

Ocean Lord 201

Chapter 201: Fluorescent Mushrooms, Lizardman Kingdom

The lizardmen quickly discovered their unexpected guests, each of them holding weapons and being on alert.

But it was easy to see the surprise in their eyes.

What were these strange creatures that looked completely different from them? How come they had no scales? No claws? Why was their skin so pale?

Moreover, where did they come from?

Countless questions crossed their minds.

Just as the lizardmen were in a state of confusion, they heard the leader of the biped creatures speak.

“Hello, we are not enemies, but come with friendship.”

Heavens!

They could understand the words spoken by these biped creatures!

Could they be a new lizardman tribe born in another cave?

For a moment, the lizardmen started chattering, gesturing, and pointing at them from time to time.

Seeing their reactions, Ji Chen furrowed his brows.

Were these lizardmen afflicted with some illness?

Fortunately, a lizardman clad in armor stepped forward, approaching them and said, “Greetings, strangers. On behalf of the Dork Kingdom, I welcome you.”

Although they hadn’t figured out what these creatures were and where they came from, judging from their language and attire, they appeared to be an intelligent race capable of communication.

Not like magma golems whose minds were solely focused on eating and excreting.

Moreover, they were exuding a friendly vibe, unlike the other lizardman tribes that were fond of killing.

The way they were dressed was quite magnificent, and their army’s equipment was of high quality, making them the most formidable army Ji Chen had ever seen.

Even if they weren’t nobles, they were akin to knights.

Hearing the lizardman in armor mentioning the so-called Dork Kingdom, Ji Chen almost burst out laughing.

Could this minuscule place, whose exact numbers were unknown but definitely not too many, possibly form a kingdom?

Though he felt like laughing, Ji Chen’s emotional control was quite strong, and he easily maintained his composure.

Compared to other lizardmen, the one who spoke carried a fine steel long spear and wore a full set of armor, even a helmet covering their head.

On the other hand, the other lizardmen held iron spears and wore rough clothes with iron pieces attached, displaying significantly simpler equipment. Some of them even wore nothing more than tattered fiber clothes.

Clearly, this underground lizardman civilization had evolved into a system with class distinctions.

Judging by the medieval level of civilization in this world, the lizardman in armor should be the so-called knights, while the ones wearing iron pieces were their attendants or something similar. As for those in rags, they would be peasants or slaves.

Putting aside his thoughts, Ji Chen smiled and responded, "I am Ji Chen, the Lord of the Crown of the Ocean, also known as Ocean Crown, hailing from the surface."

The Crown of the Ocean? The surface?

The armored lizardman felt somewhat puzzled.

What was the Ocean? Was it the name of some magma sea?

And the surface... Could it refer to some cave located above?

"I'm sorry, Lord Ji Chen, but I have a question. Where is the surface?"

Hearing this, Ji Chen furrowed his brow, suspecting something.

Could it be that these lizardmen were unaware of the existence of the surface? Did they think this underground cave was the entire world?

Now, this was getting interesting.

"The surface refers to the world above, a vast expanse billions of times larger than this place," Ji Chen explained. "It's a place with white clouds, sunlight, oceans, islands, land, mountains, and countless races and creatures."

"Due to a powerful upheaval, a connecting passage appeared between the surface and this underground world, which is how we arrived here."

As these words were spoken, all the lizardmen were left dumbfounded.

Their first thought was: How is this possible!?

Could this Lord Ji Chen be joking?

It was probably similar to the reaction of Native Americans from the Americas when they first learned from European colonists that beyond their land, there existed a much broader world.

Seeing the vastly different Naga Berserkers, Dragon Blood Murlocs, floating sea pixies, and Alice's group, the armored lizardman felt that what Lord Ji Chen said was unlikely to be false.

They began to question their existence.

These few sentences acted like heavy hammers, shattering their worldview.

“Your Excellency, I cannot determine the truth of your words, but this matter is of great importance. I must report it to the elders of the tribe to have them decide,” the armored lizardman stated.

“Please do so. But also, please introduce me to your elders. I have some matters to ‘discuss’ with them,” Ji Chen replied with a smile.

“Very well. I will convey your request. Please wait here.” The armored lizardman nodded, gesturing for the other lizardmen to stay behind.

Then, he hurriedly ran towards a distant passage accompanied by a few lizardman attendants.

However, this trip took a full six hours.

This indicated that the activity range of this lizardman civilization was quite vast. The area they were in might belong to the “border region”, and reaching the core region from here would also take a considerable amount of time.

Ji Chen didn’t feel much apart from boredom, as there was no concept of day and night underground.

Perhaps due to the glow emitted by the plants, it was daytime here all the time.

By the time they returned, instead of just a few lizardmen, there was now a hundred-strong escort of lizardmen accompanying the armored lizardman..

Chapter 202: Fluorescent Mushrooms, Lizardman Kingdom (2)

Among the escort were over ten so-called “knights”, and the rest were mostly “attendants”. There was also a relatively well-dressed, slightly obese lizardman “noble”.

Evidently, the lizardmen took Lord Ji Chen’s presence very seriously, sending a “noble” to greet him.

When the lizardman noble saw Ji Chen and the others, just like the other lizardmen, his eyes were filled with incredulity, doubt, and a hint of awe.

“Your Excellency Ji Chen, welcome to the Western Lizardmen’s realm, the Dork Kingdom. On behalf of the elders, I extend our friendly greetings to you.”

The Western Lizardmen?

Ji Chen’s lips twitched. Please don’t tell him there are also Eastern Lizardmen, Northern Lizardmen, Southern Lizardmen, and each one has its own kingdom.

If that were the case, he would have to deal with four lizardmen civilizations. That would be too troublesome.

“Alright, I understand. Shall we go meet your elders now? I’m eager to ‘visit’ them,” Ji Chen said with a hidden meaning in his words.

The lizardman noble didn't catch the hidden meaning and readily agreed, "Of course, that can be arranged. The elders also wish to meet a guest like you from, um, the surface."

With that, the noble gestured for Ji Chen to enter.

Ji Chen nodded. Being able to directly meet the core people of the Dork Kingdom was undoubtedly the best option, saving time and effort.

Led by the lizardman noble, the group marched towards the depths.

As they ventured deeper, they encountered more lizardmen along the way.

On the surface, humans lived in villages, towns, and cities. But here, thanks to the cave terrain, the lizardmen lived in clusters of caves. Larger caves served as larger settlements, while smaller ones were for smaller communities. They connected to each other with various sized passages.

This distinct way of life, contrasting with the human civilization on the surface, intrigued Ji Chen.

He couldn't help but marvel at the wonders of this world, which had given birth to such unique lifestyles.

Throughout the journey, Ji Chen took note of everything he saw and heard, gathering information about the lizardmen.

For example, a significant part of their diet consisted of mushrooms that emitted a green fluorescent glow.

These glowing plants were similar to crops for humans and were grown in considerable quantities on the soil.

Ji Chen witnessed how the lizardmen turned those glowing plants into powder, which they then spread like fertilizer over the mushroom beds.

This piqued his curiosity, so he inspected the information panel of the fluorescent mushrooms.

The sight of it startled him.

These mushrooms were far from ordinary.

[Fluorescent Mushroom]

[Tier]: 4-Star Special Product

[Usage]: Provides a substantial amount of energy for living organisms

[Daily staple food for the lizardmen, though the taste is not exceptional]

A 4-star special product that could fill one's stomach?

Seeing Ji Chen's expression, the attendant lizardman noble thought he was curious about the mushrooms and enthusiastically explained, "Your Excellency, these mushrooms are the main staple of the lizardmen. Eating just three of them a day can satisfy their daily energy needs."

"Made into a cold salad with glowing grass, the taste is incredibly delicious, and you won't be able to forget it once you try it!"

At those words, Ji Chen's curiosity grew even further, not about the latter half of the sentence, but about the first half – eating three mushrooms to satisfy one's daily energy needs?

“Someone, pick some fluorescent mushrooms for our honored guest to enjoy!” The lizardman noble quickly ordered.

Soon, a large bowl of fluorescent mushrooms was brought before Ji Chen. He casually picked one up. The mushroom was not particularly large, with a stem about the thickness of two fingers and a cap as wide as a fist. Looking at the faint green glow emanating from the cap, he couldn’t help but feel doubtful.

Is this stuff really edible?

The brighter the color, the quicker the death, right?

And it was still glowing.

Will eating this cause him to meet his ancestors who passed away many years ago?

However, looking at the sincere expression on the lizardman noble’s face, Ji Chen estimated that the noble wouldn’t harm him in such a way.

So, he decided to take the plunge and carefully chewed on the mushroom.

His brow furrowed, and he almost wanted to spit it out.

This thing tasted awful!

The texture was as dry as meat roasted for a whole day and night, and the taste was like a durian left out for three days and nights.

But, after just eating one, Ji Chen instantly felt a sense of fullness, similar to eating a large piece of meat.

Not to mention three, even two of them would make him feel full!

This stuff was incredible!

“How is it? The fluorescent mushrooms are truly delicious, right?” the lizardman noble asked enthusiastically.

“Well, they are indeed very delicious,” Ji Chen replied, managing to swallow the mushroom in his mouth. He calmly handed back the large bowl of fluorescent mushrooms, “But I think we should hurry on our way. Otherwise, it will take too long, and your elders might become anxious.”

Upon hearing this, the lizardman noble nodded in realization. “You’re right; we should focus on the important matters.”

The group continued on their way.

During the journey, the lizardman noble warmly introduced Ji Chen to the local customs and the scenery along the way.

However, Ji Chen was absent-minded, thinking about those fluorescent mushrooms from earlier.

Those mushrooms had great potential.

Even though their taste and texture were terrible, their ability to provide a significant amount of energy gave them immense value.

If they could be obtained in large quantities, even without being consumed by his people in Ocean Crown, they could be sold as a commodity to the outside world.

He couldn't help but think about how many players were still worrying about the issue of food and sustenance in their territories.

These fluorescent mushrooms could solve their problem easily.

Even the voracious appetite of the orcs and half-beasts could be satisfied with five or six mushrooms a day, without considering taste or texture.

Moreover, the lizardman noble mentioned that the production of fluorescent mushrooms was very high. With enough soil and fluorescent plant powder, a yield of 1,800 per mu (approximately 0.16 hectares) was not a problem. According to Ji Chen's estimation, the maturity time was also much shorter than that of ordinary crops, rivalling even seawater rice.

As Ji Chen pondered the business opportunities, the voice of the lizardman noble rang out.

"Your Excellency, we have arrived. Welcome to Dork City, the capital of the Dork Kingdom!"

Ji Chen looked up, and outside the passage, an extremely vast underground space came into view.

The rock dome reached a kilometer high, and the eye could not see its end. Only a faint outline of the city walls could be discerned.

Outside the city walls, the ground was covered in fluorescent mushrooms, and many lizardmen were laboring in the fields.

"Your Excellency, you cannot see the full magnificence of Dork City from here. But i assure you, as we get closer, you will be amazed by its grandeur and beauty."

"Even in the so-called above ground, i believe no city can surpass the magnificence of Dork City," proudly said the lizardman noble.

Among the capitals of the four lizardman kingdoms, Dork City was undoubtedly the most worthy of its name.

Ji Chen glanced at the confident noble and silently shook his head. Although he hadn't seen the whole city yet, he estimated that it wasn't too large.

"Let's continue forward. The elders must be waiting," Ji Chen suggested.

As they hurried towards Dork City, inside the council hall, a five-story stone-made cathedral, the lizard elders were engaged in a heated argument. "From the surface? That's impossible. Our ancient stone tablets tell us that it is a world filled with rocks and soil, with magma intermingled, and there is no so-called 'surface' world!"

“But according to the knight’s report, there is indeed a group of creatures with completely different appearances from ours appearing on the border. They can also speak many words we have never heard before, like... sky, sunlight, ocean.”

“Nonsense! They are just a group of mutated lizardmen. How can we believe their words? They might be spies sent by an enemy country, trying to harm the Dork Kingdom!”

“I agree. After all, for thousands of years, we have been constantly expanding our borders, but we have never found anything beyond rocks and soil. Now, suddenly, this group of bipedal creatures claiming to be from the surface appears. It is indeed hard to accept...”

“Regardless, everything will be clear when they arrive in Dork City.”

Just then, a guard’s report echoed from outside.

“Report! Strangers have arrived outside the city!”

The lizard elders exchanged glances. “Alright, now we can soon get to the bottom of our doubts. Bring them here!”

Chapter 203: War Begins, Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce Attacks

Ji Chen and his group walked through the vast city outskirts.

After half an hour of walking, the entire city was within view.

This city was built within a recessed rock wall.

The outermost part of the recess was marked by a fifteen-meter-high city wall, which extended in a semi-circular shape from the middle of the road to both sides, all the way to the distant rock wall.

Every fifty meters on the city wall, there was a watchtower with various iron defensive devices.

The city wall, watchtowers, and buildings inside the city were all made of stone, giving them a unique style.

It wasn’t surprising that they used stone as the building material since there was no shortage of it underground, and the lizardmen were accustomed to using it.

“Lord Ji Chen, the elders are waiting for you.”

Ji Chen nodded and led Alice and Anina, the two heroes, inside, while the rest of the troops stayed outside the city.

Although they were only three people, their combat strength was more than enough.

Arriving at the central stone building of the entire city, as soon as they entered the door, they saw a long stone table with more than ten elderly lizardmen sitting on both sides.

They appeared to be the so-called lizardmen elders.

At this moment, they were all staring at Ji Chen with scrutinizing eyes.

Feeling scrutinized like this by a bunch of creatures, Ji Chen felt somewhat uncomfortable.

“Have you seen enough?”

Upon hearing this, the lizardmen elders snapped out of their trance, and one particularly old lizardman, leaning on a cane, stood up.

His tone was extremely proud and condescending, with his chin almost pointing to the sky.

“Are you the ones from the surface? We are the elders of the Dork Kingdom. Why haven’t you paid your respects to us?”

At this remark, the other lizardmen elders showed approving looks.

Ji Chen furrowed his brow. These lizardmen elders seemed to have a rather unclear sense of self-awareness.

Immediately, his expression changed, and he replied without reservation, “No one in this world has earned my respect, let alone you lizardmen.”

Hearing this, the lizardmen elders glared back.

These three strange creatures in front of them dared to be so disrespectful. It was simply audacious!

Having held a high position in the kingdom for so long, they couldn’t remember the last time someone spoke to them this way.

“Insolent!” The old lizardman tapped his cane and scolded, “Guards, take them away and punish them with fifty lashes!”

As soon as the words fell, a large group of lizardman soldiers rushed in from outside the door.

Ji Chen sighed softly and casually waved his hand.

Anina understood immediately and rushed forward barehanded, delivering powerful punches that resounded with the sound of bones cracking.

This time, there was no gentleness like when dealing with the half-orcs. The reason for being more lenient with the half-orcs was to try and subdue them more gently.

But now, judging from the lizardmen’s knowledge and vision, it seemed that they wouldn’t listen unless enough force was used.

Moreover, Ji Chen didn’t want to spend too much time and energy convincing the lizardmen to submit.

After all, there were four such lizardman kingdoms in total, and trying to persuade each one would be too exhausting.

The most direct way to solve the problem is through violence.

After a few minutes, the ground was filled with wailing lizardman soldiers.

The lizardmen elders looked at each other with suspicion.

“Damn it! How dare they resist...”

Before the elderly lizardman elder could finish his sentence, Anina, who had rushed up in just a few steps, punched him, knocking his head askew and scattering the few remaining teeth on the ground. He covered his mouth and wailed in pain.

Now, all the lizardmen finally quieted down, afraid of losing their teeth from a punch.

At this moment, they realized how foolish it was to let Ji Chen and his group enter this place without a proper plan.

Ji Chen stood with his hands behind his back and slowly walked to the head of the long table.

“Now, I’m in charge here. Any objections?”

The lizardmen elders dared to be angry but not speak.

“Alright, I’m here for one thing only.” Ji Chen glanced at them. “The Dork Kingdom needs to submit to me.”

“You must be dreaming...”

With a snap, Anina punched the lizardman who was the first to oppose, and he flew and landed on the ground, lifeless.

Seeing this scene, the other lizardmen immediately closed their mouths.

Now, Anina was acting like a big bully’s henchwoman. If anyone disrespected the boss, she’d give them a punch.

The commotion inside the city attracted the lizardman soldiers, and they gathered and surrounded the area.

Seeing this, the lizardmen elders showed joy on their faces.

But Ji Chen remained calm.

Just as the lizardman soldiers were about to rush in, there suddenly came a cry of killing from outside the city gate.

As time passed, the sound drew closer and closer.

The army from outside the city was charging in.

As a fully-fledged Tier 4 military unit, the lizardmen were no match for them.

In fact, even before entering the city, Ji Chen had ordered Benbo to lead the army to capture the city gate upon hearing the commotion inside the city, and they suppressed the lizardman soldiers.

Soon, the army charged from the city gate and made their way here, leaving numerous lizardman corpses along the way.

These lizardmen had never seen such ferocious enemies before. With just one encounter, their formation was shattered.

Inside the stone building, upon witnessing this scene, the lizardmen elders’ faces turned pale.

Fear and panic finally appeared in their eyes.

Originally, they thought it was just a group of weak visitors, but they never expected to encounter such terrifying enemies..

*Chapter 204: War Begins, Hanseatic Chamber of
Commerce Attacks (2)*

Ji Chen sat steadily at the head of the table, tapping his fingers on the long table. “Now, can we talk about the issue of surrender?”

Ignoring the responses and expressions of the lizardmen elders, he continued, “Firstly, the Dork Kingdom needs to submit to me. All the lizardmen within the country must obey my commands.”

“Secondly, as long as it doesn’t affect your survival, you should collect as many fluorescent mushrooms as possible.”

“Lastly, I command you to immediately start a war against the other three lizardmen kingdoms. I mean right now, immediately.”

After these three statements, the faces of the lizardmen elders all changed simultaneously.

They couldn’t help but speak up, “Why should we start a war with the other three kingdoms? Besides, it’s impossible for us to fight all three kingdoms at the same time!”

Ji Chen glanced at the elder, and then with a hint of a smile, asked, “What if you include my army?”
The lizardman elder fell silent.

At that moment, another cautious lizardman elder spoke up, “You, um, why do you want us to start a war with the other three kingdoms?”

“Obviously, I want to rule all the lizardmen in this underground space,” Ji Chen said matter-of-factly, “Why else would I come here? Do you think I came to make friends with you?”

The lizardmen exchanged glances.

Ji Chen’s army had taken over the entire Dork City. Although their numbers were only a few thousand, through merciless suppression, slaughter, and with the lives of the lizardmen elders as leverage, all the lizardmen willingly laid down their weapons.

The entire Dork Kingdom began mobilizing, arming its reserve lizardmen, and assembling their forces on the border.

The other three lizardmen kingdoms soon received the news, and each of them was dumbfounded.

Although occasional skirmishes over territorial disputes between the four kingdoms were not uncommon, there had never been any sign of an all-out war, let alone one where one kingdom fought against three.

Amid their astonishment, the other three kingdoms wasted no time and began mobilizing their forces. Armies marched from all corners of their territories, assembling on the border to confront the forces of the Dork Kingdom.

After conducting thorough inquiries, it was discovered that the Dork Kingdom boasted a population of around thirty thousand lizardmen, but only about three thousand of them possessed combat capabilities. Although their military strength was not the weakest among the four kingdoms, it still ranked second to last.

Among the four kingdoms, the strongest one had a population of around fifty thousand and about five thousand lizardmen soldiers, nearly twice that of the Dork Kingdom.

Each kingdom had adjacent territories and specialized skills of its own.

For example, the Dork Kingdom excelled in armor crafting, and their armor craftsmanship was the strongest among the four kingdoms.

Upon close observation, Ji Chen noticed that the iron armor produced by the Dork Kingdom, while not matching the craftsmanship of dwarves, still surpassed ordinary armor by a significant margin. T

his advantage enabled them to engage in trade and accumulate a substantial amount of gold coins.

As for the strongest lizardmen kingdom, the Bano Kingdom, they excelled in manufacturing bows and crossbows. Because of this, the Bano Kingdom possessed an army capable of raining arrows on their enemies, making them the most powerful military force.

It was also the kingdom that Ji Chen was most wary and apprehensive of.

In close combat, he wasn't afraid at all, as Naga warriors and others could teach the lizardmen a lesson. However, he feared that the enemy would use powerful bows and crossbows from a distance to inflict long-range damage.

Nevertheless, he quickly found a solution to this problem.

“You're good with bows and crossbows? Then I'll stack heavy armor like crazy.”

This time, Ji Chen planned to involve the Half-Orcs, who had recently joined his territory, in the war.

These Half-Orcs, with an average height of over two meters, possessed strong physiques and strength, capable of wearing heavy armor that humans and lizardmen couldn't bear. Coupled with the Dork Kingdom's expertise in armor crafting, they could form a formidable heavy armor soldier legion that could sweep the battlefield.

On this day, the Half-Orcs, who had lived on the surface for a long time, followed the passage to the underground lizardmen kingdom. Leading them was the silly-looking Daro.

As Daro looked at the vast underground space, he was amazed. He hadn't expected such a large underground territory, inhabited by so many lizardmen.

However, his excitement and fighting spirit quickly replaced his astonishment.

For Half-Orcs, and for Daro's tribe, battle was their forte and the only thing they knew how to do. This time was the first task given to them by the Lord, and they were determined to complete it impressively.

Just as Ji Chen was about to commit all his forces to the war, he received some unfavorable news from above the ground. The Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce's fleet was approaching the Stormy Sea.

Upon receiving this information, Ji Chen made a decisive decision. He ordered Daro and the Half-Orcs to temporarily halt their advance and station themselves on the border of the Dork Kingdom.

He also had Anina lead a portion of the army to stay in Dork City and guard the lizardmen elders, to prevent any accidents.

After making these arrangements, he hurriedly returned to the surface with the remaining troops.

Back at the Crown of the Ocean, Wilus and others were already waiting. As soon as they saw him, they hurriedly approached.

"Where is the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce's fleet now?"

Wilus replied promptly, "Report, my lord. The Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce's fleet is currently hovering outside the Stormy Sea, seemingly worried about the storms on the outskirts of the sea."

"How many warships are in their fleet?"

"There are about forty warships, carrying an armed force of approximately four thousand men. It seems that the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce has made up its mind to attack the New Moon Islands and occupy this place."

Ji Chen nodded.

Forty warships meant that the enemy had nearly four times their number. In other words, one of their warships would have to face four enemy warships.

With approximately four thousand armed soldiers, it was a considerable force

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Evidently, the lizardmen took Lord Ji Chen's presence very seriously, sending a "noble" to greet him.

When the lizardman noble saw Ji Chen and the others, just like the other lizardmen, his eyes were filled with incredulity, doubt, and a hint of awe.

"Your Excellency Ji Chen, welcome to the Western Lizardmen's realm, the Dork Kingdom. On behalf of the elders, I extend our friendly greetings to you."

The Western Lizardmen?

Ji Chen's lips twitched. Please don't tell him there are also Eastern Lizardmen, Northern Lizardmen, Southern Lizardmen, and each one has its own kingdom.

If that were the case, he would have to deal with four lizardmen civilizations, ml .? 111.???? .??? 11

"Of course. I received this information from Raymond's guards, and the credibility is high!"

“But didn’t your previous fleet never return, and there was no news from them? Perhaps they sank due to the storm.”

As this was said, the other members of the Chamber of Commerce chuckled gleefully.

Suppressing the urge to curse, Gassani took a deep breath and said, “Although I don’t know what happened, we must not underestimate that Lord. If he could make my fleet perish, his strength must not be underestimated.”

“I suggest that the entire fleet mobilizes, use the advantage of our numbers and firepower to sink the enemy’s warships, then split into two groups and forcibly land on two suitable locations.”

“Afterward, search the islands immediately, find their territory, and eliminate any remaining enemies on the island.”

“By doing so, that Lord, no matter how powerful, cannot withstand the attack of so many warships and guards.”

After Gassani’s proposal, the other members also nodded in agreement. Though simple, this plan was direct and violent, best showcasing their advantage.

No matter how strong that Lord was, he couldn’t withstand such a powerful fleet and firepower.

“The only risk now is whether the storms outside the Stormy Sea will cause us serious damage.”

Gassani waved his hand dismissively. “If Raymond can enter safely without harm, why can’t we? Besides, this is just like doing business. Everything comes with risks, but the rewards can be immense. Just think about the benefits we can gain after occupying those islands.”

Hearing this, the other members’ eyes flickered with greed.

Soon, the entire fleet set sail, the sails flapping as they left visible traces on the sea’s surface, speeding towards the Stormy Sea.

However, they were unaware of what awaited them..

Chapter 205: War, Tidal Domain

As they crossed the stormy sea on the outskirts, the sea suddenly calmed down, and the dark clouds in the sky dispersed, replaced by brilliant sunlight.

This scene left Gassani in a daze as if the violent storm and turbulent waves they had just encountered were merely illusions.

His eyes were filled with astonishment.

Looking back, he saw a substantial storm wall standing between the sea and the sky, with raging storms outside and calm waters inside, as if someone had artificially enclosed the entire stormy sea.

If he hadn't witnessed it with his own eyes, he would never have believed that such a wonder existed in this world.

Soon, Gassani's astonishment turned into excitement, and he shouted loudly, "Split into three fleets and search for the target islands separately."

"If you spot any enemy ships, sink them on the spot! Don't let a single ship escape!"

The orders were conveyed to the other ships by the flag bearers. The entire fleet split into three, sailing in different directions.

Little did they know that several pairs of eyes were watching their every move from the sky.

Back in the territory, Ji Chen suddenly opened his eyes and a glint of sharpness flashed in his eyes.

"Lord, the enemy has arrived?" asked Alice softly.

"The Sky Guardians have detected their fleet splitting into three and searching for the New Moon Islands."

Ji Chen gazed at the sand table before him, where the entire stormy sea and the location of the New Moon Islands were displayed. Three flags, representing the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce fleet, were strategically placed at three different spots in the sea.

"The enemy is in the light, and we are in the dark. Because of their mistaken judgment of our strength, they have voluntarily dispersed their forces. This way, we can take them down one by one."

"Alice, Benbo, each of you take a military unit and deal with two of their fleets," Ji Chen ordered.

Alice and Benbo nodded and set off with their respective military units.

Ji Chen then inserted two flags representing Alice and Benbo into the sand table.

Now, with two enemy fleets dealt with, only one remained.

Next, he placed the flag representing himself in front of the flag representing the last enemy fleet.

Satisfied with the arrangement, he nodded.

"Lord, are we not going to pause the territory's work and evacuate the people?" Wilus asked, with a hint of worry on his face.

"Just these enemies are not enough to make the Crown of the Ocean go to such lengths," Ji Chen said, waving his hand dismissively.

"All affairs will proceed as usual."

"I understand," Wilus said, bowing respectfully.

In the eastern waters of the New Moon Islands.

One of the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce fleets was sailing, and two lookouts on board were scanning the surroundings, searching for the target islands.

Suddenly, one of the lookouts stopped moving the telescope in his hand and stared straight ahead at the distant sea.

His companion, seeing his reaction, couldn't help but feel puzzled. "Have you spotted the islands?"

"There are people."

Hearing this, his companion also looked through the telescope, and in the next moment, his face showed a bewildered expression.

Because, on the distant sea surface, there stood a figure!

No, it wasn't a person. Instead of having a human lower body, it possessed a fishtail!

Stunned for a moment, the companion shouted at the top of his lungs, "E-enemy!"

Boom!

Above the sea, massive bubbles surged, and water splashes shot into the sky. Eight enormous tentacles burst out of the water, entwining and violently pulling on the warships.

Boom!

Dozens of tentacles shot out successively, swiftly entangling several other warships.

Screech-

The tentacles, imbued with immense strength, coiled around the wooden hulls, emitting a piercing frictional sound. Masts broke, cannons shifted, and ships sustained damage.

Under the violent shaking, countless sailors and guards were thrown into the sea, engulfed by the surging waves.

The people on the remaining ships watched in horror as they clearly saw that the owners of these tentacles were giant octopuses!

My goodness, how could such enormous octopuses exist in this world!?

Watching their ally's ship being violently shaken, the crew on the other non-entangled ships quickly sailed away, fortunate that they weren't targeted.

Just as they thought they could escape, water splashes sounded on both sides of their ships. Hideous Naga Berserkers and Dragon Blood Murlocs clung to the ship's sides and then leaped onto the decks, launching attacks without hesitation.

Seeing the enemies invading their decks, they drew their weapons and prepared to fight back.

However, the disparity in strength soon became evident.

These were only third-tier merchant escorts and armed sailors, and they were no match for the fully fourth-tier Naga Berserkers and Dragon Blood Murlocs.

Their armor was like paper, instantly cut open and penetrated by the enemy's bone blades and tridents, while their own swords and weapons could only leave white marks, unable to break through the enemy's defenses.

Faced with this situation, the guards and sailors of the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce felt despair.

At this moment, they finally realized just how powerful the enemy truly was.

Surrounded by the ocean on all sides with nowhere to retreat and unable to defeat their opponents, they were quickly defeated.

Finally, one sailor could no longer suppress the fear in his heart, and he dropped his weapon and armor, kneeling down in surrender.

As if acknowledging his surrender, the merciless inhuman warriors paid no attention to him and proceeded to attack their other companions..

Chapter 206: War, Tidal Domain (2)

Seeing this scene, the other guards and sailors saw a glimmer of hope and followed suit, dropping their weapons and kneeling on the ground.

No one wanted to be at odds with their lives. Except for a few die-hard loyalists, the rest chose to surrender.

Soon, after the last defiant enemy was beheaded, control of the warships was taken over.

The same scenario was unfolding on the other warships as well.

Over a dozen minutes later, apart from a few ships entangled by the giant octopus, the remaining warships and their occupants were all captured.

Meanwhile, in the western waters of the New Moon Islands, the army led by Benbo launched a similar attack and successfully captured more than a dozen warships.

These events happening on both fleets were unknown to the members of the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce, who were aboard the flagship. At this moment, they were immersed in the joy of discovering the New Moon Islands.

Looking at the crescent-shaped islands that emerged on the sea surface, with pristine white beaches, vast tidal flats, towering peaks, and lush forests, everyone couldn't contain their excitement.

"Amazing! Raymond was right. The Stormy Sea indeed harbors such a beautiful archipelago."

"Once we fully occupy this place, with such an advantageous location, the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce will undoubtedly become the most powerful chamber in the Western Mid-Ocean!"

The words of each member stoked the flames of avarice within them, as they yearned to lay claim to the islands immediately, turning them into an endless fountain of wealth.

No major force knew of the existence of this island, so it was their best chance to take it.

As for the island's lord?

While he might have some strength, they didn't believe he could defeat them.

To ensure a foolproof operation, the Hanseatic Chamber invested two-thirds of its warships and guards.

They were confident that their plan was foolproof.

Just as their conversation shifted from how to seize the island to how to distribute the spoils after seizing it, suddenly, a sailor exclaimed.

“Look! There’s a person standing on the water!”

From afar, a dashing man adorned in opulent garments stood confidently with hands clasped behind his back atop a water column soaring over ten meters high, gazing down upon them.

“I am the Lord of the Ocean Crown, the master of the New Moon Islands. This is my territory. I advise you all to turn around and leave.”

His voice rang in their ears despite the considerable distance and the sound of the waves.

Several members looked at each other.

The master of the islands.

Wasn’t that the lord they were supposed to deal with this time?

He dared to personally show up. Didn’t he know how powerful they were?

Gassani stepped forward, his face oozing with cunning and malice. “Who said this island belongs to you? The Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce discovered this place several years ago. By tradition, this island belongs to us, and you are the intruders.”

“But our lord is magnanimous. As long as you obediently leave, we can forgive your invasion.”

The other members, slightly surprised by Gassani’s audacity, also chimed in, looking at him as if it were a matter of course.

“That’s right, we discovered this place long ago. This archipelago belongs to us!”

“Leave quietly, and you can live. Otherwise, there’s only a dead end for you.”

Listening to these people, one after another, claiming the New Moon Islands as theirs, Ji Chen couldn’t help but marvel at their shamelessness.

Although he arrived here a little over two months ago and wasn’t a native of this place, their claims that the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce had discovered the islands long ago were pure nonsense.

As Ji Chen gazed at the man with a wicked beard standing at the forefront, he arched an eyebrow and inquired, “You must be Gassani?”

Feeling something amiss from Ji Chen’s indifferent tone, Gassani instinctively sensed danger but still replied, “That’s right, I am Gassani.”

“Oh- The people you sent last time are now toiling away in the dark mines. Thanks for providing me with such a batch of labor.”

Hearing this, Gassani’s face darkened instantly. Seeing the contemptuous and taunting look in Ji Chen’s eyes, he felt even more furious and said with a resentful look.

“Once I catch you, I’ll let you taste the specially crafted torture I have prepared.”

“All warships, target the enemy! Prepare to fire!” he commanded.

Following the orders, the fleet adjusted its direction, aligning one side of the ships towards Ji Chen. The well-trained gunners calibrated the cannons and loaded the shells, completing all preparations for the barrage.

Seeing Ji Chen’s indifferent expression, Gassani felt a surge of joy. If he didn’t know any better, then so be it.

No matter how strong he was, could he withstand the bombardment of hundreds of cannonballs?

“Fire!”

Accompanied by white smoke, the cannons launched a barrage of shells, arcing through the air at high speed.

With a hint of disdain curling at the corners of his mouth, Ji Chen manipulated the seawater to envelop himself.

In the next moment, he disappeared from the surface, leaving no trace.

The cannonballs whooshed past, striking the sea and sending towering splashes into the air.

Seeing this scene, Gassani and his crew on the ships were stunned.

“Where is he? Where did he go!?”

As they gazed helplessly at the empty sea, they heard a shout from behind.

“He’s over there!”

Turning around, everyone saw Ji Chen had appeared in the center of the entire fleet, levitated by a column of condensed seawater several dozen meters high.

A vast surge of mana emanated from him, and his robes fluttered in the wind.

Looking at the stunned crowd on the deck, Ji Chen smiled faintly.

“Activate the domain.”

[Tidal Domain (Orange Skill, can activate a tidal domain with a radius of 500 meters, reducing enemy attributes by 0-70% based on the power gap between enemies and allies, decreasing physical and magical damage by 30%, and reducing mana consumption by 30%).]

As Ji Chen’s words fell, a shockwave surged outward from him, unleashing a ring of fierce waves that crashed against the enemy ships, causing them to rock violently.

The shockwave and waves continued until they reached 500 meters away, then stopped.

Next, strands of seawater defied gravity, spiraling upwards in a one-kilometer diameter circle centered on Ji Chen, rising to a hundred meters in height.

In an instant, a water curtain stood tall between heaven and earth, resembling a divine miracle.

At this moment, the Tidal Domain was activated.

Suddenly, Gassani and his men felt their bodies weakened as if they had lost much of their strength.

“Ding- Tidal Domain formed, reducing physical and magical damage by 30% and reducing mana consumption by 30% within the domain.”

“Ding- Enemies suppressed by the Tidal Domain, all attributes reduced by 60%.”

Seeing the system prompts, Ji Chen nodded in satisfaction.

The Tidal Domain was indeed formidable. Within the domain, enemies were weakened to the point of vulnerability, while his own immense power continued to surge into his body.

With a wave of his hand, a tremendous amount of mana spewed forth. The seawater acted as an extension of his fingers, capable of forming colossal waves at any moment to engulf the enemy.

At this moment, he felt like a god!

Looking down at the terrified enemies from a higher vantage point, Ji Chen smiled gently, spreading his hands apart with a slight curve of his fingers.

The seawater swiftly rose, condensing into a pair of giant water hands.

Ji Chen clasped his hands together, firmly holding the warship, then lifted his palms upwards. The giant water hands hoisted the warship from the sea into the air.

Gassani and his companions felt the ship shake, quickly gripping the rails to stabilize themselves. To their horror, they found themselves and the warship hovering several dozen meters above the sea.

Looking down, the water hands appeared to hold the warship like a toy.

And all of this was undoubtedly the doing of the man before them.

This wasn't an ordinary lord; he was a powerhouse!

Gassani and the others realized that they had tried to seize the territory of such a formidable person. Not only had they been disrespectful in their words, but they had also threatened him.

Panic filled their hearts.

Their legs turned weak, and one by one, they collapsed to the ground.

Their eyes were filled with fear.

But in the next moment, they saw Ji Chen slowly reveal a cold smile.

Thinking of running after offending a powerful figure like him?

They should stay here obediently and work as miners for the rest of their lives!

Chapter 207: Territory Built by Captives

As the water giant hands lifted all the enemy warships into the sky, the Tidal Domain suppressed them, rendering them immobile.

The enemy forces were thrown into chaos, their warships not firing a single shot nor launching any attacks. They had even reached this place without setting foot on the land, completely losing their will to resist.

They tossed their helmets and armor aside, their faces filled with frustration.

Seeing this scene, Ji Chen waved his hand, dispelling the mana.

The water giant hands instantly turned into rootless duckweeds, scattering into the water, along with the warships falling back into the sea with a heavy thud.

Boom

The warships heavily struck the sea's surface, sinking down momentarily, then bounced back up as the water splashed skyward, drenching Gassani and his men.

At this time, the friendly forces, who had just finished their battles at the other two locations, arrived belatedly and brought this fleet's warships and personnel under control.

Only when they gained absolute control did Ji Chen dismiss the Tidal Domain.

For this skill, there was nothing to say but three words:

Overwhelmingly invincible!

No time was spared to count the casualties on both sides.

The three captured fleets reunited, and the guards and sailors of the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce looked at each other with embarrassment.

Never did they expect that after just a few hours of separation, they all turned into captives.

It could be said...

The three fleets reunited and set sail towards the New Moon Islands. After completing a full circle around the islands, they docked at the water fortress. A total of 38 warships from the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce formed a neat line as they sailed through the fortress gate and entered the secure inner dock for berthing.

Why weren't there 40 warships?

Because two enemy warships were severely damaged in the battle, taking in a large amount of water and sinking deep into the sea along with hundreds of their crew.

This was also the most severe loss suffered by the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce.

After mooring at the dock, the captives were bound one by one and lined up to disembark from the ships.

The residents of the Ocean Crown witnessed this scene and began to discuss it.

"Aren't these the people from that Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce? They were defeated after just a few hours, they are so weak."¹¹

"That's right, it's hard to believe they came to attack the Ocean Crown with such confidence. They are just too naive."

“With Lord in charge, they couldn’t even set foot on the New Moon Islands, the only thing they achieved was becoming captives after their defeat.”

“So terrifying! Lord’s fortune in war is truly thriving!”

Looking at the residents pointing and whispering by the roadside, the captives looked downcast, their faces full of frustration, wishing they could bury their heads in the ground.

To kill is one thing, but to be defeated and captured is quite another!

They started out full of vigor, but now they were utterly embarrassed.

Among them, Gassani, hiding in the middle, was especially embarrassed.

What does it mean by he who sups with the devil should have a long spoon?

Now, not only did they fail to capture the islands, but he also became a captive himself.

As the mastermind behind two attacks, he didn’t know what fate awaited him.

Soon, Gassani found out what his fate would be.

That day, he was escorted to a dark and gloomy mine, where conditions were extremely harsh, and the labor intensity was incredibly high, guarded strictly.

The people assigned to this place as captives were all wicked and vicious individuals.

That day, as Willow emerged from the mine, looking weary and forlorn, dragging his exhausted body to collect today’s rations, he suddenly saw a familiar figure walking towards the entrance.

He looked again, his expression first stunned, then filled with excitement and joy.

He threw down his iron pickaxe and sprinted towards the figure at breakneck speed.

In that instant, Gassani and Willow performed a touching scene of a master and servant reuniting.

As Wilus rushed to Gassani’s side, Gassani hadn’t recognized him yet. He only saw a man with a dark complexion and a dirty face running towards him, which startled him.

Who is this person?

Why does his skin look so dark, like someone from the Southern Continent?

The influence of this territory is indeed quite extensive. They can even buy slaves from the Southern Continent...

“Master, it’s me! Your loyal servant, Willow!”

When this dark-skinned man spoke, revealing two rows of white teeth, Gassani finally recognized him with a horrified expression.

“Willow, so you’re not dead after all. But why are you here?”

Upon hearing this, tears welled up in Wilus’ eyes, and he grabbed the hem of Gassani’s clothes with his dirty hands.

“Let’s not bring it up. Last time, i came here on your orders to launch a surprise attack on this territory. However, unexpectedly, we were ambushed, and everyone ended up being captured.”

“Finally, 1 was brought here and forced to eat pig-like food and sleep in a cattle-shed-like shack, living a hopeless life of mining! ”

“But now that Lord Gassani, you are here, it means you have conquered this place and driven away that lord, right?”

Speaking up to this point, Willow seemed to find redemption, raising his hands to the sky and laughing heartily.

“The Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce and your brilliance have finally shone even here!”

“I’ve endured so much suffering here, but rest assured, I haven’t yielded to the enemy’s cruelty. Even in this tortured state, I haven’t revealed a single bit of information about you!”

“My loyalty is unquestionable!”

“However, Lord Gassani, why are you not speaking? It should be a joyous occasion to eliminate that lord. Why does your expression look a bit strange...”

At this moment, Willow suddenly felt something amiss and asked in confusion.

Gassani immediately turned his head with an awkward expression, pretending not to have heard the question..

Chapter 208: Territory Built by Captives (2)

“Clap Clap Clap-”

Applause sounded from behind, accompanied by a voice that haunted him.

“Bravo! A faithful servant indeed! Bravo!”

At this moment, Willow finally noticed Ji Chen, who was walking behind him and was stunned.

Looking at Gassani, then at Ji Chen, he suddenly reacted as if he had lost all hope and said with a mournful face, “Will you believe me if I were to tell you I was only joking just now?”

Ji Chen showed a gentle smile, instructed the foreman who was standing nearby, and pointed at Willow. “Lower his food rations by one level this week and make him responsible for carrying the miners’ excrement in the future.” “No!!!”

Willow’s miserable cry echoed in the sky.

This time, the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce came with a powerful and confident attack, but it crumbled in just a few hours, with a large number of sailors and guards becoming captives of the Crown of the Ocean.

However, the number of captives this time far exceeded any previous occasion.

After tallying the battle casualties and the missing individuals, the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce's fleet had over 5,000 people captured as prisoners.

Most of them were guards and armed sailors, accounting for about 80%, while the remaining 20% included various crew members such as craftsmen, chefs, maids, and slaves.

Handling such a large number of captives took nearly half a day, even if they were escorted off the ships.

Those with skills would be assigned to work within the territory after being verified as harmless.

As for those who only knew how to fight, the guards and sailors, they would be allocated to various resource points and places that required labor to do heavy physical work such as mining and logging, freeing up the residents of the Crown of the Ocean.

They contributed to the development of the Crown of the Ocean until they shed their last drop of blood and tears.

Furthermore, Ji Chen noticed something peculiar.

If the Kobolds from the beginning were counted as captives, then from that point onwards until now, the Crown of the Ocean had taken more than 6,000 captives.

This number was even greater than the number of formal residents, almost twice as many.

This led to an extremely abnormal population structure.

It could be said that the prosperity and development of the Crown of the Ocean were at least half built on the backs of these captives.

Now, with this wave of new captives, the population of the Crown of the Ocean was approaching the ten thousand mark. The previously neglected issue of food supply was now prominently highlighted.

Inside the Lord Manor.

Ji Chen sat at the head, while Wikis was reporting the situation of the territory.

"Lord, with so many new captives suddenly joining, it will undoubtedly have a huge impact on the food reserves of the territory! The Sea Rice won't be mature for a while, and the food consumption rate is too fast."

Wilus looked a bit worried. As the internal affairs officer of the Crown of the Ocean, he had a natural sensitivity to food issues.

Not to mention a few thousand captives, even a few thousand fish could eat a lot.

The food in the warehouse was flowing out like water.

Thinking of this, Wilus felt some resentment towards the half-orcs, who had only arrived here a few days ago. Those big guys could eat more in one meal than five humans combined.

The current rate of food consumption was a bit lower than expected.

“How long can the current food reserves in the territory support us?”

“We found quite a bit on the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce’s ships, but at this consumption rate, it probably won’t last more than half a month.” Half a month?

Ji Chen stroked his chin. This quantity indeed seemed a bit insufficient.

For a territory with nearly ten thousand people, the food reserves should last for at least three months to be considered relatively secure.

“This is indeed a concern.” Looking at the worried and hardworking Wilus before him, Lord Ji Chen felt a sense of comfort. He then smiled and said, “However, there’s no need to worry too much. I have already found a solution.” “Found a solution!?” Wilus’ eyes lit up with excitement as he saw Ji Chen placing several glowing mushrooms on the table.

Slightly puzzled, he asked, “Is this the solution?”

“Yes, these are called Fluorescent Mushrooms. Despite their small size, an ordinary person only needs to eat two or three of them to be fully satiated for a day.”

Upon hearing this, Wilus looked dubious but, after getting Ji Chen’s permission, he picked up one and ate it. As he chewed and swallowed, a feeling of fullness surged within him.

“It’s truly miraculous!?” Wilus exclaimed with immense surprise as he gazed at the Fluorescent Mushrooms on the table as if he were beholding a priceless treasure.

Although the taste was quite dry and peculiar, it couldn’t hide the tremendous effect they had.

Moreover, he realized that these mushrooms could be specifically given to the captives, saving a considerable amount of regular food.

“These miraculous mushrooms, where did you obtain them, Lord?”

“Fluorescent Mushrooms are produced in the underground Lizardman Kingdom.”

“The underground Lizardman Kingdom...” Wilus murmured to himself.

He heard about this place in recent days. It was a deeper and broader underground space beneath the Koboid caves.

However, that was not his main concern at the moment. What he was most interested in now was the production volume of these mushrooms.

As if guessing what he was thinking, Ji Chen quickly continued, “These Fluorescent Mushrooms can only grow underground. As long as there is enough soil and powder from glowing plants, they can grow rapidly. The time from planting to maturity is almost the same as that of Sea Rice.”

Wilus' eyes widened, filled with excitement. If they could be cultivated on a large scale, not only could they feed ten thousand people, but even a hundred thousand!

"In the coming days, we will transport a batch of Fluorescent Mushrooms from the underground Lizardman Kingdom to alleviate the current food problem. Make sure to have someone ready to receive them."

"After I conquer and unify the entire underground Lizardman Kingdom, I will make the Lizardmen put all their efforts into cultivating the Fluorescent Mushrooms, ensuring a continuous harvest."

"In addition, once the stock of Fluorescent Mushrooms is abundant, it will become one of the flagship products for external trade of the Crown of the Ocean."

After sending Wilus to handle affairs, Ji Chen began contemplating the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce. Through interrogations, he learned that the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce had deployed three-fifths of its forces for this attack, comprising their elite troops.

This force, unless it encountered fleets from large powers like kingdoms and nations, was almost invincible in the Western Ocean.

However, under Ji Chen's formidable resistance, the outcome was far from pleasant. Their warships were either captured or sunk, most of their personnel became captives, and several key members of the Chamber ended up as prisoners, condemned to a lifetime of imprisonment.

The losses were indeed devastating.

However, the remaining two-fifths of the Hanseatic Chamber's forces still constituted a formidable strength.

According to Gassani, the control over this remaining force was in the hands of several other members, and their alignment was similar to Raymond's thoughts or still undecided.

Regardless, the enormous losses they suffered this time should be enough to wake them up completely and deter them from any thoughts of meddling in the New Moon Islands.

If they were wise enough, they would realize that the Crown of the Ocean was a territory they couldn't afford to provoke.

However, if they remained stubborn, Ji Chen wouldn't mind leading troops to the Western Continent after resolving other matters and dealing with them directly, making them disappear completely from this world.

With the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce matter settled, three days later, Ji Chen led his army once again through the passageway and arrived at the underground Lizardman Kingdom, Dork Kingdom. He started to handle the ongoing war affairs with the other three Lizardman Kingdoms.

At this time, the border between Dork Kingdom and the other three kingdoms saw an increasingly intense warfare, with more frequent frictions between the two sides.

Yet, despite the escalating hostilities, the other three Lizardman Kingdoms couldn't figure out why Dork Kingdom had taken the initiative to wage war against them.

Moreover, it was a one-against-three battle in the ocean.

Did the Lizardmen in Dork Kingdom lose their minds?

Little did they know that the Lizardman elders in Dork Kingdom were also wearing bitter and helpless expressions..

Chapter 209: Reasons for War, Commencement of Battle

Dork City.

“Lord, are we really going to war with the other lizardman kingdoms? They have already sent us the final ultimatum, and if we don’t retreat, they will attack us!”

“The three kingdoms have united their armies, with a total of over ten thousand soldiers. They are well-equipped and highly motivated. We may have a hard time winning this war..”

“If we fail this war, Dork Kingdom may be destroyed! My lord, I beg you to stop this war!”

The lizardman elders were visibly agitated, each trying to persuade the lord to halt the war.

In their eyes, going to war against all three kingdoms would be suicidal. Even the most powerful lizardman kingdom wouldn’t dare to do so, let alone the second strongest Dork Kingdom.

Ji Chen looked at them expressionlessly and suddenly slammed his hand on the stone table.

The tremendous sound instantly silenced them, and they stared at him wide-eyed.

He then said slowly, “War is inevitable; my goal is to unify the lizardman kingdoms.”

Unifying the lizardman kingdoms was of great significance to the Crown of the Ocean.

Firstly, they needed to unify the entire underground space to have enough land for growing fluorescent mushrooms, which would feed the inhabitants, prisoners, and future residents of the Crown of the Ocean.

Secondly, the four lizardman kingdoms were skilled in armor, weaponry, and archery. Conquering them would provide several production lines for military equipment, which could become a new industry for the Crown of the Ocean. The arms business was lucrative in any world, and even more so in a world filled with constant struggles.

Thirdly, he couldn’t tolerate having several powers in his underground territory that were not under his control.

These three reasons combined made war an inevitable choice.

Ignoring the reactions of the lizardman elders, Ji Chen left and headed to the frontlines with his army.

Several hours later, they arrived at the border where the two sides faced each other.

The massive cave here was no less than the size of Dork City, divided by a magma river running north to south, with five stone bridges as the only crossing points.

The Dork Kingdom army was on one side, and the three-nation coalition was on the other.

Standing on a high ground, Ji Chen looked at the coalition forces stationed across the magma river.

Perhaps due to the lack of materials in the underground, the lizardmen didn't seem to have the habit of setting up camps; they rested and arranged themselves on the spot.

The soldiers were densely packed, and all kinds of military equipment were easily visible.

Because the underground space was rich in ore, almost half of the lizardman soldiers were wearing armor.

Their weapons and equipment were entirely made of iron, with formidable ballistae and catapults positioned among the troops.

From this, it could be seen that these lizardman kingdoms were not weaklings. Even the smallest of them had decent combat capabilities.

While Dork Kingdom was caught off guard by Ji Chen, who swiftly took control of their highest echelons without much effort, effectively gaining control of the entire lizardman population, the coalition forces were quite sizable.

"How many soldiers are there in the coalition? What is their strength?"

"Reporting, my lord, excluding their garrisoned troops back in their kingdoms, there are roughly eleven thousand lizardmen stationed here. Most of them are at Tier 3, ranging from 3-star to 6-star. There are also around one thousand elite soldiers at Tier 3, 8-star level."

Eleven thousand lizardmen soldiers.

Ji Chen had a rough idea of their enemy's strength.

His forces consisted of three thousand lizardmen, around one thousand half-orcs, and six hundred recruits from Naga Berserkers and other camps. In total, they had around four thousand six hundred troops, less than half of the enemy's number.

At first glance, they seemed to be at a disadvantage.

However, it was not as simple as it appeared. The forces under Ji Chen's command were superior in tier compared to the enemy's troops.

The overall strength was not significantly different, and moreover, Ji Chen had brought two additional forces this time – the Ruins Guardians and Sky Guardians.

Before returning to the underground, Ji Chen had a sudden idea to try bringing the Ruins Guardians underground.

Surprisingly, it succeeded.

The Ruins Guardians could now operate within a twenty-kilometer radius around the Crown of the Ocean, encompassing both horizontal and vertical distances.

It seemed that this underground space was not more than twenty kilometers deep. Both the Ruins Guardians and Sky Guardians could operate here alongside the Ocean Guardians.

To enhance the Ruins Guardians' capabilities, Ji Chen had affixed thick iron plates over their vulnerable cores on their chests.

Although it made them look ugly, it significantly boosted their chest defense while eliminating their single weak point.

Suddenly, an odd horn sounded from the enemy's ranks.

The lizardman soldiers formed up into lines under the command of their officers, slowly converging in front of the stone bridges.

Ji Chen narrowed his eyes..

Chapter 210: Reasons for War, Commencement of Battle (2)

It seems that the enemy's patience has been almost exhausted.

At that moment, he raised his hand, signaling his army to start deploying and adjusting the weapon angles, all aimed at the enemies on the stone bridge.

Any enemy trying to cross the stone bridge would suffer the first wave of attacks.

At the same time, squads of lizardmen soldiers also occupied one end of the stone bridge, forming defensive lines.

Of course, his half-orc army and recruitment camp troops remained in the rear, staying put.

The first wave of defense, with the most severe casualties, naturally fell on our fellow lizardmen.

If one were to measure Ji Chen's wickedness, it would begin with his treatment of lizardmen as if they were not even fellow beings, almost treating them as war criminals.

Wuwuwu

The horn sound grew more urgent, gradually resonating throughout the entire cave.

The enemy's wave of lizardmen soldiers began to charge up the stone bridge towards Ji Chen's forces.

At the same time, a swarm of black crossbow bolts shot up from the enemy ranks, cutting through menacing arcs and falling among our lizardmen.

Ahh-

As expected, cries of agony erupted.

The lizardmen soldiers in the front rows were shot like sieves, and the scene was as tragic as the historical story of Zhuge Liang borrowing arrows with thatched boats.

The thick bolts, as thick as a baby's arm, shot from the bed crossbows, efficiently impaling two or three lizardmen soldiers and pinning them to the ground.

Ji Chen's lizardmen also began to counterattack, shooting crossbow bolts in return, but their formation was much smaller than the enemy's.

With three thousand lizardmen against eleven thousand, even if they clashed head-on, they wouldn't stand a chance!

After enduring several waves of crossbow bolts, they finally trampled over the bodies of their fallen comrades and reached the middle of the stone bridge, engaging in close combat.

The stone bridge wasn't very wide, only about thirty meters, so only dozens of lizardmen soldiers from each side could engage in close combat.

The enemy couldn't fully exploit their numerical advantage on the stone bridge. In this situation, Dork Kingdom's superior armor technology, with its more effective armor defense, gave them the upper hand.

As the saying goes, thicker armor can withstand more lethal blows.

A lizardman soldier from Dork Kingdom, with armor covering him from head to toe, could withstand the attacks of two or three enemy lizardmen soldiers while still managing to kill two of them before dying.

For a moment, the front line was pushed forward considerably.

However, this situation changed when the enemy deployed a large number of bows and crossbows.

Among the four lizardmen kingdoms, the most powerful one, much like the mighty state of Qin in the Warring States period, excelled in utilizing powerful bows and sturdy crossbows to unleash a torrent of arrows upon the enemy, causing both casualties and intimidation.

In the heat of the battle, hundreds of lizardmen armed with iron crossbows emerged from the enemy ranks. They formed disciplined formations, loading specially crafted armor-piercing bolts and shooting them towards Ji Chen's lizardmen soldiers.

Swish...

Puchi-

The armor that could withstand arrows and sword strikes was pierced straight through by these armor-piercing bolts.

With a swift whoosh, wave after wave of crossbow bolts ruthlessly harvested lives.

Seeing their comrades fall like cut wheat, Ji Chen's lizardmen soldiers became hesitant to advance.

Seeing this scene, Ji Chen showed an unsurprised expression.

He had already anticipated this situation and prepared countermeasures in advance.

Let the Ruins Guardians take the frontline and cover the lizardmen soldiers' attack!"

Several towering Ruins Guardians appeared at the frontline, surprising the enemy.

What were these things?

When did such things appear in the lizardmen kingdom?

Despite their surprise, the enemy didn't stop attacking.

However, when the crossbow bolts hit these giants, although the arrowheads were completely embedded in their bodies, it had no effect on them whatsoever.

These giants continued to charge forward, carrying tremendous momentum like war chariots.

On the narrow stone bridge, ten Ruins Guardians formed a line, leaving the enemy with no place to hide, forcing them to bear the brunt.

Bang!

Countless enemy lizardmen soldiers were sent flying, accompanied by the sound of bones breaking, either falling to the ground or plunging into the magma.

Row after row of Ruins Guardians, like spring plows on cultivated land, cut through flesh and harvested lives.

Following behind them, the lizardmen soldiers surged forward and gained control of the stone bridge, driving the enemy off.

Seeing this, Ji Chen's lizardmen soldiers erupted in cheers.

But Ji Chen remained composed; he knew the real battle was just beginning.

Without the restriction of the stone bridge, enemies ten times their number rushed from all directions, surrounding them.

However, Ji Chen's forces were unable to quickly deploy reinforcements due to the limitations of the stone bridge.

Originally, Ji Chen's forces were making great progress, but now their offensive suddenly stalled.

On the other hand, the enemy surged like a tide, attempting to retake the stone bridge.

At this moment, the situation of attack and defense had reversed.

This was the crucial point in the terrain.

Those who wanted to pass through the stone bridge would inevitably face tremendous pressure at the point where the bridge met the land.

If they couldn't withstand this pressure and break through the encirclement, all their previous efforts would be in vain.

"Allow me to take the field, my lord."

Alice stepped forward as she witnessed the situation.

Without hesitation or delay, Ji Chen nodded quickly.

Escorted by a team of Naga Berserkers, Alice arrived at the frontline.

She slowly released her mana and activated her skills.

When her song covered the battlefield and swept over the vicinity of the stone bridge, the enemy lizardmen soldiers were instantly controlled.

Their eyes turned blood-red as they began attacking their own allies, causing chaos.

Ji Chen's lizardmen soldiers, influenced by the Song of War, saw their combat prowess greatly enhanced and unleashed a devastating assault on the enemy, causing them to cry out in terror.

The tide of battle had once again turned.

Such was the power of a mighty hero—to have the ability to reverse the course of a battle.

With Alice's assistance, Ji Chen's forces successfully held their ground, and wave after wave of lizardmen soldiers charged forward, establishing defensive lines at the bridgehead, along with the Ruins Guardians.

At this point, the enemy, currently at a disadvantage, temporarily retreated under the command of their officers.

They regrouped in the distance, preparing for a more powerful attack.

The rain of arrows from the enemy never ceased, falling relentlessly like they were dispensable.

Through the gaps in the Ruins Guardians' bodies, the specially crafted armor-piercing bolts caused severe damage to the lizardmen soldiers behind them.

Many Ruins Guardians were hit by the dense arrow rain, and their iron plates on their chests were penetrated, causing critical damage to their cores.

The most dangerous threat to the Ruins Guardians was the oversized bed-crossbows, which fired baby-arm-thick bolts that could shatter their limbs not protected by iron plates.

About half of the fallen Ruins Guardians were left immobile with shattered legs.

“We need to destroy those bed-sized crossbows...”

Ji Chen thought to himself and made a decision.

Forty Sky Guardians took off into the air, flying across the magma river to the opposite bank.

At this moment, the enemy lizardmen were truly stunned.

In their understanding, all creatures stood on the ground, and they couldn't fathom the concept of flight.

Seeing these things appear in the sky shattered their worldview.

However, the Sky Guardians paid no attention to their confusion. Receiving their orders, they swiftly and agilely flew towards the enemy's bed-sized crossbow positions.

Seeing the Sky Guardians approaching, the enemy realized that they were about to attack their crossbows, and immediately started to retaliate.

The soldiers on the enemy's side tried shooting their crossbows, but the nimble Sky Guardians skillfully evaded the bolts. Instead, the crossbow bolts hit their own allies, resulting in a comical scene of friendly fire.

Whoosh-

The Sky Guardians swooped down, and their sharp claws cut through the bed-sized crossbows like they were slicing paper. Along the way, they tore several lizardmen soldiers controlling the crossbows into pieces.

After a few dives, the bed-sized crossbows were mostly destroyed.

Having accomplished this, the Sky Guardians didn't rest. They continued their swift attacks, creating a storm of blood and flesh within the enemy ranks. Countless lizardmen soldiers became casualties under their claws.

Seeing this, Ji Chen nodded in satisfaction.

The air force's strength was in its formidable power, relying on unconventional weapons that left the enemy unable to effectively counterattack, allowing the air force to inflict damage without hindrance.

At the front, they faced the crushing force of the Ruins Guardians, while in the rear, they were incessantly attacked by the Sky Guardians.

The coalition forces were now at their wits' end, with no viable solution in sight.

They could only send wave after wave of soldiers, praying that they could hold their ground.

However, this hope quickly turned into mere illusion when a formidable army of half-orcs joined the battle..