opposite the street flung open.

"Sir Garen!" The blonde neighbour yelled. Her haggard and deeply trouble expression showed that she was struck with terror. A big, strong, young man followed behind her. As they had similar looks, it seemed that they could be twins.

"Sir Garen, can you help sending us into the city?" His neighbour looked frightened. She looked at Garen pitifully.

Gahhhh!!

An array of unihorn lizard cries could be heard in the distance.

Garen looked at his pocket watch and frowned. "It's easy to enter the city. But since we're neighbours, I want to warn you that the situation is very different now. The city might be worse off. If you are willing, stay in your own home. My baby is currently cleaning up the creatures in the vicinity. As the population here is small and sparse, it won't draw the creature's line of sight. Should be safe."

At that instance, she let out an expression of hopelessness and doubt.

"What do we now? When can the Royal Alliance drive away the creatures!" She was like most of the population, placing all their hope on the Royal Alliance. They viewed the current situation as a one off, incidental, regional turmoil.

Garen shook his head.

"I'm not sure. You decide yourself."

"Then we still want to enter the city." The girl muttered after hesitating.

"I'll give you both ten minutes. We will leave immediately after that." Garen directly responded.

General Veron's Third Battalion, Wiped Out.

Through the blue messenger birds, the news spread to hundreds of countries throughout the East Continent.

At the same instant, newspapers all over the world reported the news of unknown creatures attacking human cities. But soon, people would gradually not be able to purchase these papers..

The blue messenger birds started constantly falling from the sky. Other than the unihorn lizards, there were various flying creatures who occupying the sky, which was the channel of communication between cities.

Iron Tank City

War Guild Mission Hall

As Garen stepped into the hall, he saw injured people all over the hall. Some of them had even lost their limbs. Their pale faces indicated severe loss of blood.

"Garen, how are you unscathed?" A strong man with a single sheepy eye stood up astonishingly. "Right. You are considered one of the strongest in the first form mission hall." He immediately took a seat.

"Thomas? Aren't you alright as well?" Garen walked over and sat in front of the man. "The situation seems dire." He asked as he scanned the area around him.

"It's tough out there. Bounty is growing daily but nobody dares to accept jobs. The monsters are everywhere." One-eyed Thomas whispered.

At this time, from the reception room of the main hall, walked out a squad of brown-robed men and women. The leader was a burly man with short hair. There was a blood-reddish scar on his right cheek, looking like a savage.

The man held a silver helmet in his arms, quickly scanning through the rest of the people in the hall.

A white-haired elderly man holding a red staff followed behind. Closely after them were two perfect-figured women in black robes.

"It's the Galileo Squad. They should be taking up the two toughest missions." One-eyed Thomas stared at the party as he whispered to Garen.

He wasn't the only one. Everyone in the hall fixated their eyes on this party.

Garen was familiar with the Galileo Squad. Its leader, Galileo, was an elite second form totem users, while all the members were second form totem users. They even had a totem smith in their squad. With this elite line-up, they completed several challenging missions, gaining fame in Iron Tank City.

There were there strong squads in Iron Tank City which frequented the war guild for years. Only the ace of the Galileo Squad was a second form totem user, while the leaders of the other two squads had third form ultimate totems under their command.

The Galileo Squad left the hall, quickly disappearing on the path outside the door.

Garen retrieved his gaze, listening to Thomas' gentle words of adoration.

"If only I could be as strong as the Galileo Squad."

"You should forget it. Their most basic prerequisite is to have two second form totems." A bald, plump man laughed.

Garen and Thomas chatted for a moment. He was waiting for someone. After sending his female neighbour into the city, he directly headed here to check out the situation.

The situation was indeed dire. The war guild must have given up a fair bit to incentivize the top squads.

The first form mission hall was the most crowded area for a small town like the Iron Tank City. For the second form and third form halls, it was just furnishings. As a place where only a select elite could enter, there were simply no exchanges going on.

Soon, their shift ended. Garen stood up and walked towards the mission counter. He took out the previously completed mission list and handed it in.

"Completed once again? That fast?" The guy receiving the list was a sinister looking middle-aged man. He and Garen were familiar with each other as the last few mission lists were distributed by him.

"Bounties should have multiplied by a few fold recently, isn't it?" Garen asked softly.

"You are smart." The middle-aged man nodded. "All of them have multiplied, you are just in time. Also, the governor's mansion has just released a large batch of inactive totems. Would you like to have a look?" He spoke softly, with a sense of allurements in his voice. "There seems to be a fair amount of decent core totems."

"Is it specially distributed?" Garen raised his brow.

"Of course, besides us, the war guild, where else can you find such elite firepower? If we do not provide support, wouldn't we be just waiting for doom?" The middle-aged man answered surely.

"Is there a white dragonhawk?"

"Certainly. Although it is powerful, it's not cheap to train it."

"Show me the list."

Garen's heart skipped a beat. Although the white dragonhawk is strong, it also means it has been researched thoroughly, with many strategies to counter it.

He was different from other totem users. With the existence of potential points, he could rely on them for direct evolution, although the probability wasn't high. He could choose a less-researched, foundationally strong new totem as his final card.

Once the evolution succeeded, as no one would be familiar with the power of this new totem, it definitely would have a remarkable impact.