

## **Ocean Lord 191**

### *Chapter 191: Harvest of Trades, Arrival of Irona*

The entire trading event lasted for three days.

Every day, the deck was packed with a large number of players from King Kong Island, coming from all over the island to participate.

Among them, I\_Love\_Black\_Socks, who was engaged in ferry business, also made a fortune from this event.

Over the three days, she ferried thousands of players and collected thousands of boat tickets, instantly transforming from a pauper to a wealthy woman, smiling even in her sleep.

Meanwhile, it was unclear who leaked the news that Ji Chen spent nearly 100,000 gold coins on purchases on the first day of the event.

Another player, who personally experienced the transactions but preferred to remain anonymous, posted a picture of several boxes filled with gold coins, igniting even more excitement about the event.

In no time, the name “Islander” gained even more fame.

Previously, it was because of his powerful strength and formidable fleet, but now he was also renowned for his outrageous wealth.

“You guys say that the Islander spent 100,000 gold coins in a single day? That’s just insane! My total assets are only 1,000 gold coins, and he spent a hundred times more in just one day! The gap between people is just so huge.”

“At least you still have 1,000 gold coins. I only have a few dozen, struggling to make ends meet...”

“100,000 gold coins!!! I could never earn that much in my entire life. The Islander is truly incredible! Is there any chance he needs a follower? I’m willing to be his little brother! I’ll go to the ends of the earth to find him if he gives the word!!”

“Islander, I’m begging to be kept as your lover. I’m 1.7 meters tall, fair-skinned, long legs, and 36D. My white stockings are to die for! Please PM me-”

Such comments flooded the chat channel and forums, and Ji Chen’s private messages were about to explode.

When Ji Chen had just finished dealing with his affairs and opened the chat channel and forums with a puzzled expression, he saw this scene and couldn’t help but frown.

“These people are thinking of mooching off others instead of working hard. How shameless!”

Furthermore, apart from this, was he the type of individual who would keep a lover?

He must properly criticize these people who want something for nothing!

But he would first note down the name of the one with the 36D bust and long legs in white stockings...

Anyway.

The King Kong Island players who received this news had been waiting for these few days like desperate women in a secluded backyard, hoping that Ji Chen would purchase their items, and they could become overnight millionaires like those lucky few.

Seeing this, Ji Chen seized the opportunity to increase the intensity of his purchases, focusing on military recruitment camp cores, treasures, and building blueprints.

The number of marine unit types was estimated to be in the tens of millions, and Ji Chen's target of acquiring Naga Warriors, Murlocs, and several other main unit types were just a few inconspicuous ones among them. It was undoubtedly a challenging task to find specific ones from such a vast array of unit types.

Even if players possessed such unit types, the difficulty of acquiring the same type of military recruitment camp cores from each other was high due to geographical barriers and limited information flow.

However, thanks to the publicity of Ji Chen's rapidly growing fame and his unquestionable financial ability, quite a few players from King Kong Island came forward to sell these scattered military recruitment camp cores to him.

This approach proved to be much more efficient than him searching all over the place himself.

Of course, he didn't need to personally handle the purchase of these scattered military recruitment camp cores. Together with some regular building blueprints, I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings acted as his representative in the transactions.

At this moment, there was no one around him who was more suitable to negotiate with players.

Raymond had led a team to the Northern Continent, so he was not available.

Alice, as a Siren, was not familiar with human coin transactions, and Benbo, a Murloc, was naturally not suitable either.

As for Anina, it was needless to say, letting her engage in trade with cunning players might even lead to her revealing her underwear color unintentionally.

Having cooperated with I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings several times already and established a certain level of trust, Ji Chen found it natural to let her handle these matters.

He harbored little concern about her resorting to deceitful tactics, as he trusted that this astute woman wouldn't engage in actions that offered less while sacrificing more.

After three days of purchases, the harvest was quite abundant.

First, the military recruitment camp cores.

After acquiring eight military recruitment camp cores on the first day, he managed to buy another batch through the lavish spending.

With this new batch combined with the previous ones, he now possessed a total of nine Naga Warrior cores, nine River Murloc cores, and five Sea Pixie cores.

In addition to that, he also acquired four Lobster Rider cores and five

Self-Detonating Water Spider cores, which he purchased from l\_Love\_Black\_Sockings. In total, he had ten Lobster Rider cores and ten Self-Detonating Water Spider cores.

Upon returning to his territory, he could now construct dozens of recruitment camps all at once, recruiting hundreds of units with this batch of military recruitment camp cores.

A surge of strength!

In addition to the Amplifying Staff, Ji Chen also spent fifty thousand gold coins and twenty-five thousand gold coins respectively to acquire two other treasures.

The first one was a bracelet made of green crystal, intricately carved with distinct edges and a unique style. Intricate magical patterns were engraved on the inside, and strands of golden energy flowed within it, making it quite extraordinary..

*Chapter 192: Harvest of Trades, Arrival of Irona (2)*

[Shield Bracelet]

[Tier]: 3-star treasure

[Effect]: Generates an active or automatic shield around the wearer when facing powerful attacks or life-threatening situations, blocking both magic and physical attacks.

[Cooldown]: 6 hours

[Crafted by Samora Ville, the Master Alchemist of the Northern Continent's Orlan Kingdom]

I Samora Ville: No one understands alchemy better than me ]

The reason Ji Chen bought this bracelet was for Alice.

As a formidable mage, Alice's strength spoke for itself.

With songs like the "Song of Temptation" and the "Song of War,"<sup>11</sup> she was held in high regard.

Her apparent weaknesses, however, were her melee combat and relatively weak defense.

In short, her low health and defense left her vulnerable once enemies got close.

The bracelet served to fill this gap, providing enough reaction time when facing powerful opponents.

Its appearance, resembling a jade bracelet, looked great on Alice's fair wrist, complementing her elegance.

Upon receiving the bracelet, Alice's exquisite and radiant face showed a mix of surprise and joy, sending a few coquettish glances towards him.

The suggestive gaze hinted at certain intimate possibilities.

With this acquisition, Ji Chen felt that the 50,000 gold coins spent were truly worth it.

The other treasure he purchased was a treasure-level scimitar.

The blade gleamed with a chilling cold light, and its excellent handling and swing proved its extraordinary power.

[Northern Blade]

[Tier]: 2-star treasure

[Effect]: CD Increases sharpness by 50% 0 Greatly enhances armor-piercing ability 0 Increases durability by 30%

[A formidable weapon of the Black Iron Dwarves, boasting deadly killing capabilities]

I Looking for the Mountain Dwarves? What does that have to do with us Black Iron Dwarves?]

Ji Chen planned to give this scimitar to Sparrow.

As one of his pirate heroes, even though Sparrow was only a green elite-tier hero, having a reliable weapon was essential.

He believed that this scimitar would significantly enhance Sparrow's combat prowess.

As for the building blueprints, there were no high-tier blueprints like the Elemental Arrow Tower acquired on the first day. They were all lower-star blueprints, with the highest being three stars.

Among them were blueprints for various living facilities, functional buildings, and some ordinary defense structures like watchtowers and basic arrow towers.

Despite the variety, the total number of blueprints was quite substantial, reaching dozens.

After calculating the total expenses for these purchases, Ji Chen couldn't help but feel delighted.

All these items together cost approximately 290,000 gold coins, just a little short of the previous goal of 300,000 gold coins.

Just when Ji Chen thought he couldn't reach the small goal, things took a turn.

On the morning of the fourth day, Ji Chen stood by the shore bidding farewell to I\_LoveJBlack\_Sockings.

I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings looked reluctant.

"Big Boss Islander, are you leaving already? After spending so many days together, I find it hard to part with you."

Seeing her expression, Ji Chen couldn't help but respond with a touch of annoyance.

"Are you upset about me leaving or about the gold coins I gave you?"

I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings was exposed by his remark and couldn't keep up the act anymore, embarrassedly touching her head.

This time, Ji Chen's visit directly and indirectly brought her a profit of almost tens of thousands of gold coins, a considerable windfall.

If this happened a few more times, she would become a wealthy woman in no time.

Looking at the sky, Ji Chen realized that if he started heading back now, he would reach the New Moon Islands by the afternoon of the day after tomorrow.

All good things must come to an end. After staying on King Kong Island for almost a week and completing all the tasks, he had said what needed to be said. This trip had yielded substantial gains, and there was no reason to continue staying.

“It’s about time for me to leave. I hope that the next time we meet, you’ll become even stronger than you are now.”

Hearing this, I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings also became serious, nodding and saying, “I also hope that you, Big Boss Islander...”

“Enemy incoming!!!”<sup>1</sup>

Before she could finish her sentence, a sudden alert sounded from the other side of the territory, causing I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings’ expression to change.

At this moment, who would dare to attack her territory? It seemed impossible!

Ji Chen also furrowed his brows slightly. He hadn’t even left yet, and they dared to attack?

Soon, a group of soldiers hurriedly ran over, their expressions showing a hint of anxiety.

“What happened? Who are the enemies?”

The leading soldier looked somewhat puzzled and quickly reported, “Reporting, my lord, there is a large group of Half-Orcs approaching the territory, but it seems like they are not here to attack. They all appear to be weary and exhausted.” I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings was taken aback and asked in confusion, “Half-Orcs? Aren’t those burly, simple-minded beings that usually live deep in the forests? Why would they appear near the coast?”

“Is the one leading them a small female Half-Orc with a striking resemblance to a human on the outside?” Ji Chen asked.

The soldier was surprised and said instinctively, “How did you know?”

Ji Chen smiled; of course, he knew. As expected, it was Lady Irona and her group.

Following his instructions, a group of disheveled and downcast Half-Orcs were brought in front of him.

Among them was Lady Irona.

When Lady Irona saw Ji Chen, her face was filled with surprise and a sense of relief. However, as she noticed the ambiguous smile on Ji Chen’s face, a hint of embarrassment flashed across her own.

She couldn’t help but recall how arrogantly she had rejected his invitation a few days ago, and now she came back in such a pitiful state. The embarrassment overwhelmed her.

Taking a deep breath, Lady Irona knew this was not the time to dwell on such matters; there were more important things to attend to.

“Lord Ji Chen, 1...”

Seeing the embarrassment on the face of this female Half-Orc that didn’t quite resemble one, Ji Chen took the initiative to ease the tension and spoke in a gentle and comforting tone.

“Now that you and your companions are here in front of me, it means you have accepted my invitation.”

“Don’t worry; I hold no grudges. My previous promises still stand; there’s no need to fret.”

His soothing words helped Lady Trona’s complexion to relax, and she finally felt some relief.

She couldn’t help but admire Ji Chen’s generosity and tolerance. Having a lord with such magnanimity was worth her loyalty and allegiance.

“Your Excellency, I have one final question,” Lady Irona said.

“Go ahead,” Ji Chen replied.

“In your territory... the Crown of the Ocean, are there other races besides humans?” Lady Irona inquired.

Ji Chen pondered for a moment and understood the reason behind her question.

“Besides humans, there are Kobolds, Cave People, and Sea Creatures. The Crown of the Ocean is a land that embraces tolerance and greatness, capable of accommodating any race for survival and prosperity,” Ji Chen explained. “Even Half-Orcs can integrate into it without any barriers.”

As soon as Ji Chen’s answer was given, Lady Irona’s last concern vanished completely. She immediately showed a respectful expression and knelt to signify her allegiance.

“Your Excellency, we are willing to submit to you and become members of your domain...”

“We disagree!”

Suddenly, a discordant voice came from behind.

Lady Irona turned around with an expression of surprise and anger, rebuking, “Daro Tribe, we agreed that you would follow my decision, but what are you doing now!?”

A group of particularly strong Half-Orcs emerged from the crowd, displaying a domineering attitude.

Observing this, Ji Chen squinted, remaining silent as he watched their performance.

The leader of this group of Half-Orcs was nearly 2.5 meters tall, with a physique twice as sturdy as the others. Their exposed bodies were covered in various scars from blades and axes, some recent and others old, with fresh blood still oozing from some. Among them, many seemed to be recent additions to their collection of injuries.

This group of Half-Orcs exuded a strong and fierce aura, clearly a bunch of battle-hardened warriors who considered their scars a mark of honor.

The leader of the Half-Orcs arrived before Ji Chen with bloodshot bronze eyes filled with lingering killing intent and ferocity.

Ji Chen's mouth curled up slightly.

It seems that things have become quite interesting..

*Chapter 193: The Daro Tribe Submits*

"Daro leader, what are you doing!? Didn't we agree that the Toothwood Tribe would follow us and seek refuge under the Lord for a way to survive?"

"Could it be that the prestigious Daro Tribe is going back on its word today?"<sup>11</sup>

Lady Irona stood up, glaring at him.

Daro glanced at her, his worm-like eyebrows furrowing. "Irona, I know you are the smartest Half-Orc on King Kong Island, and I did promise you that before. But after I came here, my thoughts changed."

With that, Daro looked towards Ji Chen, a proud expression crossing his face, along with a hint of disdain and doubt. "The Daro Tribe only submits to the strong, but he doesn't look like a strong one at all. Such a thin and weak body, I could easily snap his arms and legs with just one hand. Tell me, can the honorable Daro Tribe bow to a weakling like him?"

"No!!!" The Half-Orcs behind Daro roared angrily, thumping their chests with clenched fists.

Lady Irona was speechless, realizing that to make this group of muscle-headed Half-Orcs truly submit, she would have to conquer them with her personal strength. But Lord Ji Chen...

Clearly, even Lady Irona had little hope in this regard. After all, she had only witnessed the strength of the young girl beside Ji Chen but had never seen him take action. It seemed that like her, he was not adept at combat and belonged to the strategist type.

Seeing Lady Irona at a loss for words, Daro felt triumphant. However, he suddenly noticed the strange expressions on the faces of the other humans present.

When I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings heard the burly Half-Orc say that the Big Boss Islander was weak, she couldn't hold back her feelings.

What kind of confidence did this Half-Orc have to dare to say such things?

If the Big Boss Islander was considered weak, then what did that make the rest of them?

Seeing that he couldn't convince Daro, Lady Irona could only apologize.

"Your Excellency, please don't mind what he said. The Half-Orc race highly reveres strength and does not prioritize intelligence. The Daro Tribe, in particular, selects its leader entirely based on strength, even naming the tribe after the leader. So..."

In other words, the leaders selected are usually muscle-headed dunces, just like Daro in front of them.

However, this Daro was not an ordinary Half-Orc; he was a hero.

[Daro (Hero)]

I Race: Half-Orc j

[Current Tier]: Blue Excellent-Tier

[Potential]: Blue Excellent-Tier

[Skills]: Half-Orc Bloodline (Blue Skill, increases stamina and wound recovery speed by 100%)

Rage (Blue Skill, increases movement speed and attack speed by 30%)

Skin Resistance (Blue Skill, increases skin defense by 30%)

Might (Blue Skill, increases strength by 30%)

[Unit Trait |: Half-Orc's Wrath (Blue Skill, boosts the morale of all underlings by 50% in all attributes)

[Leader of the Half-Orc Tribe, if you can subdue him, he can serve as a subordinate charging into battle]

Wow, he was similar to Benbo. Not only did he have decent strength himself, but he could also provide significant bonuses to the same type of units.

As Daro noticed the slightly strange looks from the other humans, he couldn't make sense of it. But soon, he dismissed the thought. What was he thinking? Let's just fight first!

"If you want me, if you want the Daro Tribe to submit, you must defeat me first!!!"

Daro shouted loudly at Ji Chen, his naturally loud voice almost deafening the others present.

Ji Chen looked at this muscle-headed Half-Orc with some helplessness.

At first, he felt a bit annoyed by Daro's words, but after realizing that he was just a brainless Half-Orc, he didn't feel much anger anymore.

After all, there was no need to get angry with a muscle-headed fool.

Dealing with such a situation required a good beating.

Daro had yet to realize that he was about to receive a beating when he saw Ji Chen's indifferent expression, and he thought that Ji Chen was afraid.

His expression grew even more smug and arrogant as he provocatively taunted.

"Human, are you afraid to fight strong Daro? After all, humans can't match our Half-Orcs in cunning and deceit. I don't know why Irona wants us to submit to you. If it weren't for the promise of food here, I wouldn't waste my time coming here..."

"Daro, shut up!" Irona said with a trembling voice.

She saw that the little girl who had beaten up the Toothwood Tribe was already looking unfriendly.

Not only her, but the beautiful mermaid-like girl with fins on her ears, the fish people exuding strange power, and the large group of soldiers behind them all had killing intent in their eyes when they looked at Daro.

Since Ji Chen himself didn't have combat prowess, his subordinates could give Daro a good beating!



If they really angered Ji Chen, their chance to join the Crown of the Ocean might be ruined!

Daro, however, seemed completely unconcerned and continued nonchalantly, “He he, I shouldn’t have wasted my time coming here today. It would have been better to kill a few more enemies...”

Suddenly, Daro felt a tremendous pressure emanating from Ji Chen.

He felt a darkness descending upon him, and the pressure was like a massive mountain, coming down from the sky and casting a huge shadow.

Thud

Daro was forced to kneel on the ground, his face filled with terror.

Because he saw Ji Chen in front of him, towering like a giant that connected heaven and earth.

Looking up, he saw a group of deep, divine-like eyes gazing at him, seemingly seeing through everything about his physical and spiritual being.

The more he was stared at, the more frightened and terrified Daro became.

He couldn’t even utter a word and could only cower on the ground, trembling like a little chick.

At this point, all disrespectful thoughts had vanished from Daro’s mind. He just hoped that this nightmare would end quickly.

After what felt like a long time, Daro felt the surroundings gradually brightening, causing him to startle and prop himself up.

“I’m willing to submit, ah ah ah -”

Without changing his expression, Ji Chen used a tentacle made of condensed water to wrap around Daro’s legs and swung him forcefully into the air.

Like an astronaut, he had left the cabin and was in good condition.

Like a tennis ball hit with great force, Daro flew through the air.

When he reached the highest point reached by inertia, he began free-falling, crying out more miserably as the sea surface approached.

Just before the impact with the sea, the tentacle wrapped around Daro again, and with a forceful swing, he was sent back into the sky.

The sequence continued indefinitely with a pattern of descent, ascent, descent, and ascent, repeating in a continuous cycle.

Seeing Daro constantly ascending and descending in the air, and hearing his pitiful and mournful cries, everyone present gasped in horror, feeling chills in their hearts.

Looking at Ji Chen, who remained unfazed, they couldn’t help but gulp nervously.

They would rather be killed instantly with a single slash than be tortured like this!!

Eventually, Daro stopped making any sound and was returned to the ground.

Ji Chen looked at Daro, whose eyes were now turning white, foaming at the mouth, lying on the ground like a puddle of mud, and was somewhat surprised.

“His vitality is surprisingly tenacious. It seems I can play a little more.”

Hearing these words, Daro, who was pretending to be dead, instantly jumped up and knelt down, his face filled with terror and pleading.

“Sir, my lord, no, father! I know I was wrong. Please spare my life!!”

“As long as you tell me to go east, I’ll go east, and if you order me to go west, I’ll go there too. I will always be loyal to you!”

Seeing Daro, with tears and snot streaming down his face, looking completely different from his previous arrogant self, Ji Chen smiled.

“Didn’t you say coming here was a waste of time?”

“No, no, no! Meeting you is the greatest honor of my life!”

“Didn’t you say humans only know how to use cunning tricks?”

“That’s impossible. For example, you, my lord, are one of the strong ones!”

“Stronger than strong Daro?”

“Yes, yes!” Daro nodded frantically like a chick pecking at seeds, his face filled with the desire to survive.

Ji Chen gave it a deep look and ignored it, then turned to the other half-orcs, speaking coldly.

“Does anyone else have objections?”

They all knelt down, their expressions a mix of fear and excitement. Half-orcs revered and admired the strong, so when they saw even the most powerful among them, Daro, submit, they naturally had no objections.

Irona watched this scene with complex emotions. She hadn’t expected that Lord Ji Chen would be such a powerful spellcaster, able to make Daro kneel with just his pressure, without any resistance.

Even though the pressure wasn’t directed at her just now, she still felt a shiver down her spine.

At this moment, Irona saw Ji Chen turn back and walk towards her. He looked deeply into her eyes and spoke slowly.

“After joining the Crown of the Ocean, you are no longer called tribes; you will be known as half-orcs.”

Upon hearing this, Irona’s face showed a touch of bitterness, nodding reluctantly.

At this point, they had no bargaining power left. In the face of absolute strength, everything appeared pale and powerless..

*Chapter 194: Leaving King Kong Island, an Impassioned Speech*

Ji Chen walked back with his hands behind his back, but he saw I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings looking at him with a resentful expression.

“Big Boss Islander, when did you bring back so many Half-Orcs?”

“Them? I ran into them on the way back from the ruins and invited them to join us.”

Ran into, invited.

I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings couldn't help but twitch her eye corner when she heard these words.

What a lie!

Why didn't she run into so many Half-Orcs when she walked?

If he just ran into them, why would he allow them to bring their whole families to cross the forest from afar just to find him!?

Looking at the two Half-Orc heroes, Daro and Irona, she couldn't help but salivate.

They were blue and Purple-Rare tier heroes who came to offer themselves voluntarily...

Could this be the aura of a big boss? Naturally attracting people to come and join?

Seeing I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings' envious expression, Ji Chen shrugged, not explaining too much.

He turned his gaze to the group of Half-Orcs.

Among them, besides the mature Half-Orcs, there were also quite a few elderly, weak, and young ones. They were subtly divided into several groups.

Summoning Irona, Ji Chen inquired and learned that this group of Half-Orcs consisted not only of Toothwood Tribe and Daro Tribe members but also from other tribes.

As it turned out, after Ji Chen left and Irona gathered the other three Half-Orc tribes whose gathering grounds and hunting grounds had also been occupied, they attempted to concentrate their forces and launch a counterattack.

The result was quite clear—they were soundly defeated and forced to retreat.

Apart from Irona and Daro, the chiefs of the other three tribes were killed on the spot during the counterattack.

Eventually, under Irona's suggestion, they fled with the remaining Half-Orcs and sought refuge here.

So, the group of Half-Orcs here consisted of members from five different tribes.

Upon careful counting, there were more than 1,750 Half-Orcs in total.

Once they joined the Ocean Crown (Crown of the Ocean), they would become the second-largest population after humans among the subjects.

Previously, when Ji Chen just arrived on the island and helped I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings deal with those four players, he also gained a batch of population from their territory. The number of people was slightly less than this group of Half-Orcs but still amounted to more than 1,500.

Adding them together, there were over 3,000 people in total.

This trip to King Kong Island, apart from other resources gained, just the population alone could be considered a huge fortune.

Feeling in high spirits, Ji Chen waved his hand, and the troops began to transport the Half-Orcs onto the ships.

After half a day, all the Half-Orcs were loaded onto the ships, and the fleet was ready to set sail.

On the shore, Ji Chen bid farewell to I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings.

“Big Boss Islander, come visit my place whenever you have the time. I will definitely treat you well!”

“I got it. I also welcome you to the Ocean Crown.” Ji Chen didn’t say much; he wasn’t much of a talker himself, just politely replied.

Unexpectedly, when I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings heard this, her eyes brightened. “To the Ocean Crown? I might feel a bit embarrassed, but since you invited me, I can’t now show my respect and refuse you.”

“After I finish reconstructing my territory and organizing everything, I will come to visit you as a guest!”

Ji Chen watched as I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings spoke with a smooth tongue, slightly surprised, but then smiled, “Alright, you’re welcome to come.”

The Ocean Crown and New Moon Islands would inevitably attract attention from the world, and having I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings as the second player on the New Moon Islands was a promising idea.

With this thought in mind, Ji Chen didn’t waste any more time. He waved his hand, jumped down into the sea, and walked on the layered water steps towards the New Moon.

The fleet, which had been anchored for several days, set sail again and began its journey back.

The journey was as dull as ever.

Three days later.

Ji Chen looked at the gradually appearing New Moon Islands and felt quite pleased.

No matter how exciting and bustling the outside world was, it couldn’t compare to the comfort and peace of his own territory.

Compared to when he left, there were visibly more buildings on the island, giving off a hint of civilization.

On the deck, Half-Orcs and humans gathered by the ship’s rail, looking at the distant outline of the islands. Their faces displayed both anxiety and hope.

This was going to be their new home...

The fleet circled around the islands and finally sailed into the bay on the eastern side of the main island.

Here, a large water fort and a developing commercial port came into view.

The stationed troops inside the water fort had long spotted Ji Chen and his group. They had already opened the fort's gate, and the fleet sailed in, docking at the pier.

All the residents of the Ocean Crown, led by Wilus, gathered at the shore to welcome them.

As the New Moon dropped anchor, Ji Chen stood at the side of the ship, looking down at the residents below, who were also gazing back at him.

He raised his right hand and waved, "I'm back."

Boom...

Like a burst of flood, the residents erupted into thunderous cheers, their faces filled with excitement.

"The Lord is back!!"

"Our Lord returned triumphantly this time, bringing back several warships!"

"Of course! Our Lord is a wise and heroic leader. What's just a few warships to him? And it looks like he has brought back quite a few new residents too. Our territory is going to be even livelier now!"

Amidst the cheers of the residents, Ji Chen was the first to step down from the ship and walked onto the pier.

Like a victorious general returning from a campaign, he followed the path cleared by the people and reached the center of the crowd.

Standing atop a water platform, he allowed everyone to see him clearly and his dignified posture..

*Chapter 195: Leaving King Kong Island, an Impassioned Speech*

The residents fell silent, gazing up at their beloved Lord.

Ji Chen surveyed the surroundings and spoke slowly, "This time at sea, we achieved unprecedented gains—resources, armies, and population. We have obtained enough resources to fill our warehouses, enabling the prosperity and better lives of all on the Ocean Crown. Our armies have grown stronger through extensive battles, capable of resisting any external threats!"

"But that's not all; more residents and companions have chosen to join us. As a result, the New Moon Islands will become even livelier and more vibrant. While we fight for the future of the Ocean Crown abroad, you have not slackened at home."

"I've witnessed the water fort rising rapidly, the budding commercial port, the sea of new homes, and the dedicated figures toiling under the scorching sun."

"You have played a crucial role, no less than us, perhaps even surpassing us."

With genuine emotion in his speech, Ji Chen touched the hearts of the residents, causing their faces to flush with excitement. They realized that their recent hardships and fatigue were nothing compared to the recognition and praise from their Lord.

An emotion began brewing within them, like the prelude to a volcanic eruption. Ji Chen could sense the atmosphere and emotions reaching their peak.

He opened his arms, his enthusiasm rising, and his voice became more fervent, "I am immensely proud of the residents of the Ocean Crown!"

"But this is not enough. We are still not strong enough because ambitious outsiders are greedily eyeing our land, wanting to seize it and take away our place of survival."

"Can we agree to their demands?"

"NO!!!"

The native residents roared with defiance.

"Evil creatures from the deep sea want to invade us again, kill us, and devour our families and companions, turning this place into a desolate and lifeless wasteland."

"Can we stop resisting and surrender?"

"NO! KILL THEM!!!"

The residents seemed to envision the scenes of grotesque monsters roaring and charging towards them, fearlessly expressing their determination.

"And those cunning adversaries hiding in the shadows, plotting malicious schemes, waiting for us to let down our guard and deliver a deadly blow."

"Can we become complacent with our achievements and stop striving to become stronger?"

"NO! KEEP MOVING FORWARD!!!"

"Very well!" Ji Chen raised his right hand triumphantly, his demeanor impassioned. "In that case, we must continue to strive and fight. Every bit of effort today will make tomorrow's life even better."

"With each step forward today, we become stronger tomorrow!"

"As long as we keep marching, our vision high, our will unwavering, one day, the Ocean Crown will become the most dazzling gem amidst the boundless ocean!!"

"Long live the Lord! Long live the Ocean Crown!"

Suddenly, a resounding roar erupted from the crowd, igniting the "volcano".

"Long live the Lord! Long live the Ocean Crown!"

"Long live the Lord! Long live the Ocean Crown!"

The thunderous sound reverberated like a roaring thunder, shaking the leaves, startling birds into flight, and drowning out the howling of the sea tide.

All the residents were in a state of fervor, waving their arms as if they could wave them off, passionately shouting slogans, and gazing at Ji Chen on the high platform with intense excitement.

At this moment, Ji Chen was their deity in their hearts.

Outside the crowd, Lady Irona watched Ji Chen amidst the fervent people, her face filled with astonishment. Her heart pounded violently with the chants of the crowd, making her feel like she had become a part of them.

To be adored so passionately by the residents, the Lord must be a wise and mighty leader who could guide them towards greatness.

Just as she felt relieved and reassured, she suddenly heard a voice coming from nearby.

“Long live the Lord! Long live the Ocean Crown!”

She turned her head and saw Daro, his face flushed with excitement and tears in his eyes, waving his arms and shouting slogans at the top of his voice. Thanks to his naturally loud voice, he had become the most eye-catching one among the crowd.

Lady Irona was speechless.

This guy sure adapted quickly.

“Ding- Due to your speech, the people’s sentiment has increased by 15 points. The current sentiment is 85 points, and the labor efficiency of the residents will be increased by 50% within the next seven days.”

“Ding- Due to your speech, the newly joined residents will not lower the sentiment.”

As Ji Chen saw the system notifications pop up, he felt pleasantly surprised. In ordinary situations, with so many new residents, especially from different races, the sentiment would typically plummet by dozens of points in an instant.

But now, not only did the sentiment not drop, but it even increased significantly—what a fantastic gain!

Feeling the energy and loyalty of the residents, Ji Chen’s heart swelled with pride and determination.

With such a devoted and passionate group, he was more certain than ever that the Ocean Crown would become an unshakable bastion of strength and prosperity. He could sense the potential of this land, and with the support of his people, they would face any challenge and emerge victorious.

The speech had ignited a burning spirit in the hearts of the residents, and this fiery passion would fuel their journey towards an even brighter future. The Ocean Crown was now not just a land of survival, but a land of dreams and aspirations, a realm where hope and determination thrived.

The Lord of Glory, Ji Chen, smiled as he basked in the heartfelt cheers of the people, vowing to lead them to achieve greatness and defend their beloved home, the Ocean Crown, against all odds.

“Wikis, stay behind, and the rest of you, go about your work!”

With Ji Chen’s order, all the residents rushed enthusiastically to their respective posts, and the previously crowded dock suddenly became empty.

Wilus walked over, his face still filled with excitement from the earlier speech. "My Lord, your words were simply marvelous! I have never seen such a magnificent Lord like you!"

Ji Chen smiled and said, "Calm down now, there's still a lot of work for you to do."

"Please, give me your orders!"

"Take the new human residents from the ship and assign them housing in the territory."

"Be sure to keep them separate from the original residents for a while to allow them time to get acquainted and adapt to each other."

"Unload all the supplies from the ship and move them into storage, but prioritize organizing the personnel first."

"Here are the building blueprints for you. Coordinate the resources and start construction when it's appropriate."

"And, I brought back a batch of alchemical guards from the outside. They will be responsible for the defense of the Ocean Crown and the New Moon Islands. The original army can return to their posts."

"That's it for now."

Ji Chen rapidly gave a series of instructions.

Wilus accepted the stack of blueprints, bowed, and immediately set to work. A loyal and dutiful subordinate like him was someone any lord would cherish.

Soon, groups of new residents were led into the territory, and box after box of supplies were unloaded and carried away.

As for the Half-Orcs, Ji Chen had promised to allow them to find a place to live on the island. So, he instructed Benbo to lead Lady Irona and Daro to explore the islands and find suitable locations for settlement.

Of course, they would have to build their own houses, as the current human residences in the territory would probably make them feel cramped due to their size.

After settling the new residents, Ji Chen and the others returned to the Ocean Crown and disbanded the army. He then took out the Control Crystal from his backpack and connected it to the territory.

"Ding- Control Crystal has been bound to the territory."

Following the system prompt, Ji Chen released the alchemical guards from the Space Storage Sphere.

The residents were thrilled and filled with admiration when they saw these guardians, knowing that they were here to protect them.

Ji Chen spent some time releasing all eight hundred Ruins Guardians, filling the territory to the brim, making it quite crowded.



With a thought, he quickly commanded them to various locations – the outskirts of the territory, the water fort, the commercial port, resource points, warning lighthouses, and the subsidiary islands.

The Ruins Guardians either patrolled in plain sight or concealed themselves in inconspicuous corners, ready to act when the time came.

Next, Ji Chen went to the beach and released all the Ocean Guardians as well.

With over two thousand of them, they would patrol the New Moon Islands day and night, providing defense and vigilance against any invading enemies.

Lastly, more than forty Sky Guardians soared into the sky, becoming a pair of watchful eyes from above.

With the addition of the alchemical guards, the defense system of the Ocean Crown became even more robust, and its protection capability improved significantly.

Everything was completed!

*Chapter 196: Strong Military Power, You Don't Want to...*

The first day back in the territory was destined to be extremely busy.

After sending the Ruins Guardians to various positions, Ji Chen hurried to the western side of the territory and took out the military recruitment camp cores he had acquired on King Kong Island.

He began constructing them one by one.

A few minutes later.

The originally empty space, which only had a few recruitment camps standing, suddenly had dozens of them, neatly arranged in rows.

“Detected the appearance of evolved military recruitment camps. Do you want to spend resources to upgrade them all?”

The notification came from the Military Talent Tree.

Ji Chen showed an unsurprised expression and chose “Yes” without any hesitation.

As long as a military unit had advanced through the Military Talent Tree, any other military units of the same kind and origin could be assimilated to the same tier.

This was much more powerful than just raising the tier of one recruitment camp.

After a burst of light, the newly constructed Naga Warriors, Dragon Blood Murlocs, and Pure Water Sea Pixies recruitment camps were successfully upgraded.

Ji Chen didn't rush to recruit soldiers; instead, he went to the beach.

By the waterside on the beach, he specifically set up a place for the recruitment camps of units like the Dead Octopus, which needed to be built in water areas.

Otherwise, if built on land, the recruits would just be stranded immediately.

As the seawater surged, ten statues of Lobster Riders emerged from the water, each featuring a lobster statue atop a semi-circular arch.

He took out eleven advanced crystals he obtained from the Ancient Land of the Divine Realm and began to think about which units to use them on.

Ten crystals could advance to Tier 4, and one crystal could advance to Tier 5.

At this point, the territory had a total of fifty-two military recruitment camps.

Choosing which units to advance and how many recruitment camps to advance was a question worth pondering.

After much contemplation, Ji Chen approached the ten Lobster Rider recruitment camps.

The Lobster Riders were purchased from King Kong Island and belonged to the sequence of marine cavalry based on their skills and appearance.

He thought about the possibility of upgrading them to the same tier as the Naga Warriors.

Their defense was almost the same as the Naga Warriors, their attack power was stronger by quite a bit, and they completely surpassed the Naga Warriors in speed.

The only drawback was that Lobster Riders were purely marine units and couldn't fight on land.

However, Ji Chen still felt that it was worth using the advanced crystals to upgrade them.

Because the ocean was their main battlefield, he urgently needed a unit that could launch rapid attacks and react quickly.

Ji Chen made up his mind.

He first used the ten advanced crystals on the ten Lobster Rider recruitment camps.

The lobster statues that emerged from the water suddenly grew two circles larger, becoming harder and more vivid in appearance.

At first glance, they looked as if a giant lobster was floating on the water's surface.

[Lobster Statue]

[Tier]: 4th Tier 1 Star

[Recrutable Unit]: Lobster Riders (4th Tier 1 Star)

[Recruitment Cost]: 80 units of wood, 80 units of clay, 80 units of crude iron

[Click to Recruit]

Advancing from 1st Tier 2 Star to 4th Tier 1 Star, it jumped two major levels.

Each one required 240 units of resources, and with ten recruitment camps, he could recruit 210 of them, which meant a total of 50,400 units of resources.

Seeing this data, Ji Chen couldn't help but gasp.

Indeed, 4th Tier units were not cheap. For an average player, just this one recruitment would be enough to deplete most of their resources.

Because they were upgraded with advanced crystals, there wasn't a significant difference before and after the upgrade.

So Ji Chen didn't hesitate and began recruiting.

The lobster statues shook in unison, and the surrounding seawater churned violently.

Bubbles emerged in large numbers from the water's surface.

One by one, sea clan warriors riding giant lobsters and wearing bone armor surfaced.

A cold aura from the deep sea pervaded the area.

These sea clan warriors had humanoid forms, but their entire bodies were covered in fins and scales. They held bone spears that were two meters long, and their eyes were blood-red, indicating that they were seasoned warriors with extensive battlefield experience.

The giant lobsters beneath them seemed like ancient and exotic creatures. They were the size of fully-grown bulls, with a horn on their heads and bone spurs and hooks at their joints, exuding a menacing aura.

It seemed to convey to others that they were not delicious delicacies but rather species that could bring death.

The lobster riders emerged from the water and naturally lined up in ten rows in front of Ji Chen, with almost identical intervals between each formation, showing their well-trained discipline.

The knights placed their bone spears on the bony racks on the sides of their giant lobsters' heads and thumped their chests with their right hands, bowing in unison.

"Great Lord, we are willing to serve you and slay all enemies before us!"

Seeing this scene, Ji Chen nodded in satisfaction.

Now, it truly looked like an ancient army.

"Follow me, and I will lead you to ultimate glory."

Upon hearing this, the knights silently thumped their chests again, their determined gazes showing their unwavering resolve.

[Lobster Riders]

[Race]: Sea Clan

[Tier]: 4th Tier 1 Star

[Skills]:

Fusion (Purple Skill): When the lobster mount and the rider collaborate, combat power is increased by 40%.

Death Charge (Purple Skill): Entering the charging state increases movement speed by 80% and impact force by 40%.

Sea Clan Bloodline (Purple Skill): Significantly enhances stamina and injury recovery speed.

Swiftiness (Purple Skill): Increases movement speed by 60%..

*Chapter 197: Strong Military Power, You Don't Want to... (2)*

[Unit Characteristics]: Synergistic Charge (When fighting or charging together with the same unit, all attributes are increased by 50%).

[Split out!!]

With four purple-grade skills, a major transformation occurred!

A formidable unit born purely for slaughter.

Although its Tier was only 4-star, when their numbers multiplied, they could cause terrifying damage and threats.

Ancient cavalry, with dozens of them, could perhaps be resisted by infantry.

But if their numbers reached hundreds, thousands, or even tens of thousands, their explosive combat power could destroy any enemy blocking their path on flat terrain.

However, the Lobster Riders' battlefield was the vast ocean.

For now, let the Lobster Riders familiarize themselves with the New Moon Islands. When not on a mission, they would serve as a patrolling force.

With ten advanced crystals used up, only one crystal capable of advancing to Tier 5 remained.

After some consideration, Ji Chen decided to keep it for now. Since there was only one, currently, there was no unit worthy of using this advanced crystal.

So, when he acquires the desired unit in the future, it won't be too late to use it.

The other new unit bought from King Kong Island this time, the Self-Detonating Water Spider, also had ten recruitment camps.

Since there were no more advanced crystals, and they could only be upgraded through the Military Talent tree, Ji Chen recruited all of them this week to save some resources.

One camp could recruit 35 units per week, and ten camps equaled 350 units.

With a similar appearance to a long-legged spider, they had an elliptical body about the size of a millstone and eight thin legs, each over one meter long.

Their body was covered by a layer of bone armor like a balloon, and through the gaps, one could see dozens of spheres crowded inside.

Once their body exploded, these spheres would fly in all directions like clustered bombs, causing a larger secondary explosion.

They were even more terrifying than human flesh bombs used in Syria.

As a large number of Self-Detonating Water Spiders floated on the sea surface with their legs, riding the waves, Ji Chen suddenly had a sense of déjà vu.

Aren't these like naval mines?

With their flat bodies lying on the water surface, they were hard to detect due to the waves.

When enemy ships approached, they could simply stick to the hull.

They are indeed useful!

Ji Chen casually opened the military talent tree.

He began to advance the 1st-tier 3-star Self-Detonating Water Spiders.

“Consumption... Unlocking nodes...”

“Self-Detonating Water Spider (1st-tier 3-star) successfully advanced to Self-Detonating Water Spider (3rd-tier 3-star).”

After the advancement, their body did not change much, but the explosive power had undoubtedly increased exponentially.

However, as they were one-time consumables, Ji Chen didn’t want to experiment with their explosion power. After all, he would have plenty of opportunities to test it in the future.

It had been a while since the last unit talent upgrade.

As they faced stronger enemies, the Naga Warriors were no longer invincible and unstoppable.

During their battle with the Ruins Guardians, if it hadn’t been for the terrain advantage, the Naga Warriors would have been overwhelmed.

In order to deal with more challenging and dangerous difficulties in the future, it was imperative to upgrade them once again.

At their current level of development, as long as they didn’t require a large amount of rare resources like Mithril and Orichalcum, Ocean Crown could fully support the consumption of upgrading several units.

First, the Naga Warriors.

Likewise, Ji Chen recruited all the available Naga Warriors this week.

With ten Naga Warrior recruitment camps, a total of 140 were recruited.

Then, he upgraded them using the military talent tree.

“Naga Warrior (3rd-tier 5-star) successfully advanced to Naga Berserker (4th-tier 5-star).”

With a prompt, the Naga Warriors became the fifth 4th-tier unit in the territory.

Their scales became even tougher, shimmering with a metallic luster, and their bone blades became sharper and more resilient. Their strength and speed increased drastically, and their combat power multiplied several times over.

Next were the Pixies. Ji Chen didn’t hesitate and proceeded to recruit the Pure Water Sea Pixies in the same manner.

With seven Pure Water Sea Pixie recruitment camps, each having 21 units, a total of 147 were recruited.

“Pure Water Sea Pixie (3rd-tier 3-star) successfully advanced to Elemental Sea Pixie (4th-tier 3-star).”

The Dragon Blood Murlocs required Dragon Blood Crystals to advance again, so they couldn’t be upgraded this time.

With ten Dragon Blood Murloc recruitment camps, a total of 140 were recruited.

Next on the list were the Murloc Rangers.

“Murloc Ranger (2nd-tier 5-star) successfully advanced to Murloc Prowler (3rd-tier 5-star).”

With two camps, each having 28 units, a total of 56 were recruited.

Apart from these, Ji Chen didn’t have plans to continue upgrading other units for the time being.

He simply recruited the weekly output of those units.

After tallying the numbers, the quantity of each unit had significantly increased, as follows:

Naga Berserkers: 202 units, 4th-tier 5-star.

Shallow Sea Murlocs: 207 units, 4th-tier 3-star.

Pure Water Sea Pixies: 224 units, 4th-tier 3-star.

Lobster Riders: 140 units, 4th-tier 1-star.

Murloc Prowlers: 266 units, 3rd-tier 5-star.

Self-Detonating Water Spiders: 350 units, 3rd-tier 3-star.

Elite Pirates: 270 units, 2nd-tier 4-star.

Deep Sea Roamers: 20 units, 4th-tier 1-star.

Tidal Sea Spirits: 3 units, 4th-tier 1-star.

Giant Octopuses: 10 units, 4th-tier 8-star.

A total of 1,692 units.

Ji Chen was in a great mood.

After hard work and cultivation, he finally obtained the desired harvest.

Although most of the resources obtained from the raid and gathering were consumed, in return, he now possessed a much stronger and powerful army.

It was a snowball effect, where gaining resources allowed him to exchange for a more formidable army, and with that army, he could acquire even more resources.

This cycle continued, constantly building on each other.

With a happy smile on his face, Ji Chen made passersby wonder if he had encountered something extraordinary..

*Chapter 198: Strong Military Power, You Don’t Want to... (3)*

After completing a series of tasks, the sky gradually dimmed.

As the sun set behind the mountains, the residents returned from outside and gathered together to enjoy their dinner.

The dinner was sumptuous, with various meats, vegetables, and seafood laid out on the square.

This was because new residents had joined, and they wanted them to experience the prosperity of the Ocean Crown, using food to win their hearts.

Everyone ate with joy and contentment, creating a scene of happiness and tranquility.

Among them, the half-orcs ate the most, stuffing chunks of meat into their mouths as if their lives depended on it, resembling hungry ghosts finding their home.

After the satisfying meal, the residents began to sing and dance.

Even the well-fed half-orcs joined in, dancing to the primitive half-orc dance while making peculiar sounds.

With a rhythmic and melodic beat, both humans and kobolds couldn't resist joining the festive dance.

The peculiar dance unknowingly broke down much of the barrier between the half-orcs and other residents, subtly raising their affinity towards one another.

Ji Chen watched this scene with satisfaction, nodding approvingly.

As the supreme lord, he couldn't easily join the celebration, so he quietly returned to the Lord Manor.

However, at the entrance, he saw Lady Irona waiting for him.

"Lady Irona, do you need something from me?" Ji Chen asked as he approached her.

Lady Irona hesitated for a moment upon seeing Ji Chen, then nodded and replied.

"In that case, come inside, and we can talk," Ji Chen said casually.

The two of them walked into the Lord Manor one after the other.

Lady Irona locked the door behind them, much to Ji Chen's surprise.

She then slowly approached him.

With each step, her clothes fell to the ground until she stood before him completely naked.

Ji Chen looked at her with astonishment. "What are you doing?"

Lady Irona blushed but maintained her composure. "Among the half-orcs, the submissive party must offer everything to the strong. Males offer their lives and strength, while females offer their bodies to bear offspring, in return for the protection of the strong."

"So, as the representative leader of the Toothwood Tribe... as a half-orc, I should offer everything to you," Lady Irona said, her voice trembling with embarrassment.

After finishing her words, Lady Irona couldn't bear it any longer and lowered her head, as if trying to reduce her sense of shame.

Ji Chen looked at Lady Irona's unexpectedly attractive figure and squinted his eyes. A hint of interest appeared on his face.

It seemed like there would be some entertainment tonight.

"I've been curious for a long time, how did such a petite being like you come to be born in the half-orc tribe? I've noticed that the female half-orcs are usually big and strong."

Lady Irona lazily lay on Ji Chen's chest, not even bothering to move a finger, and replied leisurely, "My father was a half-orc, and my mother was a human, which is why I turned out more like a human."

Ji Chen suddenly realized.

So that was the reason. It seemed that her mother's genes were quite powerful to compete with the burly half-orcs and make her offspring more human-like.

He didn't delve deeper into why Lady Irona's mother, a human, would be in a half-orc tribe.

However, he guessed that it might be a story of a half-orc kidnapping a human girl while she was out playing and bringing her back home, leading to some explicit scenes that couldn't be allowed on the page.

This plotline was quite familiar to him.

While Lady Irona was resting lazily, she suddenly frowned, feeling something unusual in her body. A hint of panic flashed in her eyes, and she looked up, pleading, "Lord, I can't continue, please do it again next time..."

But Ji Chen interrupted her words, his expression becoming stern. "Lady Irona, you wouldn't want the lives of the half-orcs to become unpleasant, right?"

Upon hearing this, Lady Irona's body stiffened, and she stopped struggling. Her eyes shimmered with teardrops. "As long as you treat the half-orcs well, I... I'm willing to do anything."

"That's the right attitude. Don't worry, I will treat them all fairly. As long as you cooperate, everything will be fine...."

### *Chapter 199: Returning Kobolds and Lizardmen*

The next day.

Ji Chen walked out of the Lord Manor, looking refreshed and full of energy.

Today, there were many things that needed to be taken care of.

Last night, news came from the underground cave that they had found several Kobolds who had disappeared after rashly entering the mysterious entrance due to the vibrations.

However, Ji Chen was busy at that time and couldn't spare time for it.



So, he temporarily put the matter aside and planned to handle it this morning.

Being his first encounter with Kemonomimi in his life, he couldn't help but feel excited.

Don't blame the lord for being irresponsible, only blame the beauty for being too charming.

Ji Chen was in a very pleasant mood at the moment, leisurely leading Alice and the others to the entrance of the underground cave.

The entrance had been expanded several times to facilitate the transportation of mineral resources. The resources were gathered here and then transported back to the territory.

"Lord!" Two Kobolds guarding the entrance saw him coming and their eyes were both fanatical and awed.

Ji Chen waved his hand casually and said a few encouraging words that made them ecstatic. Then he got to the point.

"Last night, you found those Kobolds. Where did you find them?"

"Reporting to the lord, we found them in a branch cave below that entrance."

Ji Chen nodded and stopped asking. He led the troops into the cave.

He wanted to meet those Kobolds and inquire about more information and details.

In the largest cave of the underground cave.

A group of emaciated Kobolds with pale faces and gaunt bodies were brought before him.

They looked fearful and bowed almost to the ground.

Ji Chen looked at them and couldn't help but furrow his brows.

Weren't there over twenty Kobolds missing? How come there were only a few here?

With this doubt in mind, Ji Chen called one of the Kobolds over.

"Why are there only a few Kobolds? What about the others?"

"Lord, when we found them, only these few were left. We don't know where the others went."

"We also asked the other Kobolds about their whereabouts, but as soon as they heard the question, their emotions became agitated, and we couldn't continue the communication..."

Ji Chen nodded and looked at the Kobolds in front of him, gesturing for them to stand up.

"I'm sorry for what you've been through during this time."

As these words were spoken, tears welled up in the eyes of these Kobolds, and they cried uncontrollably, "We've been through such hardships during this time. When we were hungry, we could only eat the mushrooms growing in the cave, and when we were thirsty, we could only drink water droplets from the rocks. If you hadn't found us a little later, we would have starved to death!"

Ji Chen fell silent for a moment.

He had almost given up on the idea of finding them earlier and had only sent a few teams of Kobolds out to search symbolically.

But unexpectedly, these Kobolds had survived against all odds and were found alive.

It was truly remarkable.

After these Kobolds finished pouring out their grievances, Ji Chen continued to speak.

“Don’t worry, from now on, you won’t have to worry about food. The territory will make sure you are well-fed.”

“Now, I have a question for you... Besides you, where did the other dozen or so Kobolds go?”

“Did they go missing, or... did they die?”

As soon as the words fell, these Kobolds all looked horrified at the same time. They covered their heads with their hands and cowered on the ground, trembling uncontrollably.

This reaction startled Ji Chen. He didn’t expect their response to be so intense as if they were reminded of something they feared greatly.

Just when Ji Chen was at a loss, Alice approached, saying, “My lord, let me try to soothe their emotions.”

Ji Chen was initially puzzled, but soon he understood the reason behind it.

Alice’s singing could take creatures into beautiful illusions, and perhaps it could be used to calm these fear-stricken Kobolds.

With his permission, Alice took a step forward.

Her melodic voice slowly echoed in the cave.

Even though it didn’t contain any magic, the singing was incredibly pleasant to the ears.

It was more ethereal than the singing of a nightingale and more melodious than a cuckoo’s call.

Even those without a musical bone in their body could feel the beauty of this singing.

Gradually, the Kobolds lying on the ground, convulsing in fear, stopped trembling and perked up their dog-like ears to listen to the melody.

Seeing this scene, Ji Chen’s face lit up.

It’s indeed effective!

Several Kobolds stood up from the ground, their faces gradually calming down.

As the song ended, Alice stepped back to the rear.

At this point, most of the fear on the faces of the Kobolds had dissipated.

Observing this, Ji Chen carefully asked again.

This time, although there was still some fear on their faces, they no longer lost control of their emotions.

With his guidance, they narrated everything they had seen and heard from the day they were trapped until they were rescued.

“On that day, after the passage was blocked due to the tremors, we discovered a new cave formed from the collapse. We thought there might be another exit inside, so we all went down together.”

“Once we descended, we found that it was another vast cave... as we wandered around, we reached an enormous underground space, ten times larger than this one!”

Hearing this, Ji Chen subconsciously looked around.

The place they were currently in was the largest chamber in this underground cave system, with an area approximately the size of a football field. But if the other place they mentioned was ten times bigger, wouldn't it cover tens of thousands of square meters?

“That cave connects hundreds of caves of varying sizes embedded in the rock walls, and there were clear signs of creatures living there.” As they spoke, the Kobolds' faces displayed evident fear..

*Chapter 200: Returning Kobolds and Lizardmen (2)(2)*

“We haven't had a chance to explore; a large number of Lizardmen rushed out from those caves. When we saw this scene, we ran as fast as we could, but a few of us got separated from the other Kobolds.”

“Because we were not familiar with the environment and didn't pay attention to the direction while fleeing, a few of us ended up getting lost. We hid in an inconspicuous cave, and that's how we were eventually found.”

“As for the other Kobolds who got lost, they probably got eaten by those Lizardmen! Sob~”

After listening, Ji Chen let out a sigh of relief.

Wow, he didn't expect there to be such a story down here.

Underneath this underground cave, there's even a deeper cave, inhabited by another race—the Lizardmen.

What's even funnier is that the Kobolds have been living here for hundreds of years, continuously digging tunnels, and yet they never dug a passage connecting to the Lizardmen's cave. The two races have been living peacefully without knowing each other's existence for such a long time.

It wasn't until an earthquake created a narrow passage that connected the two caves.

And there were Lizardmen down there...

Ji Chen's interest was piqued, and he spoke with a serious expression.

"Anina, I want you to go back now and lead a troop to guard the entrance of that cave. If you find any creatures attempting to come out from inside and they are not friendly units, eliminate them without mercy!"

"Yes!"

"Kobolds, listen up!"

"Put down what you're doing right now and conduct a thorough search of this cave. Find out if there are any other passages leading to the Lizardmen's cave! Report immediately if you find anything!"

"Yes, my Lord!"

Although he was intrigued, Ji Chen couldn't afford to be careless about the Lizardmen. He knew next to nothing about them.

Soon, under the mobilization, Anina led hundreds of troops into the cave.

The hundreds of Kobolds carefully inspected each and every cave, even the abandoned ones.

Three days later, they got the results.

Aside from the initial passage they found, they also discovered two other passageways leading downward in separate caves.

One of the passages even had a diameter of four to five meters.

Yet, it seemed the Lizardmen had not noticed.

Upon receiving this information, Ji Chen decided to start exploring the Lizardmen's cave immediately.

According to the Kobolds' description, there were at least a thousand Lizardmen living in that underground space.

Such a large group of unknown forces, whether they are friendly or hostile, cannot be ignored.

After such a long time, the passage formed by the previous earthquake should have stabilized, and it should no longer collapse easily.

On the morning of the fourth day, Ji Chen assembled all the troops capable of combat on land and entered through the largest passage.

They descended along the sloping path.

Whether it was his imagination or not, he felt the temperature rising as they went deeper.

Sweat dripped from his forehead.

After a brief thought, Ji Chen realized the key to the problem.

Below this mountainous region lies a dormant volcano.

Now, they were descending deeper into the volcano, which explained the increasing heat.

Two hours later.

The passage came to an end, and a vast magma pool appeared before them.

Under the dark rock walls, the crimson magma flowed slowly, causing the air to shimmer. The bubbling lava occasionally erupted and splashed on the walls with a gurgling sound.

As they arrived here, the temperature skyrocketed to an extreme level. Within a few seconds, their backs were completely drenched, and sweat poured down their foreheads, leaving their mouths dry.

As the Tidal Dominator, Ji Chen instinctively felt disgusted by this place. Without water, his combat power would be reduced by ninety percent.

Moreover, the army seemed to encounter some issues as well.

The Naga Berserkers and Dragon Blood Murlocs, although amphibious units, were not capable of prolonged activity in high temperatures. In this magma environment, their combat capabilities were significantly weakened.

Though they could still maintain their fighting strength, they visibly appeared sluggish.

Ji Chen knew that a swift and decisive victory was necessary.

Observing his surroundings, he searched for the way forward.

The space was not complicated; above the magma pool, there was a stone bridge that led further in.

Without hesitation, he gestured and led the army to advance along the stone bridge.

The bridge showed signs of artificial carving, with handrails made from carved rock, and some primitive patterns on the bridge surface.

As they moved forward, Ji Chen gained a preliminary understanding of the level of civilization in the Lizardmen's culture.

The stone bridge was not very long, and after ten minutes or so, they reached its end, yet they still hadn't seen any sign of the Lizardmen along the way.

At the end was a winding, narrow corridor with a width of less than five meters. On one side was the rock wall, and on the other side was a cliff where magma flowed underneath.

"Naga Berserkers in front, Dragon Blood Murlocs in the rear for immediate support, and the rest follow behind me."

Ji Chen quickly arranged the formation, and the group continued to move forward.

The corridor ascended, and the flowing magma beside them gradually diminished, indicating that the temperature was slowly decreasing.

Ji Chen became more certain of his assumption. They must be on the way to the vast underground space where the Lizardmen resided. After all, those Kobolds hadn't encountered any magma. This suggested that the Lizardmen's location was likely at a higher elevation.

If that was the case, the Lizardmen probably didn't prefer excessively hot environments.

With this thought in mind, Ji Chen urged the army to accelerate.

After another hour of progress, they finally stopped seeing any magma. The temperature returned to a tolerable range.

Passing through another passage, a space the size of a football field appeared before them. Some plants emitting a faint fluorescent light grew on the walls and ground, illuminating the entire area.

A group of bipedal, ugly-looking creatures with slender bodies and tails appeared not far away.

Ji Chen squinted his eyes at the sight. As expected, these were the Lizardmen the Kobolds had mentioned.

[Lizardmen]

[Race]: Lizardmen

[Tier]: Tier 3, 5 Stars

[Skills]:

Night Vision (Blue Skill – Enables the ability to see objects in dim environments)

Hibernation (Blue Skill – Can enter a hibernation state, significantly reducing energy consumption)

Heat Resistance (Blue Skill – Their scales effectively insulate heat)

[Unit Trait]: Forging (Lizardmen are naturally skilled at forging, easily crafting iron weapons)

[The mushroom harvest this year isn't great, and our hibernation time will have to increase.]

Despite being Tier 3, 5 Stars creatures, it seemed from their skills that they weren't particularly skilled in combat. However, Ji Chen was particularly interested in their unit trait – forging.

Forging?

It reminded Ji Chen of the Dragon Slayer Great Sword obtained from the mountaintop dragon's lair. Due to the lack of skilled blacksmiths, the sword was still awaiting repair.

If these Lizardmen possessed such a unit trait, perhaps they could assist in the repairs?

Moreover, with the expansion of the territory and the increase in the labor force, the consumption of various iron tools, especially iron picks and axes, also increased. Currently, the Ocean Crown's blacksmiths, initially provided by the system and gifted by the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce, were limited to just a dozen or so, resulting in a limited forging speed.

Currently, it wasn't the tools awaiting people; rather, it was people anxiously waiting for the tools.

If Ji Chen could subdue this group of Lizardmen and turn them into skilled workers, working day and night to forge tools, it might resolve the current dilemma.

In an instant, Ji Chen had figured out the usefulness and destination for these Lizardmen.

A smile reminiscent of a capitalist formed on his lips. Without any concealment, he walked slowly towards them with the army..