

Ocean Lord 211

Chapter 211: Striking Allies, Surrender

“My warriors, it’s our turn to take the stage! This performance will determine whether we feast on victory or swallow defeat! Tell me, what do you want to eat?!”

“Meat!” The Half-Orcs answered loudly.

“Very well!” Daro lifted a huge battle axe resembling a door panel and pointed it towards the frontline, roaring, “Cut down the enemy to the last! Leave none alive!!”

“For our Lord, we offer our hearts!”

“Ura!!!”

With over a thousand Half-Orc warriors clad in heavy iron armor and wielding various fierce weapons, they transformed into a steel torrent, charging straight towards the frontline.

The Lizardman coalition soldiers, already at their wit’s end from the attacks of the Ruins Guardians and Sky Guardians, felt their hearts sink as they saw the imposing Half-Orc warriors charging towards them.

When did the Dork Kingdom produce such terrifying creatures?

Enormous stone golems, flying creatures, and these frightening fanged monsters, each more terrifying than the other, each more powerful than the other.

Their swords and blades slashed at the enemy like they were hitting rocks, and even the proud bows and crossbows failed to exert their expected killing power.

Seeing their own soldiers being slaughtered by the Half-Orc warriors, they couldn’t help but recall the news from a few days ago about guests from the surface appearing in the Dork Kingdom.

Previously, they had scoffed at this news, but now witnessing these strange creatures, they couldn’t help but reconsider whether the news was indeed true.

In the center of the army, the commanders of the Lizardman coalition, faced with the dire situation, couldn’t remain calm.

They gritted their teeth and spoke fiercely, “Damn it, where did these creatures come from? Could it be true that they really came from the so-called surface? Could there truly be an unknown world above our heads?”

“The Dork Kingdom must have received help from these creatures, giving them the audacity to start this war! If not for them, we would have easily defeated the Dork Kingdom!”

“Regardless of whether they exist or not, if we can’t stop them now, we will face the calamity of annihilation!!”

Seeing the battlefield turning overwhelmingly in favor of the enemy, many Lizardman coalition commanders started to consider retreat.

Just as they were contemplating whether to withdraw, a soldier suddenly cried out in fear, “Those fanged monsters are charging this way!!”

They looked in the distance and saw thousands of Half-Orc warriors, drenched in blood from their fierce battle, breaking through the defensive lines and heading straight towards the center of the army.

The Lizardman commanders immediately panicked, realizing it was a beheading tactic.

They urgently shouted, “Quick, stop them!!”

Wave after wave of soldiers rushed forward.

Daro, leading his tribesmen, charged back and forth amidst the enemy, not caring about the direction or who was friend or foe, as long as it was a Lizardman, he charged towards them.

The battlefield was filled with bloodshed and corpses.

As Daro was in the midst of the intense battle, he suddenly heard an extraordinary voice.

He looked up and saw a few Lizardmen dressed in magnificent armor standing on a high platform, directing the battle. His eyes lit up.

Those were the enemy Lizardman commanders!

Killing one commander was worth much more than killing a hundred ordinary soldiers!

“My warriors, take down those Lizardman standing up there! Our Lord will surely praise us!”

Upon hearing this, the half-orcs beside Daro all looked over, their eyes bloodshot, filled with the thirst for battle achievements and glory.

“Ura!!!”

Although the Half-Orcs appeared weak and helpless before Ji Chen, their combat strength was quite astonishing.

With their upgraded equipment, killing enemy Lizardman soldiers seemed like child’s play.

Under Daro’s leadership, the Half-Orc warriors pierced into the enemy formation like a sharp knife, carving a gap wherever they went, turning the area into a bloody hell.

Even the most elite soldiers dispatched by the Three Kingdoms Alliance couldn’t stop their onslaught and massacre.

As Daro approached closer, the Lizardman commanders of the coalition finally panicked and hurriedly descended from the platform to escape.

Witnessing their own commanders fleeing, other Lizardman soldiers lost their will to fight, one by one throwing off their helmets and armor, eager to grow an extra pair of legs to run faster.

A miraculous scene unfolded on the battlefield, where thousands of Lizardman soldiers were chased by merely a thousand Half-Orc warriors, like wolves chasing a flock of sheep.

Daro fought fiercely, chopping up the fleeing Lizardman commanders into pieces with a few strikes. Just when he planned to pursue and collect more enemy heads, he suddenly remembered Ji Chen's instructions and immediately shouted at the top of his lungs as he chased after, "Surrender and you won't be killed! Treat the captives kindly!!"

Seeing their leader giving the order, other Half-Orcs followed suit, shouting, "Surrender and you won't be killed! Treat the captives kindly!!"

Upon hearing this, a large number of fleeing enemy Lizardman soldiers chose to surrender on the spot, lying down obediently on the ground. They were no longer willing to face such terrifying foes in battle.

The enemy surrendered one after another, and only a small number of them escaped into the interconnected caves, disappearing without a trace by relying on their familiarity with the terrain.

Seeing this, Ji Chen ordered to halt the pursuit.

They began to clean up the battlefield and count the casualties.

Walking across the stone bridge to the other side of the lava river, Ji Chen looked at the numerous lizardmen corpses scattered all over and silently shook his head.

A feeling of invincibility surged within him.

The real strength of his forces, the recruited army, had not yet joined the battle..

Chapter 212: Striking Allies, Surrender (2)

Wasn't that an easy victory?

Unknowingly, the power of the Crown of the Ocean had grown to such an extent that it easily overwhelmed tens of thousands of lizardmen soldiers.

With these thoughts in mind, Ji Chen nonchalantly walked up to the lizardmen soldiers who had surrendered.

Thousands of lizardmen soldiers kneeled on the ground, not daring to look him in the eye.

Their instincts told them that this man was the most powerful being who could easily decide their life and death.

The half-orc hero, Daro, returned with a proud look after scouring the surroundings for surrendered soldiers.

This time, it had achieved great merit, breaking through the enemy's defense line and even killing the enemy's leader.

It was sure that its Lord would reward it handsomely.

However, when it came back, it saw a few friendly lizardmen talking to its Lord with expressions of indignation and sorrow.

Suddenly, it felt something ominous.

Ji Chen saw Daro approaching, and his face darkened.

"You, come here."

Hearing the displeasure in Ji Chen's tone, Daro couldn't help but tremble and swallowed his saliva, wearing a pleasing expression as he walked over.

"Lord, haven't I performed well this time?"

"True, you did well..."

"Then why are you glaring at me like that?"

"You not only killed enemy soldiers but also killed your own lizardmen soldiers!?"

"While inspecting the battlefield just now, I noticed that many of our lizardmen soldiers were killed by your hands!"

Daro looked at the lizardmen corpses that were brought over.

The injuries on them could only have been caused by the weapons of the half-orc warriors.

Realizing this, Daro felt embarrassed.

At this moment, it also remembered that when they broke through the enemy's defense line, they seemed to have killed quite a few lizardmen who looked similar to their allies.

It thought of a way to plead its innocence.

"Lord, it's a misunderstanding! These lizardmen all looked so alike, and we were fighting in the heat of the moment. How could we distinguish them?"

"If you want to blame someone, blame them for blocking us!"

Saying this, Daro provocatively glanced at the lizardmen leader standing nearby, with an expression of "I did it, so what?"

The half-orc tribe only respects the strong. You weaklings can just go aside!

This look made the allied lizardmen general feel furious, but they dared not speak out in anger.

Their enemies tremble before them, and even their allies cower in fear.

Seeing this scene, Ji Chen's expression grew even darker.

Regardless, your achievements and mistakes balance each other out, but I'll still impose a punishment by forbidding meat for a week.

Upon hearing this, Dare's face immediately fell.

A week without meat, how would they survive?

Then it seemed to remember something and anxiously asked, "Can we still continue to participate in the battles afterward?"

"Uh... yes."

"Understood! I have no objections!" Daro became happy again, grinning stupidly.

Giving up meat for a week was bearable, but not being able to fight would be like taking away their lives.

Seeing its silly appearance, Ji Chen couldn't help but laugh and scolded, "Hurry up and get some rest. Afterwards, I'll have you lead as the vanguard to attack the three lizardmen kingdoms."

"Yes!" Daro immediately straightened its posture and saluted, then happily led its subordinates away.

After a day of counting and statistics, the casualties and outcomes of the battle became clear.

In this battle, over four thousand lizardmen soldiers were killed, more than five thousand were captured, and only less than two thousand managed to escape.

As for the losses:

The Dork Kingdom suffered about one thousand five hundred lizardmen soldiers killed.

The Alchemy Guardians lost over seventy Ruins Guardians, and two hundred more were injured to varying degrees.

However, the Sky Guardians had no casualties, only a few of them were hit by crossbow arrows, but they could be easily repaired and used again with the Space Storage Spheres.

On the other hand, the half-orc forces, thanks to their full-body armor protection, had less than thirty fatalities and about a hundred injuries.

The half-orcs were truly resilient due to their naturally robust physique, which allowed them to continue fighting even after enduring injuries that would incapacitate humans.

Their recovery speed after being injured was astonishingly fast; in just two days, they would be up and about as if nothing happened.

Upon seeing this, Ji Chen began contemplating whether to find another opportunity to head to King Kong Island and attempt to subdue another group of half-orcs.

After this battle, the military strength of the three major lizardmen kingdoms had been greatly weakened, and they were unable to organize effective resistance.

The remaining soldiers could only cower in their capital cities, living in fear and trembling.

Meanwhile, Ji Chen and his forces were enjoying the spoils of war.

The battlefield was strewn with a large number of military supplies, including a considerable amount of armor, expertly crafted strong bows and crossbows, as well as various swords and halberds.

Additionally, they seized over a hundred bed-mounted crossbows. If it hadn't been for the Sky Guardians restraining them, these formidable weapons would have caused much greater harm.

Furthermore, they also confiscated a large quantity of fluorescent mushrooms that the enemy had used for provisions.

These were all stored in a cave designated for food storage, estimated to number in the millions.

This amount was enough to sustain the Crown of the Ocean for nearly half a month in terms of food consumption, not counting the captured lizardmen soldiers.

All these caves and resources would be claimed as spoils of war by the Crown of the Ocean.

Despite suffering significant losses in soldiers, with nearly half of their forces remaining and most of them being injured, the Dork Kingdom surprisingly witnessed an overwhelming outpouring of praise for this great victory.

The reason behind this enthusiasm was the realization that they had received assistance from powerful beings from the surface, which ignited hope within the Dork Kingdom that they could potentially assert dominion over the underground lizardmen world.

Long ago, this place had only one lizardmen kingdom, but due to certain circumstances, it split into four, evolving into the four major kingdoms as they are today.

Therefore, regardless of which kingdom it was, the idea of unification was buried deep within.

However, none of the kingdoms had absolute power to conquer the other three, resulting in a delicate balance that maintained their current status quo.

And now, this war has directly wiped out the majority of the military strength of the other three lizardmen kingdoms, leading to such a prevailing public opinion in the Dork Kingdom.

When the lizard elders of the Dork Kingdom received the frontline battle reports, they were shocked.

They never expected Ji Chen to achieve a victorious and thorough triumph in the war.

Mixed feelings of joy and frustration overwhelmed them.

The joy came from seeing the hope of unifying the four kingdoms.

The frustration stemmed from the fact that this victory was not achieved by the Dork Kingdom itself but was handed to them by outsiders.

Once the four kingdoms were unified and Ji Chen controlled them all, the lizard elders would lose their usefulness.

On the day of unification, their fate would be sealed.

However, the lizard elders quickly came up with a solution.

Resistance was definitely futile.

So, since they couldn't resist, they chose to enjoy it.

If they submitted to Ji Chen, there was still a possibility of becoming deputy administrators to help manage the unified lizardmen kingdoms.

This way, in a roundabout manner, it would still be an honor for their lizardmen race.

After all, it was unlikely that the beings from the surface would personally manage the region, so they would need some lizardmen to assist.

Therefore, when Ji Chen returned to Dork City with a part of his army, he saw the lizard elders, each leaning on a cane with most of their teeth missing, waiting at the city gate.

“Great Lord, we are willing to submit to you and become your subjects. We hope you can lead us to conquer the enemy's territories and spread your glory across the four kingdoms' lands.”

Looking at these lizard elders, whose expressions were now extremely respectful, a far cry from their previous opposition, Ji Chen smiled disdainfully in his heart but didn't pursue it further. He had already guessed most of their hidden thoughts.

Anyway, as long as all the lizardmen kingdoms submitted and produced what he desired, letting them manage on his behalf was not entirely out of the question.

Ji Chen didn't invest too much energy into this matter. As long as his fist was powerful enough, he had no fear of these lizardmen rebelling..

Chapter 213: Conquering the Enemy, Reaping the Harvestthe Enemy Country, Rewards

After two days of rest.

On the battlefield of the past, beside the Magma River, Ji Chen stood atop a raised platform, gazing down at the orderly arrangement of thousands of troops below, his countenance solemn.

From left to right, there were the Half-Orc army, the Recruitment Camp army, the Ruins Guardians, and the Sky Guardians, as well as the lizardmen army from the Dork Kingdom.

In front of the armies stood the Half-Orc hero Daro, the Murloc hero Benbo, and the Siren hero Alice.

All the troops and heroes looked up to him, their eyes filled with fervor.

Today, they would set out again, under the leadership of the great Lord, to completely conquer the remaining three lizardmen kingdoms, bringing them under the rule of the Crown of the Ocean and achieving the goal of unifying the underground lizardmen world.

After a moment of silence, Ji Chen swept his gaze around and spoke in a resolute tone.

He first looked at Daro.

"Daro!"

"Here!"

"Lead the Half-Orc army to attack the Panda Kingdom, capture their capital, and control their high-ranking officials."

"Yes! I will ensure the task is completed!" Daro pounded his chest with his right hand and kneeled down to receive the order.

The Panda Kingdom was the second-ranked lizardmen kingdom, but their soldiers had almost been wiped out in the previous war. A thousand Half-Orcs were more than enough to conquer them.

Ji Chen nodded and then turned to Benbo.

"Alice and Benbo, lead the Recruitment Camp army to attack the Lando Kingdom and wipe out any enemies who dare to obstruct you!"

The Lando Kingdom was the weakest among the four kingdoms, even weaker than the Dork Kingdom. A few hundred Tier 4 soldiers from the Recruitment Camp would be more than sufficient to deal with them.

“As you wish, my great master!” Benbo raised his trident high, also accepting the command.

“Understood, my lord!” Alice saluted, placing her hand over her chest.

“Ruins Guardians and Sky Guardians, follow me to attack the Bano Kingdom. The soldiers from the Dork Kingdom will be divided into three groups, following behind to take control of the territory we conquer and handle prisoners. They will also be responsible for transporting supplies. No mistakes are allowed!”

With that, Ji Chen didn’t waste any more time. He waved his hand and spoke loudly, “Set out, everyone! Complete the mission as soon as possible!”

The armies split into three, led by their respective heroes, and marched towards their targets.

After the previous wars, the military strength of the three kingdoms had reached its lowest point.

The remaining troops in each kingdom numbered only a few thousand, and they were unable to resist the advancing forces.

The three armies set out, destroying any obstacles on their way until they captured the enemy capitals.

Once all of this was accomplished, the underground lizardmen kingdoms would be unified, and only Ji Chen’s voice would resound throughout.

As they traversed through the mountain cave leading to the Bano Kingdom, they encountered several lizardmen settlements along the way.

Ji Chen didn’t trouble them, merely handing them over to the lizardmen soldiers from the Dork Kingdom who were following behind, and then continued forward.

As they approached the capital of the Bano Kingdom, the number of settlements along the way increased.

However, stopping at each one would significantly slow down their progress.

Therefore, they chose to ignore them and head straight towards their destination.

Along the way, they didn’t encounter any soldiers from the Bano Kingdom. It seemed that the remnants of the defeated army and the guards along the route had all been called back to concentrate their forces for a final desperate resistance.

Ji Chen was pleased to see this, as it saved him the trouble of searching for them. All he needed to do was to wipe them out in one go.

During the journey, they learned from the mouths of these lizardmen civilians that the Bano Kingdom had urgently recruited about two thousand able-bodied lizardmen in the past two days to replenish their previously lost forces.

Compared to the Dork Kingdom, the Bano Kingdom was more powerful and had a considerably larger territory. It took them half a day's journey to reach the cave where the capital was located.

Standing on a plain in front of the cave, they gazed at a majestic underground city standing at the center.

The capital of the Bano Kingdom was built around an underground plateau, with a thirty-meter-high thick city wall on the outermost layer. Hundreds of arrow towers and watchtowers stood on top.

From the battlements, one could see a large number of bed crossbows, city defense crossbows, catapults, and other siege equipment filling every part of the city wall.

Numerous fully armed lizardmen soldiers patrolled closely on the city wall, looking as if they were facing a formidable enemy.

At this moment, the city resembled a startled hedgehog, bristling with thorns, nervously peering out through the gaps.

Ji Chen smiled at the sight.

It seemed that the Bano Kingdom was aware of their approach and dared not move, staying huddled inside their city.

However, it was indeed an effective tactic. With such tight city defenses, a forced attack would undoubtedly lead to significant losses.

The formidable bed-mounted crossbows and crossbow machines were not easy opponents, even for the Ruins Guardians.

When they arrived within firing range, Ji Chen first ordered the Sky Guardians to take action and try to destroy the bed crossbows and crossbow machines.

However, as soon as the Sky Guardians approached the city wall, a barrage of arrows of all sizes was shot out.

Faced with such a dense rain of arrows, even the Sky Guardians dared not get close and had to hover outside the firing range of the city.

Seeing this scene, Ji Chen frowned.

It seemed that he had to personally take action.

With a thought, the Tidal Domain, which had previously demonstrated its might in the battle with the Hanseatic Chamber of Commerce, appeared once again.

As the Tidal Dominator, controlling water was an effortless task for him.

He raised his right hand.

Like a massive magnet, thousands of puddles, pools, and underground rivers in this cave defied gravity and floated up, converging into numerous tiny streams that flowed towards him..

Chapter 214: Conquering the Enemy, Reaping the

Harvestthe Enemy Country, Rewards (2)

The lizardmen in the city witnessed this scene, and they were all dumbfounded.

Their shock was beyond words.

My goodness, what did they just witness?

The water actually floated and gathered together?

Were they dreaming?

Several minutes later, Ji Chen looked at the small lake formed under his feet and nodded in satisfaction.

Though not abundant, the water was enough.

He raised his palm, and more mana surged out.

The water rose again, condensing into thousands of water blades in the air, covering half of the sky in an instant.

Amid the lizardmen's terrified expressions, Ji Chen waved his hand, and the water blades rained down like a storm.

While slicing through the lizardmen's bodies, they also destroyed the defensive mechanisms on the city walls.

The water blades kept pouring down until the small lake had shrunk rapidly, and the attacks ceased when the last drop of water was used up.

At this point, the city walls were in disarray.

Most of the lizardmen defenders on the walls had vanished, leaving behind a layer of scattered remains without any signs of resistance.

Their bodies and limbs littered the ground, and blood flowed down the walls, leaving deep scars on the stone fortifications.

The surviving lizardmen stared blankly at the scene, their gazes fixed on Ji Chen as if he were some kind of monstrous being.

Fear, genuine and profound fear, filled their hearts.

Boom!

The Ruins Guardians, already arranged in rows, marched towards the city gate with heavy steps, steadily and resolutely.

Their enormous hands slammed against the iron gates, causing them to resonate with a dull thud, leaving depressions on the surface.

Hearing this thunderous sound, the lizardmen soldiers didn't come up to attack; they just watched as the city gates were smashed open, falling to the ground with a resounding crash.

Faced with an enemy they couldn't defeat, there was no point in fighting.

They had lost all will to fight, and one by one, they kneeled on the ground, begging for mercy.

The army entered the city without any resistance, slowly advancing inside.

Standing on the shoulder of a Ruins Guardian, Ji Chen looked at the kneeling lizardmen on both sides of the street with a disdainful expression.

Even when he approached, the lizardmen still dared not raise their heads.

After entering the city, hundreds of Ruins Guardians scattered and took control of key points throughout the city, dealing with any remaining resistance.

As for Ji Chen, he led several squads to the center of the city, in front of a church-style stone building.

The stone doors of the building were tightly closed, and there were no soldiers guarding it.

Seeing this, he gestured, and a Ruins Guardian stepped forward and punched the stone door several times, causing it to collapse with a loud crash, raising a cloud of dust.

As the dust settled, Ji Chen walked in and was slightly surprised by what he saw.

In the center of the building, beside a finely crafted stone table, lay the bodies of more than a dozen lizardmen who had committed suicide.

Blood was still oozing out from them, gathering on the ground, painting it a bloody red and filling the air with a pungent smell of blood.

Among these high-ranking officials of the Bano Kingdom, there were generals and elders. However, faced with the fall of the city and the inevitability of defeat, they had chosen to end their lives resolutely.

Ji Chen glanced deeply at the scene, feeling a slight tremor in his heart. He muttered, "They still have some backbone."

"Well, since that's the case, let's find a place to bury them."

Without any unexpected incidents or obstacles, the entire city was successfully captured and taken over.

Under the suppression of the Ruins Guardians, no reckless lizardmen dared to resist.

Next, Ji Chen went to the treasury of the Bano Kingdom to receive the wealth stored there.

Being an underground lizardmen kingdom, their storage differed significantly from the surface-dwelling races.

What first caught Ji Chen's eye were the piles of ore used for forging weapons and equipment, which accumulated into a mountainous heap.

Besides the storage in this warehouse, the Bano Kingdom had even larger quantities of ore stashed away in several secret caves.

Roughly estimating the current consumption rate of the Crown of the Ocean, these ores would be enough for hundreds of years.

Not only that, but the other three kingdoms also stored some ore, although not as much as the Bano Kingdom.

In the depths below, there was no shortage of ore!

Apart from the ores, the Bano Kingdom's warehouse contained an enormous amount of fluorescent mushrooms, so much so that Ji Chen couldn't even estimate their quantity.

These mushrooms were stored as a precaution in case the city got surrounded by enemies.

But little did they know that before they could even take a bite, the city would fall.

With these fluorescent mushrooms, the food problem for the Crown of the Ocean was easily solved. They could endure not only three months but even three years!

In addition to the ores and fluorescent mushrooms, the warehouse also held a considerable amount of advanced resources like mithril, crystals, and fine gold.

Being situated underground beneath a volcano with intense geological activity, even these rare resources could be produced in abundance.

This wave of plunder was like hitting the jackpot!

Feeling delighted, Ji Chen walked out of the warehouse. These items would later be transported to the surface by the lizardmen and transferred to the Crown of the Ocean's warehouse.

Half a day passed, and finally, news arrived from the other two armies.

Undoubtedly, both armies had achieved victory and successfully captured the enemy's capitals, but their methods of conquest were entirely different.

First was Daro's army, which won through pure violence and bloodshed.

Daro led the half-orcs and charged straight through the Panda Kingdom's capital, breaking through the city's defenses under heavy fire.

They killed a large number of soldiers and even slaughtered the Panda Kingdom's high-ranking officials who attempted to resist.

However, there was another version of the story claiming that after witnessing the city gate being breached, the high-ranking officials of the Panda Kingdom chose to surrender, but Daro, blinded by rage, killed them all with a few axe strikes.

However, Ji Chen didn't particularly care about which version was true and which was false.

After all, he hadn't intended to let these lizardmen kingdom's high-ranking officials survive in the first place.

Would he have kept them around to cause trouble?

Next was Alice and Benbo's expedition.

Alice and Benbo, along with their recruited troops, also swiftly captured the capital of the Lando Kingdom, but their methods were more elegant.

They didn't choose to launch a direct assault; instead, Alice used her singing to control a portion of the enemy lizardmen soldiers from behind the city walls.

She manipulated them to open the city gate from the inside. Then, she controlled them to attack the other lizardmen soldiers.

Seeing their comrades attacking them, the soldiers of the Lando Kingdom's lizardmen panicked and had no time to deal with Alice and Benbo's forces. This made it easy for Benbo to take control of the city gate effortlessly.

Following this, Alice continued to control a large group of enemy soldiers in a snowballing manner, making them fight for her.

Facing Alice's singing, the enemy had no idea how to respond and could only watch helplessly as Alice and her troops pushed forward with high spirits.

In the end, the city's defenses were effortlessly dismantled.

Throughout the battle, their recruited troops didn't have to lift a finger and simply watched the spectacle unfold, making them the most relaxed force in this campaign.

With the fall of the three capitals, it meant that the three lizardmen kingdoms had been annihilated.

Besides the capitals, there were still some caves of varying sizes in the three kingdoms that held a small number of resistance forces.

Ji Chen also had no intention of spending too much effort personally subduing each and every one.

He directly allowed the leaders and generals of the Dork Kingdom, along with their lizardman army, to go and eliminate them one by one, bringing them under his rule.

On a bright and sunny morning, Ji Chen finally finished dealing with the underground affairs and returned to the surface.

Looking at the azure sky, the lush forests, and hearing the chirping of birds and insects, his mood instantly improved.

In the underground lizardmen kingdoms, everything he saw was either rocks or magma, and the scenery was monotonous and dull, devoid of anything that could relax a person.

After spending so many days there, he longed for everything on the surface.

However, after a short moment of rest, Ji Chen once again immersed himself in his work.

Little did he know that a new crisis was slowly approaching the Crown of the Ocean..

Chapter 215: Alchemist Irona, Unknown Guest

Deep within an underground cavity, several kilometers beneath the surface, scorching magma filled the space, reigning supreme with its overwhelming high temperature.

In such an environment, no living beings could survive here.

However...

At the center of the magma-filled cavity, a colossal body coiled, resembling a mountain in size.

Antler-like crystal spikes emitted a radiance that even the magma could not conceal.

Six wings enveloped the body, their edges sharp as they showcased the formidable power of their owner.

Beneath the glass-like crystal scales, veins akin to tree leaves spread throughout, connecting and converging at the massive heart, pumping blood to every part of the body with each rhythmic beat.

It was evident that this enigmatic creature was in a state of hibernation or deep slumber.

Suddenly, in accordance with a certain rhythm, the heart, which had been beating steadily, leaped with a surge of energy. The powerful beats transmitted tremendous energy, propelling it through the magma within the vast cavity and bursting into countless streams of upward magma flow.

Crown of the Ocean.

Lord Manor.

“Did the tremors last night cause any collapses in the underground lizardman kingdom and kobold caves?”

“Report, my lord, we haven’t received any reports yet, but I have ordered them to intensify their investigation.”

Upon hearing Wilius’ report, Ji Chen nodded.

Last night, while everyone was fast asleep, the tremors that had occurred on the mountain peak resurfaced once again.

However, just like the previous time, after one tremor, everything fell silent.

Therefore, suspecting that the previous tremor was not a coincidence, Ji Chen immediately dispatched troops to the underground lizardman kingdom to see if there were any issues there.

According to the information received, the lizardmen had also sensed the tremors but hadn’t discovered anything abnormal.

However, if there was any slight abnormality, it was in the increased activity of the magma river flowing underground.

Ji Chen was puzzled by this situation.

Helplessly, he had the lizardmen stationed by the magma river, closely monitoring for any anomalies that might indicate a volcanic eruption.

During the recent days of conquering the lizardman kingdom, Ji Chen had come to know that the four major lizardman kingdoms were situated beneath the entirety of the New Moon Islands, with a portion below the islands themselves and another part lying beneath the ocean floor.

Considering the widespread magma rivers underground, it was safe to say that most of the New Moon Islands had been formed due to volcanic eruptions.

If left unchecked, a volcanic eruption could bring devastating consequences. Not only would the underground lizardmen face instant peril, but the very existence of the New Moon Islands would be at risk of annihilation.

All Ji Chen could do for now was to be vigilant. After all, facing a disaster like a volcanic eruption, there was nothing human power could do except escape.

However, according to the thousands of years of history the lizardmen possessed, this volcano had already entered a dormant state. As long as there were no external forces, it was unlikely to erupt on its own.

Thinking of this, Ji Chen seemed to recall something and asked, “How is Irona’s progress now?”

“She has joined us. Irona’s alchemy skills are the most formidable I’ve ever seen, well, the most formidable for a half-orc. The healing potions she prepares can greatly accelerate the healing process of injuries.”

“The reason why the injured half-orcs can recover so quickly is largely due to her potions.”

Wiius’ face showed some admiration as he continued, “Besides healing potions, Irona also prepares various other potions like the Rage Potion, Breathing Potion, Blindness Potion, and dozens more. As long as she has enough materials, she can continuously produce all kinds of potions.”

“My lord, where did you find her? It’s like finding a treasure!”

Ji Chen smiled and replied, “Believe it or not, I met her on the way back.”

Indeed, Irona was not a combat-type hero but rather the first “technical” talent in Crown of the Ocean, a master alchemist skilled in concocting various potions.

[Irona (Hero)]

[Race]: Half-Orc

[Secondary Profession]: Master Alchemist

[Level]: 20

[Current Tier]: Purple (Rare Tier)

[Potential]: Purple (Rare Tier)

[Skills]: Potion Mixing (Purple Skill, able to concoct various potions)

Material Identification (Purple Skill, able to keenly discern various materials)

Talent Creation (Purple Skill, through long-term research, able to develop new potions)

Absolute Loyalty (Purple Skill, absolutely loyal to the lord, unwavering until death)

[This is an extremely rare humanoid female hero among the half-orcs, and also a herbalist that is difficult to find among millions of half-orcs. She is also an expert-level alchemist, a near-extinct profession.]

From the description, it could be understood that among the half-orcs, who were physically developed but had simple minds and an average intelligence not exceeding 50, finding an expert-level alchemist was an unimaginable feat.

Yet, such a “talent” was accidentally encountered by Ji Chen and even successfully recruited.

To fully utilize her talent, which was ten times stronger than that of a senior alchemist, Ji Chen gave special instructions to build a dedicated alchemy workshop for her. He also mobilized a large

number of lizardmen and kobolds to search for various herbal materials on the surface and underground.

The first batch of healing potions she concocted was immediately used on the injured half-orcs in this battle.

Clearly, the effects were excellent.

It was truly worthy of all the effort he put in to make Irona submit to him back then..

Chapter 216: Alchemist Irona, Unknown Guest (2)

Well, what reward would be suitable?

Well! Let's reward her handsomely tonight!

"Alright, you can go about your tasks."

After dismissing Wilus, Ji Chen stood up, stretched lazily, and felt content.

After the incident with the underground lizardman kingdom, the Crown of the Ocean entered a period of stable development.

Every day, various buildings sprung up from the ground. The residential area on the east side of the Lord Manor had expanded from its initial twenty or thirty houses to nearly two hundred.

At a glance, the houses were neatly arranged, hidden among lush vegetation, giving the area a villa-like feel.

On the other side, the military recruitment camp was surrounded by walls, with dozens of recruitment camps standing within, forming a military zone.

On the muddy flats to the east of the Crown of the Ocean, close to fifty warships of various kinds were anchored, their masts rising and their flags fluttering, presenting an awe-inspiring sight.

Every day, more than ten warships patrolled around the New Moon Islands and within the Stormy Sea, ensuring safety.

Not far from the water fort, the commercial port had been completed two days ago.

This commercial port could accommodate up to a hundred merchant ships, and more than thirty mechanical cranes stood on the docks, easily loading and unloading heavy cargo.

It was believed that in the near future, this place would be as prosperous as Silver Harbor, filled with merchant ships from all over.

The sea rice cultivation area, located several kilometers to the west of the territory, had grown to over a thousand mu thanks to the diligent efforts of the native tribes.

A sea of green rice plants gently swayed in the breeze, bringing a sense of joy.

Indeed, "a vast expanse of fertile land" could not describe it any better.

From the underground lizardman world and the kobold caves, an endless stream of ores, fluorescent mushrooms, and various weapons and equipment were transported out and piled up in the warehouse.

A portion of these resources would be used for the needs of the territory, while the remaining would be preserved until Raymond's return to sell and trade them for the required resources.

After going through several events before, the Crown of the Ocean had gained a large amount of labor force, and now every aspect of the territory was rapidly developing.

Each day brought about new changes, and it could be described as ever-changing.

Ji Chen casually opened the territory panel and noticed that the prosperity level had already reached over 170,000 points, far surpassing the requirement to upgrade to a "City".

Seeing this, he didn't hesitate and immediately chose to upgrade the territory.

The tens of thousands of resources needed for the upgrade were nothing to him now; he spent them without even batting an eye.

Soon, after clicking the upgrade button five times in a row, a system prompt popped up.

"Ding- Territory level successfully increased (from 5th-level Town to 1st-level City)."

"Ding- City-level buildings have been unlocked."

Upon reaching City-level, the appearance of the Lord Manor underwent a tremendous change.

It transformed from a two-story attic into a four-story castle with a main and auxiliary building, featuring a red roof and white walls that combined both formidable defense and elegance.

Each floor had several rooms, including reception rooms, dining halls, and storage rooms, all well-equipped.

Ji Chen took a leisurely stroll around and revealed a satisfied expression.

This was the kind of Lord Manor a lord should reside in.

Next, he opened the panel to check the current size of the territory.

As a 1st-level City, the territory covered an area of three kilometers in length and width, totaling nine square kilometers, equivalent to ninety thousand square meters of land.

Not too big, but not too small either.

However, it still couldn't cover even one-tenth of the main island.

Ji Chen felt slightly dissatisfied and decided to upgrade it further, directly raising it to a 5th-level City.

This time, he was more satisfied as the 5th-level City covered an area of a square with a length and width of ten kilometers, totaling one hundred square kilometers.

Yet, it was worth mentioning that since the Crown of the Ocean was originally situated on the southeast side of the main island, nearly three-fifths of this one hundred square kilometers were located in the sea, with only about forty square kilometers covering the main island.

This was one of the frustrating aspects of island-type territories. When upgrading, the included land might be less than half of what a land-type territory would have.

Just as Ji Chen was considering whether to directly upgrade to a Mega City, a commotion arose from outside.

“Unidentified enemies spotted in the waters! Be on alert!”

Ji Chen’s expression turned serious, and he closed the panel before immediately walking out.

The residents didn’t show signs of panic; they continued with their work confidently, knowing that the Lord and the territory’s army would protect them from any harm.

As Ji Chen stepped out, they greeted him with salutes and well wishes.

“My Lord.”

“You’ve worked hard, my Lord...”

Ji Chen nodded in response and checked the detection map from the warning lighthouse.

On the radar-like map, there was a red dot representing an unknown vessel in the northeast direction of the New Moon Islands, slowly moving on the sea surface.

Two of his own warships were rushing towards it at full speed.

As Ji Chen observed the red dot on the detection map, which seemed to be a ship, moving slowly along the edge of the storm, he furrowed his brow.

This appearance didn’t seem like an enemy; instead, it resembled a ship that had accidentally strayed here, emanating a sense of bewilderment.

Meanwhile, in the northeast waters of the New Moon Islands...

An extremely damaged warship was navigating on the sea, listing heavily.

Two of its three masts were broken, and the remaining one showed signs of severe damage. The ship’s sails were torn with several large holes.

On the chaotic deck, sailors were working hard to repair the damaged hull and attend to the injured..

Chapter 218: Tension and Conflict

Looking at the two fully armed warships approaching, the captain, guards, and sailors were on high alert.

Swords were drawn, crossbows loaded.

Unable to determine if they were friends or foes.

If they were friends, they might request help from the Lienhardt Grand Duchy in the name of the nation.

But if they were enemies...

Their hearts sank; even though they were prepared to sacrifice themselves, they would do everything to protect the safety of the Lady.

“Brave soldiers, please temporarily put down your weapons,”

The Lady suddenly stood up, her melodious voice like a lark resounding.

Everyone was startled, and the captain asked in puzzlement, “My Lady, we can’t afford to lower our guard until we know whether they are enemies or friends!”

“Exactly. If we brandish our weapons first, we might turn someone who was friendly or had the potential to become a friend into an enemy.”

The Lady gazed at them, her delicate face adorned with a playful smile, “Besides, we can’t win against them anyway, can we?”

These words left the captain and his crew momentarily stunned, then they couldn’t help but smile wryly; they had to admit, the Lady always managed to persuade them from a certain perspective, and it sounded quite reasonable.

“Very well, let’s all temporarily lay down our weapons.” The chief guard sighed helplessly, shaking his head. “But remember, if they show any malice, we’ll counterattack immediately, with the priority of protecting the Lady’s safety!”

As the warships approached closer, everyone’s vigilance reached its peak.

However, when they saw the figures on the ship, they were all taken aback.

Well... not only were there humans on the ship, but also murlocs, nagas, and adorable flying creatures.

Various races mixed together like a hodgepodge.

Just as they were astonished,

In addition to these, dozens of sea tribe warriors riding giant lobsters emerged from the sea, followed by hundreds of enormous alchemical devilfish and floating sea spiders.

There were also several giant birds flying in a formation in the sky.

A diverse array of powerful soldiers surrounded them in an instant, eyeing them warily.

The two warships encircled them from both sides, and the dozen or so cannon barrels on the ship exuded a chilling air.

The captain and chief guard looked at this scene, their expressions growing more solemn. They discreetly shielded the Lady behind them, their muscles tensing, their hands on the hilt of their blades, ready to unsheath them at any moment.

The atmosphere instantly became tense, both sides poised for conflict.

Just as the heavy tension reached its climax, a voice came from the ship.

“This is the Stormy Sea, the private domain of our lord.”

“Who are you, and why have you trespassed here?”

Hearing this, the captain and his group were immediately stunned.

What? The Stormy Sea is the private domain of their lord?

Seeing them remain silent, the voice spoke again, this time with some impatience.

“I’ll ask again, who are you, and why have you come here!?”

The captain took a deep breath, sheathed his half-drawn sword, and performed the standard salute of the Lienhardt Grand Duchy’s navy toward the source of the voice, “I honor Your Excellency, I am the captain of the Radiant Envoy under the command of the Lienhardt Grand Duchy’s navy, currently on a mission.

We were unaware that this place had a lord, nor did we intend to trespass. However, we were attacked on our journey, and to escape the pursuit, we had no choice but to take the risk of passing through the storm and seek refuge here.

But unfortunately, the Radiant Envoy suffered continuous damage, and it became severely damaged, sinking to the point of no return. Therefore, we had to abandon the ship and flee.”

The captain pointed at the debris floating on the nearby sea surface, explaining in detail, his expression sincere, bowing again respectfully.

“We might have caused offense, so on behalf of the Lienhardt Grand Duchy, please accept our sincere apology.”

It must be said that this approach is impeccable. They first explain their reasons and then apologize while subtly mentioning their backing.

This method showed humility, gave the other party respect, and also created a certain level of deterrence.

Even from the most critical perspective, it is difficult to find any fault.

However, they couldn’t have anticipated the kind of leader they were dealing with.

Listening to the rapid explanation, Anina suddenly felt a headache, but at least she caught the most crucial point.

Inadvertent intrusion.

That made things easy.

Anina waved her hand dismissively, “Then just leave now.”

The captain and chief guard subconsciously looked down at the small boat they were standing on, and even though they maintained a composed appearance, their lips couldn’t help twitching.

Leave in this small boat?

They were afraid they might get capsized by the storm before even sailing out of the stormy sea, going straight to meet all the past Grand Dukes of the Lienhardt Grand Duchy.

“Allow me to negotiate with them,” the girl, supported by her maids, emerged from behind the captain and chief guard, facing the opposite side.

“Please be careful, My Lady...” Both men subconsciously tried to shield the girl behind them, but she stopped them with a raised hand.

“It’s fine; they are not enemies.”

The girl shook her head, lifting her head like a proud peacock, looking up at Anina, who stood on the deck of the several-meter-high warship.

Her expression neither haughty nor subservient, even on the slightly swaying small boat, she elegantly performed a kneeling salute.

“I am Monica Valencia, daughter of the Lienhardt Grand Duchy’s ruler.”

“Due to an enemy attack, the Radiant Envoy has sunk, and the supplies onboard have been lost to the sea. With only our current resources and ships, we don’t have enough to return..”

Chapter 219: Tension and Conflict (2)

“Therefore, I would like to request your help in returning to the Lienhardt Grand Duchy. The Valencia Family of the Lienhardt Grand Duchy will surely not forget the helping hand you extend to us.”

“My Lady!” The captain and the chief guard were both startled and alarmed, their expressions turning sour. How could they directly reveal their names and identities like that?

Even though the Lienhardt Grand Duchy was only one of the several duchies and kingdoms along the northwestern coast of the central ocean of the Northern Continent, it wasn’t the most powerful presence.

Nonetheless, being a noble daughter of a grand duke made her a distinguished figure next to the grand duke himself, a cherished jewel in his eyes.

If the other party were to know about Your Highness’s identity, would they harbor any ill intentions?

What made them simultaneously relieved and somewhat frustrated was that upon hearing this, Anina’s petite eyebrows furrowed, casting a disdainful gaze, and she spoke with an air of royal contempt.

“Lienhardt Grand Duchy? Never heard of it. As for who you are, a princess of a kingdom? Without a decree from higher authorities, not even an imperial princess would be allowed entry!

As for any assistance, it’s the same as before. Without a decree from higher authorities, I won’t even offer a strand of hair.”

So, if you’re sensible, leave this place immediately. Otherwise, hmph...”

With the Dragon Slayer Great Sword resting on her shoulder, Anina glanced at them, “I can handle you on my own, and the sea wouldn’t mind having more nourishment for life.”

Clang-

All the sailors and guards on the Radiant Envoy drew their blades and weapons fiercely, glaring at them.

Loyalty demanded that they not let their sovereign be insulted, even if it meant sacrificing their lives.

Thus, faced with an opponent far stronger than them, they didn't hesitate to brandish their weapons.

In response to their actions, the gunners on the two warships loaded their cannons, getting ready to fire.

The Dragon Blood Murlocs and Naga Berserkers lifted their tridents and bone blades, their eyes filled with a crimson hue.

The Lobster Rider's gaze turned ice-cold, holding his iron spear under his arm, poised to charge.

The Self-Detonating Water Spider moved its thin legs gently, prowling on the outskirts, prepared to self-destruct and charge into the enemy ranks.

Under the sea's surface, the Ocean Guardians waited for the signal to move, while in the deeper waters, the massive Giant Octopus swam slowly.

In the air, the Sky Guardians glided by, their claws reflecting a metallic sheen in the sunlight.

Suddenly, a profoundly weighty atmosphere shrouded the surroundings, the tension so tangible that a mere spark could ignite it into flames.

Seeing this, Monica grew anxious and clenched her teeth.

"Please calm down, Your Excellency. This is not the outcome we intended, and we never meant to offend the lord's authority. If possible, could you grant us an audience with the lord?"

After speaking, Monica's eyes revealed a glimmer of hope, but what she saw was Anina unmoved.

A tinge of disappointment flashed across Anina's face, and she pursed her lips. "Fine, we'll leave now..."

However, all of a sudden, a Sky Guardian swiftly flew down from the sky in the distance and landed on the warship.

On it was a half-orc, the hero Daro.

He surveyed the surroundings, hopped off the Sky Guardian, and walked briskly to Anina, speaking in a deep voice.

"The Lord has given orders not to offend them. Escort them to the island. He wants to meet these foreign guests."

Upon hearing this, Monica's downcast expression immediately brightened, and she excitedly waved her little fist at the captain and others.

Seeing this, the captain's group also eased their expressions, exchanging glances and sheathing their weapons.

Anina rolled her eyes. “Withdraw all troops. Let these people board the ship and head to the New Moon Islands. Otherwise, with these small boats, who knows when they’ll arrive on the island.”

Upon hearing this, the previously hostile army froze in place.

The Dragon Blood Murlocs and others retracted their weapons and stationed themselves at the ship’s railings.

The gunners returned the cannons to their positions, secured the ammunition, and closed the cannon doors.

The Lobster Riders submerged into the sea, disappearing without a trace.

In an instant, the tension gradually dissipated, as if the air had become much lighter.

Anina looked at the jubilant Monica, who couldn’t contain her excitement, and impatiently said, “Hurry up, don’t keep the Lord waiting.”

Rowing small boats, the group successively boarded the warship and were directly settled on the deck.

Although the atmosphere devoid of battle lingered, the troops stationed on the ship remained vigilant, watching these unfamiliar guests with a subtle sense of suspicion.

The suppressed atmosphere still hung in the air.

The captain of the Radiant Envoy, the chief guard, and all the sailors and guards were tense, their muscles tight. At the slightest sign of trouble, they would immediately lead their Lady to escape.

However, upon turning around and seeing their Lady looking around with delight, their faces turned blank for a moment, then they forced a bitter smile.

Oh, my lady, haven’t you observed the rather peculiar ambiance around us?

Perhaps sensing their thoughts, Monica smiled brightly.

“Anyway, we’re already on the ship. No matter how nervous we are, it won’t make a difference. Even if they throw us into the sea now, we can’t resist. In that case, it’s better to think about how to communicate with the lord later. Actually, I’ve been curious for a while now and have a few questions to ask.

For example, what kind of person is the lord who possesses an entire sea territory as their domain? What are their personality and appearance like? The New Moon Islands they mentioned, what kind of islands are they?

And that beautiful girl who was holding such a huge sword earlier, she’s really impressive. I can’t even wield a long sword myself. If possible, I’d really like to be friends with her...”

Monica poured out her thoughts like an innocent little girl.

Intentionally or unintentionally, these words were overheard by Anina, who was sitting on the ship’s rail. Her gaze changed, softening a bit.

She thought to herself, “This girl leading them doesn’t seem that clever. With such an innocent demeanor, she’s still a duke’s daughter. Maybe the lord could gain some advantages and benefits from this...”

As she thought, her guard lowered slightly.

Anina looked at Monica, unaware that Monica was also sneakily observing her.

Noticing Anina’s softened gaze, Monica couldn’t help but smile inwardly.

” Well, this girl is quite easy to handle. But would she be upset if she knew that I’m acting?”

However, for the sake of the duchy, for the sake of being able to return, there was no other choice.

Monica stood at the ship’s railing, cutting through the waves along with the warship. She gazed into the distance and gradually saw the outline of an archipelago – seven islands.

Her little mouth dropped open.

So there really was such a large archipelago within the Stormy Sea. And it was ruled by a lord.

Soon, Monica began to ponder the significance of this archipelago and the strategic value of the lord.

This archipelago was located within the Stormy Sea, adjacent to the Golden Passage of the Central Ocean. Its geographical value was incredibly high.

As long as the storms on the sea’s fringe remained somewhat manageable and the islands had ports, once this location came into the world’s awareness, it would unquestionably create a significant commotion.

On that premise, what could the Lienhardt Grand Duchy do? What role could they play here?

Unconsciously, Monica, born into the ducal family, started to think about many things – economics, politics, diplomacy, military...

But soon, she calmed down.

Perhaps this plea for help was also an opportunity, a chance to intersect with this territory, with its lord.

As they drew closer to the archipelago, the envoy party of the Radiant Envoy was surprised to find that the island was even more prosperous than they had imagined.

Buildings covered the islands, extending for kilometers and bustling with human activity.

Large warship forts and commercial ports stood side by side, with dozens of warships anchored, showcasing their might.

People moved densely along the roads, transporting resources and goods, creating a bustling scene.

Was this the domain they had arrived at?

Chapter 220: He Will Make This Deal

Without their realization, the warship had drawn closer to the harbor. Anina gracefully disembarked from the ship's railing and waved to Monica's group, who were still observing their surroundings with the curiosity of children. "What are you all staring at? Hurry down and follow me to meet the lord." Upon hearing this, the captain and the chief guard were about to address their lady when they saw her enthusiastically running toward the dock and stepping onto the pier.

Witnessing this, the two exchanged helpless glances and followed suit.

Monica trailed behind Anina, her eyes wandering around, taking in everything at the harbor.

Before her was a scene of orderly activity, even verging on the peculiar.

The population consisted not only of humans but also included half-orcs, kobolds, lizardmen, and sea-dwellers. Despite their diverse races, there was a noticeable absence of discord or hostility among them.

This territory actually harbored such a diverse array of races? And they coexisted so harmoniously?

Seeing this sight left Monica and the rest of the group astonished.

What amazed them even more was the constant smiles on the faces of passersby and workers, radiating contentment and fulfillment.

Even in their busy movements, one could sense the vitality and liveliness that permeated this land.

"My Lady, this territory seems rather unusual..." the captain murmured in a hushed tone, his eyes filled with surprise. "I've never seen so many different races living together in harmony."

"Different races have significant differences in habits, and being able to bridge those differences suggests that the lord here is quite extraordinary..."

The chief guard chimed in, "Our Lienhardt Grand Duchy is relatively tolerant of different races, but internal racial conflicts do occur from time to time. So, such a situation is indeed quite rare."

Monica nodded and watched as Anina strode ahead with determination. A thoughtful expression crossed her face. "Since this territory manages to achieve such harmony, the lord here must have some unique methods. We might be able to learn something by asking."

Following Anina, the group left the harbor and ventured into the jungle.

Over time, the road from the harbor to the stone plaza where the lord's manor was located had evolved from a muddy path into a wide stone road that could accommodate three horse-drawn carriages side by side.

The trees on both sides had been meticulously pruned to provide shade and enhance the aesthetics. Colorful flowers and plants adorned the roadside.

Indigenous birds unique to the island perched on the treetops, observing the passing group with curiosity.

Monica marveled at the scenery along the way and began to gain a clearer understanding.

This territory was undoubtedly prosperous; otherwise, they wouldn't have the resources to construct such facilities.

As they strolled along the cobblestone path stretching for hundreds of meters, the scenery ahead unexpectedly expanded before their eyes.

A stone plaza appeared before their eyes.

On one side of the plaza stretched rows of residential houses for hundreds of meters, while directly in front of the plaza stood a castle with white walls and a red roof.

Seeing the towering swordswoman turn her head, she pointed towards the castle and spoke.

“Here you go, the lord is waiting for you right there. However, except for you, the rest must remain here.”

“How can that be?” The captain and chief guard were the first to object, exchanging glances before one of them said, “At the very least, we should also be allowed inside.”

In the end, their request was personally rejected by Monica, stating that since they had already come this far, there was no need to worry about danger.

Guided by Anina, Monica entered the castle and arrived in a spacious hall.

Crystal lamps on both sides of the walls emitted ample light, preventing the interior from appearing dim. This illumination allowed Monica to immediately spot Ji Chen seated on the steps.

Upon getting a clear view of Ji Chen’s appearance, Monica’s eyes widened in surprise.

She had pondered what the lord might look like—perhaps a middle-aged person emanating authority, or an elderly individual with silver hair. Yet, she had never imagined that the lord would be such a young and handsome man. He couldn’t be much older than her, could he?

Observing Monica’s astonishment, Ji Chen curiously asked, “You seem surprised?”

Monica retracted her surprised expression, gracefully performed a kneeled curtsy, and then adorned her face with her characteristic smile.

“Yes, I didn’t anticipate you being so young and already possessing such a powerful territory. In my experience, it’s quite an unheard-of feat.”

At her words, a smile involuntarily appeared on Ji Chen’s face. This wave of praise, regardless of its size, made him feel rather pleased.

However, he quickly regained his composure and spoke seriously.

“I am Ji Chen, the ruler of the Stormy Sea and the New Moon Islands, as well as the lord of this territory—the Crown of the Ocean. I welcome your visit here. My subordinates may have been a bit offensive earlier, and I ask for your understanding.”

Monica quickly shook her head and said, “No, it’s we who should seek your forgiveness. We entered without your consent, which, by rights, calls for our apology.

It’s a pity that the Radiant Envoy has already sunk, otherwise, for our visit to your territory, we should have presented a gift as a token of our meeting.” Speaking up, Monica paused for a moment,

then clenched her teeth and took off the necklace from her neck. “This is a protective item my father gave me before. Now, we offer it as a gift to you. We hope it meets your satisfaction.”

A gift from the Grand Duke of the Lienhardt Grand Duchy?

Out of curiosity, Ji Chen focused his gaze, examining the necklace for more information..