

## **Ocean Lord 531**

### *Chapter 531: Zunong's Action, True Buffet, Elf Squad*

After several days of travel, the Wasteland Guild led by Zunong, the Jungle Guild led by Pando, as well as many smaller guilds and solo players from the Bass Kingdom's camp, finally withdrew from the front lines and returned to the Bass Kingdom's territory.

They coordinated with some Bass Kingdom soldiers who had rushed from the city of Kaiserven and successfully cleared out the Lienhardt Marine Corps that had been blocking Ilkand City, regaining control of the mountainous areas outside Ilkand City.

As for the Lienhardt fleet that had traveled a thousand miles to launch a surprise attack on Ilkand City, upon seeing numerous enemies and the arrival of reinforcements, they chose not to stay and fight but promptly retreated, disappearing into the vast sea.

It was at this moment that they received news of the Thorey and Pelan Kingdoms declaring war on the Bass Kingdom and the Bass Kingdom Expeditionary Force retreating and entering a defensive phase. Many were shocked.

Just yesterday, they heard about the Bass Kingdom's imminent capture of Feiguang City, with a seemingly unstoppable offensive that could have wiped out Lienhardt. Now, why had the situation suddenly taken a turn for the worse, plunging into such a negative outlook?

However, among the Bass Kingdom camp players who felt that things were not going well and had become somewhat pessimistic, there were very few who felt a burst of joy.

Inside a mansion in Ilkand City.

"The Lienhardt army has entered the territory of the Bass Kingdom, and their morale is extremely high. The Bass Kingdom Expeditionary Force has left only a small portion of its troops to delay the enemy, while the main force has retreated to Ilkand City."

"I heard that the Northern Thorey Kingdom and Pelan Kingdom have also launched their full-scale attacks. Guild Leader, why do I feel like the Bass Kingdom is about to fall? Shouldn't we consider running away?"

Looking at the anxious expression of his trusted subordinate, Zunong calmly took a sip of tea and replied, "No rush."

No rush? Guild Leader, the enemies are about to kill us upfront!

As the Wasteland Guild, aligned with the Bass Kingdom camp, they would undoubtedly be targeted by Lienhardt once the Bass Kingdom was defeated.

They would either face annihilation or expulsion, and either way, it would spell their doom.

Seeing Zunong's calm demeanor, the subordinate suddenly calmed down and asked in a low voice, "Does Guild Leader already have a plan?"

Zunong smiled without answering and instead asked, "Have our brothers all returned to the city?"

“Most of them have gathered in the city, but Ilkand City doesn’t allow our troops to enter. We can only camp and build defenses outside the city to confront the Lienhardt army. It’s clearly using us as cannon fodder!”

Zunong’s expression darkened. Keeping their troops outside the city without the protection of walls was essentially making them cannon fodder.

Damn it, they really don’t treat us like human beings.

Zunong’s expression grew serious, and he said in a deep voice, “Since they don’t treat us as equals, then we won’t serve them either.”

“What do you mean by that, Guild Leader?”

“I’ve reached an agreement with Ji Chen. If we turn against the Bass Kingdom and help Lienhardt win this war, not only will Lienhardt not hold us accountable for our previous mistakes, but they will also reward us handsomely.”

His trusted subordinate’s expression changed, almost shouting out, but after looking around to make sure there was no one nearby, he cautiously spoke, “Can we trust this? Setting aside whether it can be achieved, what if Lienhardt turns on us afterward?”

In this place, deception and intrigue were common, and no one could guarantee the authenticity of such promises.

Zunong was no fool, and he wouldn’t take his entire guild on a risky venture based solely on Ji Chen’s words.

Setting down his teacup, Zunong stood up with a solemn expression.

“So, we must send our men to the Lienhardt army first and get a commitment from someone with enough credibility.

Ji Chen told me that we could send someone to approach Monica, the daughter of the Duke of Lienhardt. A commitment from a native of her caliber would be credible enough.

Right now, have our contacts get in touch with Monica immediately. Ensure all communication is done privately, without the Bass Kingdom finding out; they are wary of us as well.”

The in-game chat system was the most discreet means of transmitting information between players. Even if the natives monitored it, they couldn’t know when the information was being passed.

Watching his trusted subordinate depart, Zunong took a deep breath, loosening his clenched fists. He realized his palms were sweaty.

He was not a person to sit and await his fate. If the Bass Kingdom was destined to fall, he wouldn’t go down with it.

However, he also didn’t mind giving a gentle push from behind to a Bass Kingdom that was already teetering on the edge.

Coincidentally, in another mansion located on the opposite side of Ilkand City, Pando, the leader of the Jungle Guild, also issued similar orders to his trusted subordinates.

Beneath the calm surface of the sea, there were hidden undercurrents swirling.

At the same time, deep within the ancient battlefield's mystic realm, on a moss-covered slope's steep face.

Benbo rushed down from the slope and came before Ji Chen, saluting and saying, "Master, we've found a hidden mountain valley entrance about three kilometers ahead. There are a large number of black creatures there, and it seems to be one of their habitats."

Ji Chen nodded; he was curious about these creatures that were as black as charcoal and resembled crawlers.

What were these creatures surviving on?

Setting aside the incredibly tough conditions of the desolate ice fields and ignoring the vast icebergs and various dead bodies, there was nothing else..

How could they possibly discover sufficient food to support such a large population of dark creatures?

*Chapter 532: Zunong's Action, True Buffet, Elf Squad (2)*

"Could it be that they eat corpses?"

This thought flashed through Ji Chen's mind, and when he subconsciously denied it, he suddenly realized something.

Wait a minute, maybe these creatures survive by eating corpses. After all, in this vast ancient battlefield, there are frozen intact corpses everywhere, and they don't even need preservation. The eternal ice is a natural refrigerator for storing food. As long as they get hungry, they can dig it out and eat it.

Today they eat humans, tomorrow they eat elves, the day after tomorrow they eat orcs, without repeating a meal.

A true buffet.

Coming back to his senses, Ji Chen asked, "Is there anything else you've discovered?"

Benbo shook his head and said, "Nothing else. It seems that apart from the monotonous glaciers, there's nothing noteworthy here."

Ji Chen furrowed his brow slightly. After leaving the Bass Kingdom fleet, they ventured more than a hundred kilometers, but they found nothing.

Here, it seemed that there was no distinction between day and night. The cold sunlight constantly shone on this icy plain, without any prominent landmarks. This made him lose track of time; he only knew that it had been one or two days.

And there was still no sign of the so-called divine relic.

"...Then let's proceed to that valley."

"Understood."

These black creatures resembling crawlers also had names.

[Deviant Ghost]

[Race]: Deviant Ghost

[Tier]: Fourth Tier, 8 stars

[Level]: 35

[Skills]: N/A

[Note]: These deformed monsters evolved over a long time from surviving believers of the God War.

When the Ocean Crown army appeared near the entrance of the valley, hundreds of Deviant Ghosts, who were wandering near the valley entrance as guards, instantly noticed the unwelcome guests. They emitted sharp cries and rushed towards them, their blood-red eyes filled with a desire for food.

These creatures that could move emitted an extremely delicious aroma, and this fresh flesh and blood must be much tastier than the dried-up corpses frozen in ice.

The Deviant Ghosts, having spent a long time on the icy plains, had developed claws that enabled them to move swiftly on the slippery ice. These claws acted like spikes, giving them better traction than even the Desert Wolves and making them faster.

When this wave of Deviant Ghosts rushed within a hundred meters, the Water Nymph Archers did not hesitate to release a rain of arrows, instantly nailing over a hundred Deviant Ghosts to the ice, and the black, foul-smelling blood flowed all over the place.

Immediately after that, a wave of magical arrows rained down from the sky. The violent explosion of magical energy easily tore their bodies apart, scattering their limbs all over the place.

Two clean and efficient waves of attacks resolved hundreds of Deviant Ghosts.

There was no joy of victory. Ji Chen waved his hand calmly, and the Ocean Crown army stepped over the broken bodies of the Deviant Ghosts and arrived at the entrance of the valley.

Inside the valley, it wasn't as desolate as the outside ice plains. Shielded from the frigid wind, the temperature suddenly warmed up. An ice river meandered through the valley, and lush vegetation grew on both sides of the river. Bushes scattered along the banks bore red wild fruits, giving a sense of vitality.

It seemed that this ice plain wasn't just ice glaciers; there were also places teeming with life.

Ji Chen looked at the steep slopes on both sides of the valley, which looked like they had been gnawed by dogs. They were littered with hundreds of large holes, which should be the nesting places of the Deviant Ghosts.

At this moment, the Deviant Ghosts inside the holes also reacted to the commotion outside. They crawled out like ants, and their numbers quickly reached over a thousand, still increasing rapidly.

Without exception, they detected the scent of fresh blood and meat in the air, and their eyes were greedy and cruel. Without hesitation, they charged towards the source of the aroma.

As the Deviant Ghosts swarmed like locusts, Ji Chen slowly raised his right hand and then swung it down firmly.

Boom!

Many units that had already formed their formations erupted with a powerful momentum. There was no fear on their faces, only a resolute fighting spirit that could break through the sky.

Whoosh!

A sharp whistle echoed in the sky.

Waves of arrows carrying terrifying killing intent shot up into the air and pierced through the bodies of the Deviant Ghosts before they could react, causing them to fall to the ground in agony.

But the ones behind them did not evade; they marched straight ahead, trampling over their fallen comrades and turning them into a pile of flesh pulp. The filthy blood seeped into the muddy soil of the valley, staining the ice river with a hint of blackness.

However, such casualties did not deter these malformed monsters, who knew nothing of what life meant. The strong scent of black blood and gore only further stirred the murky blood coursing through their bodies like a hodgepodge. Their charging speed increased, and they charged toward the frontlines, arrows raining down upon them like raindrops.

After previously helping to relieve the pressure on Feiguang City and engaging in numerous battles against players and guilds, the Ocean Crown army suffered significant losses.

The Nagas Legion and the Dragonblood Legion, in particular, had suffered heavy casualties. The two legions now had a total of just over 700 units, but they still formed a formidable force. Relying on the narrow valley entrance, they had forged an unshakable defense line with their own flesh and blood.

“Ding- Your army has killed a small group of Deviant Ghosts and gained 19,500 experience points.”

“Ding- Your army has killed a small group of Deviant Ghosts and gained 18,000 experience points.”

Although there were many Deviant Ghosts, under the relentless onslaught of the Ocean Crown’s rolling cutting edge, they amounted to nothing more than experience points on the experience bar.

After countless battles and clashes, Ji Chen had finally reached level 48. Looking at the slowly increasing experience bar, a hint of satisfaction flashed across his face..

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Although killing these Deviant Ghosts didn’t yield much, the experience points they provided were quite generous.

As one of the factors that make up their strength, level played a crucial role for magic-based professions.

For example, among legendary-tier magic-based professions, the power displayed by a level 40 mage and a level 50 mage was evidently not on the same level; the gap in their strength could be several times over.

And individuals like Elin, an epic-tier mage who was nearly at the maximum level, could easily handle a hundred of them without breaking a sweat.

Recalling the immense power that Elin demonstrated in the past, Ji Chen couldn't help but feel a sense of admiration and motivation.

He believed that one day, he could reach that level, and perhaps even surpass it!

“Full-scale assault, leave none behind!”

Hearing the supreme command from their leader, the morale of the legion surged, and they pushed back the thousands of approaching Deviant Ghosts, cutting them down one by one.

A team in robes advanced on the icy plains, climbing up from the side of the valley, cautiously peeking over the cliff edge towards the valley below.

The pointed ears and graceful faces peeking out from beneath the hoods, unmistakably marked them as elves.

At this moment, these elves watched the Ocean Crown Army slaughtering the Deviant Ghosts in the valley, and they couldn't help but reveal expressions of surprise and curiosity. They began whispering to each other.

“Captain Arlin, where did these peculiar creatures come from? We've never seen anything like them.”

“That's right, that human leading them doesn't seem like the army from the human settlements on the eastern ice plains, does it?”

“It doesn't seem likely. If they had the strength to confront the Deviant Ghosts head-on, they would have already attacked us and tried to seize our land.”

The elf they referred to as Captain was a mature-looking female elf. She frowned when she saw the young elf squad members chattering away without any sense of caution and scolded them.

“Don't discuss it. Deviant Ghosts have keen hearing. We don't want to alert them. We can't handle this many.”

The young elves immediately fell silent, clearly regarding Captain Arlin with great respect.

“In any case, the sudden appearance of this unfamiliar army on the isolated ice plains must signify some kind of change. We need to report the situation here to the elders immediately.”

Just as Arlin was about to lead the young elves away from the area, she suddenly noticed the human in the middle of the unfamiliar army directing his gaze towards their direction. Her heart skipped a beat, and she quickly signaled her team members to stay still.

How is this possible?

From such a distance, they could still perceive us!?

Arlin's heart pounded in her chest, and she dared not move a muscle until she saw the human turn his head and continue directing the battle. Only then did she breathe a sigh of relief.

She gestured for the young elves to slowly crawl backward, and when they had all descended, they stood up and hurriedly ran in the direction of the village.

Ji Chen looked towards the cliff on the left side of the valley, his brow furrowing.

Why did it feel like someone was spying on them from the side?

Could it be the soldiers from the two Bass Kingdom fleets?

That possibility was slim; they wouldn't have set foot on land, and without the firepower of their warships, they were essentially powerless. Moreover, it was highly unlikely that they would have coincidentally found them in such a vast ice plain.

It was strange. Were there any other living beings here besides the Deviant Ghosts and the soldiers from the Bass Kingdom fleets?

After a moment of contemplation, Ji Chen, who couldn't shake off his concerns, secretly called for Anina.

"You, go around this valley secretly and check if there's anything on the left side of the cliff."

Anina nodded, wielding her large sword as she maneuvered through the rear of the army, circling around towards the left side of the valley's cliff..

*Chapter 534: What Year Is It Today?*

As the battle in the valley gradually subsided, with the last approaching deviant ghost falling under the blade, Anina also returned, her face showing some excitement.

"Lord, I've found some footprints on the cliff over there, as well as traces of someone lying in wait."

Ji Chen's expression grew serious. There were actually humanoid beings in this icy wilderness?

"Where did they leave from?"

"It should be to the northwest."

Heading deeper into the icy wilderness in the northwest direction, it seemed that there was indeed a settlement of natives hidden in inconspicuous places.

Ji Chen felt it necessary to find them. As residents of this land, they might know clues about the divine relic.

"Clean up the battlefield."

After slaying all the approaching deviant ghosts, the Ocean Crown team entered the holes on both sides of the valley. After a simple exploration, they found nothing of value except for some deviant ghost hatchlings and a large number of corpses used as provisions.

However, in the inconspicuous corners of these dark and damp caves, some broken weapon and armor fragments were found, but it was difficult to determine whether these were stripped from the bodies of believers by the deviant ghosts or obtained from elsewhere.

There was no significant gain, and Ji Chen quickly led the army to the location where unidentified traces were found, following Anina.

At a cliff on the left side, although some had been wiped away by the wind and snow, it was still possible to faintly see that more than ten humanoid creatures had recently lain in this place, peering into the valley where they slaughtered the deviant ghosts.

Ji Chen's expression slightly brightened, finally some traceable clues. He didn't stay long and waved his hand.

"Alice, lead the knights and lobster guardians who can't land ashore, and follow beneath the ice.

The rest of the legions and units follow me, following the traces to find these natives!"

With a relatively clear goal, their pace quickened considerably as they rapidly advanced along the still visible traces.

After traveling for more than ten miles, the remaining traces finally disappeared. The other side probably realized this as well and began to conceal the traces they left behind.

Ji Chen wasn't too disappointed. Since the other side wanted to erase the traces they left, their pace would inevitably slow down. If they were lucky enough, they might even catch up to them.

"Divide into teams of ten, spread out in a fan shape towards the northwest."

The army quickly dispersed under his command and explored the area ahead.

"Ding- Your army is in combat mode."

The system prompt came, and Ji Chen's eyes lit up as he looked in the direction slightly to the northwest.

Under his control, all the scattered armies converged towards that direction, and more and more combat alerts indicated that the unidentified group had been surrounded and engaged.

Ji Chen, along with a group of heroes, quickly rushed over and soon saw the Ocean Crown team encircling a snowy slope without attacking.

A group of more than ten elves wearing white robes were trapped on the slope, looking desperate.

Ji Chen's face suddenly became strange. The group that was spying on them earlier turned out to be elves?

Arlin held her bow and aimed it at the enemies trapped on the slope below her. Although her expression remained calm, a hint of despair welled up in her heart.



She hadn't expected this army to catch up with them so quickly; they were even better at tracking than those savage orcs!

Looking at these peculiar soldiers with powerful auras and a strong martial presence, it seemed unlikely that they could return to their village now.

Arlin managed to keep her composure, but the other young elves were trembling with fear, their hands shaking as they held their bows. They heard stories of their fellow elves being captured by humans or orcs and tortured beyond recognition.

Ji Chen walked out from among his troops, revealing himself to the elves.

With a gentle smile on his face, he proactively expressed goodwill.

"Stranger elves, hello, I'm Ji Chen, the lord of this army, and I mean no harm to you."

Arlin hesitated for a moment, signaling the young elves to lower their bows and stepped forward to say, "Human, if you truly mean us no harm, then let us leave."

Seeing that they still appeared wary, Ji Chen smiled and said, "There's no need to be so cautious. In the main world, we humans have a good relationship with your elven kin. We've engaged in trade cooperation, and I even know the ambassador and military attache from your presence in the Maple Principality, as well as the highest commander of an elven fleet."

After speaking, Ji Chen noticed the confusion on the mature elf leader's face. Considering that this icy plain was once a battleground of gods and ancient wars, he had a sudden realization.

It seemed that these elves had long lost contact with the elves of the main world, completely unaware of what had happened outside, and the time span might not be ordinary either.

With this thought in mind, Ji Chen took out the piece of elven envoy token from his backpack and showed it to the elves.

"If possible, I would like to visit your gathering place. This was given to me by your kin from outside, and it can serve as proof of my goodwill."

Arlin looked at the elven envoy token with a puzzled expression.

This was undoubtedly an item of the elven race; there was no mistaking it!

Could it be that this human truly had friends among the elves from the outside world?

In the end, Ji Chen let the group of elves go and asked them to return with a message, instructing his army to wait in place..

*Chapter 535: What Year Is Today?(2)*

In that frozen wilderness, there was no concept of day or night. The sun never stopped shining, bathing the glaciers and snow in its eternal light. This created an expansive and dazzling white world that could momentarily overwhelm and mesmerize anyone who beheld it.

"Lord, do you think they'll come back?" Anina asked with boredom, using her large sword to scrape the snow on the ground.

Ji Chen smiled and, to be honest, he didn't know either. However, in order to make them let down their guard, he had no choice but to do this.

After about half a day, when he was beginning to doubt if the elves would return, more than ten figures appeared in the distance, striding briskly toward them.

It was the same group of elves as before, with Arlin taking the lead. She glanced at Ji Chen with a cautious expression.

"Elder said I should take you to the village, but you can only bring ten guards with you."

Ji Chen nodded with a smile. "Of course."

Seeing him agree so readily, Arlin also breathed a sigh of relief and lowered her guard even more.

She nodded and said, "Then please follow us."

Following those words, Arlin proceeded to take the lead. She moved with purpose, and a strand of hair peeked out from beneath her hood, gently swaying in the cold breeze, adding a touch of heroism to her demeanor.

They followed Arlin and her group of elves across the frozen wilderness. They seemed to move east and west at random intervals, and Ji Chen had no idea how these elves were navigating on the uniform ice field. If it were up to him, he would have gotten lost by now.

After traveling for about thirty to forty miles, they arrived at a bare, brown rocky beach.

Arlin led the way to a seemingly ordinary rock, and with a slight golden glow from her hands, she pushed the rock aside effortlessly, revealing an irregular hole below, from which a faint flicker of firelight emanated.

Ji Chen was quite surprised. If the elves hadn't pushed it open, he wouldn't have known that there was a hole hidden there.

After Arlin pushed the rock aside, she turned to Ji Chen and said, "Please leave your army outside, and you can bring in a maximum of ten guards."

Ji Chen nodded. There was no need to hesitate about this.

"Benbo, you'll stay outside with the army."

"Herald and Anina, the two of you will come with me."

After that, he looked at Arlin and said, "We're ready."

Seeing that he only brought two guards, Arlin was somewhat surprised, but she didn't say anything. She simply nodded and then jumped into the hole. When the other elves followed suit, Ji Chen also led his two heroes and jumped down.

As they all entered, the rock above slowly returned to its place, blocking out the sunlight. After a brief moment of darkness, the surroundings gradually brightened up again. Inside the cave, there was a man-made passage about two people wide, with torches hanging on both sides of the stone walls at regular intervals.

Arlin and the other elves didn't say much. They just led the way with their heads down. After walking a few hundred meters in the slightly dim passage, they passed through an exit bathed in white light and arrived in a tranquil and beautiful valley.

It was as if they had stumbled upon a hidden paradise, warm as spring, with flowers and grasses blooming across the ground. Tall trees stood in the valley, and on their trunks were various treehouses, not as grand as those in the main world of the elves but still exquisitely beautiful.

Waterfalls, like white ribbons, hung from the cliffs surrounding the valley, converging into streams on the ground, nourishing the land on both sides of the river.

Ji Chen was amazed by the beautiful scene before him.

He hadn't expected to find such a vibrant valley here, so different from the lifeless ice field outside.

"Please follow me. Elder Marianne is waiting for you."

Arlin's voice woke him from his reverie. Ji Chen nodded and followed behind her, arriving at a massive and sturdy tree. The trunk of this tree seemed to have been hollowed out, and inside was a chamber set up like a meeting room.

About a dozen elderly elves sat on either side of a wooden table, with the foremost one standing up. Presumably, this was Elder Marianne. She smiled kindly and said, "Welcome to the Vale, Lord Ji Chen."

"Good day, Lady Marianne," Ji Chen replied with a slight bow, performing the elven courtesy.

This gesture immediately earned him the goodwill of the elders present, and their expressions softened considerably.

Regardless of the purpose of his visit, his polite manners already indicated a friendly attitude, far superior to the savage orcs who were known for their brutality.

Marianne looked at the extraordinary-looking human before her and asked curiously, "Lord Ji Chen, I heard from Arlin that you come from the main world. How is the situation outside now?"

Ji Chen was about to respond to the first part of her question when he heard the second part and froze.

"...Lady Marianne, do you mean...?"

"Of course, I'm referring to the war between our Orderly God faction and the Barbaric God faction's barbarian races. Which side has won? Or is the battle still ongoing?"

Although it's been a long time since those battles, our power has waned considerably, but we're still here, fighting against the remnants of the barbaric believers.

However, since this realm is disconnected from the main world, we have no way of knowing what's happening outside. You're the first human I've encountered from the outside world in all these years," Elder Marianne explained.

Ji Chen seemed a bit dazed at the moment, and it took him a while to come to his senses. He seemed to have realized something, and his expression turned somewhat peculiar..

*Chapter 536: What Year Is Today?(3)*

“Lady Marianne, if you’re referring to the godly war that once swept across the entire world, where followers of various races clashed, then that war has long ended.

Perhaps to put it into perspective, that godly war concluded tens of thousands of years ago. The deities of both the Order and Barbarian factions, as you mentioned, vanished from this world after that war, and the outside world has long become the realm of ordinary races.”

Marianne and many other elders of Vale displayed looks of incredulity. “How is that even possible!?”

Observing their expressions, Ji Chen patiently explained.

As he narrated, the elven elders’ expressions shifted from skepticism to shock, then from shock to bewilderment, eventually settling into silence as they struggled to digest this immensely profound revelation.

However, some of the elves, perhaps due to the sheer magnitude of this information, openly expressed disbelief. They even suspected Ji Chen of being a spy sent to undermine their resolve by fabricating false information.

Their apparent unwillingness to believe the truth, though known to be factual, left Ji Chen somewhat bemused. It reminded him of a war movie from Earth, where soldiers from a nation held a small island against all odds. Regardless of how the enemy or allies tried to explain, they refused to accept that the war had already ended, convinced it was a deceitful ruse created by the enemy, persisting in their resistance.

These elves trapped within this mystic realm appeared to share a similar sentiment.

“...That’s roughly the situation. The godly war has indeed concluded, and everything I’ve said is true. Whether you believe it or not depends entirely on you,” Ji Chen stated.

The elven elders bore complex emotions on their faces, emotions too intricate to be expressed in words. Their hearts were in turmoil.

Every elf present here was at least eight centuries old, but in relation to the time that had passed since that war, which had affected countless realms, including the main world, their lifetimes seemed as insignificant as grains of sand.

Since their birth, they were taught to remain faithful to their beliefs, upholding the ideology of the godly war.

Over centuries, this belief had grown ever more deeply entrenched in their hearts. Now, to suddenly learn that what they had clung to was falsehood rendered their long-held convictions meaningless. It was a bitter pill to swallow, and anyone would struggle to accept it in such a short span of time.

Ji Chen could somewhat empathize with their emotions and couldn't help feeling a pang of nostalgia.

After a lengthy pause, Marianne composed herself and spoke with a bitter smile, "I believe you, Lord Ji Chen. You didn't travel all this way to this frozen wasteland just to deceive us with a lie.

In truth, our previous generation of elders had a suspicion long ago but lacked sufficient information to confirm it. The fact is, we haven't received divine revelations for a very long time, and that part is undeniably true. The only explanation could indeed be what you've mentioned."

"You believe as you see fit."

Marianne seemed to have eased a bit, and she continued, "Thank you for sharing this with us. You took the initiative to contact Arlin and express your intention to visit us, old folks. I assume you have something you'd like our assistance with. If it's within our power, we'll certainly offer our full support."

Ji Chen felt relieved and nodded, saying, "Indeed, I do have something I'd like your help with."

"Do you happen to know of a relic left behind by a deity on this frozen wilderness, one imbued with the power of the ocean?"

A glimmer of clarity appeared in Marianne's hazy eyes.

"Lord Ji Chen, are you seeking to obtain that item?"

Ji Chen, now understanding the situation, brightened and nodded.

"Hehe, we do indeed know about the relic you mentioned...."

*Chapter 537: Isn't Pre-Battle Supplies Normal? Scrolls, Robes, and Blue Dragon Blood*

"This used to be a weapon wielded by a god from the Orderly Divine Lineage, infused with the immense power of the ocean he controlled, granting it unparalleled strength.

This god once used this weapon to single-handedly take on three deities from the Barbaric Divine Lineage during a battle that erupted in this realm.

But later, a deity of the main god level from the Barbaric Divine Lineage disregarded righteousness and made a ruthless move, causing this god to ultimately fall, but his weapon remained in this frozen wilderness."

Ji Chen's heart was stirred, never expecting to learn about ancient god battles here. To be able to single-handedly face three opponents, apart from the god's formidable strength, the weapon must have been extraordinary.

In a low tone, he asked, "So, what was the name and domain of this god?"

Marianne shook her head. "Due to the passage of time, his name is no longer known, but there is no doubt that he was at least of the upper god level, possessing several powerful authorities."

Ji Chen's eyes flickered slightly. The data from "Lord of Glory" clearly stated that gods were classified into lower gods, upper gods, and main gods.

The more powerful the god, the more authorities they possessed, and this Ocean God, who was at least an upper god, was considered powerful even among the Orderly Divine Lineage.

The oceanic power contained in that weapon was a perfect match for his own strength. If he could obtain this power, he would undoubtedly undergo another transformation.

In life, strength was the foundation of existence.

The power of the ocean, he was determined to obtain it!

However, at this moment, an elven elder suddenly spoke, "Lord Ji Chen, since you came from the main world to this place, you should know how to leave this frozen wilderness, right?"

"Of course."

Ji Chen nodded naturally.

Seeing this, the other elven elders, including Marianne, showed a hopeful look on their faces.

Since the ancient god battle had long ended, there was no reason for them to continue staying in this desolate frozen wilderness. Especially after hearing Ji Chen talk about the relatively peaceful world outside, no elf was willing to stay here, surrounded by endless ice and snow.

Ji Chen could sense the excitement in their eyes and smiled faintly, "The gateway to leave is located in the southeast direction, approximately 150 kilometers from here."

Marianne furrowed her brows. She was well aware of the harsh conditions in the frozen wilderness outside.

A distance of 150 kilometers might not be much for young elves, but if the entire Vale Village, including the elderly, the weak, and the children, had to traverse through the howling snowstorms and endless glaciers, not to mention the various monstrous lairs scattered across the frozen wilderness, it would be a daunting journey.

"Such a long distance, if anything unexpected happens on the way, I'm afraid..."

Ji Chen glanced at their changing expressions and spoke in a casual tone, "Apart from that, outside the gateway, there's a powerful sea beast coveting that divine relic. Beyond that lies an endless expanse of water. Even if you can reach there, without a ship, it's impossible to leave."

Upon hearing this, Marianne and the other elven elders couldn't help but show a hint of despair on their faces.

Where could they find a ship large enough to carry all the elves from Vale Village?

Not to mention defeating a powerful sea beast out there!

Although they were descendants of the survivors of that ancient god battle, due to their isolation, their strength was not strong. Vale Village had a fighting force of only three to four hundred people, and the strongest among them was only at the fourth-tier, level 9. Otherwise, they would have already dealt with the Barbaric Orcs on the other side of the frozen wilderness.

The most hopeless and cruel thing in the world is to give a glimmer of hope and then ruthlessly extinguish it.

Marianne's heart was in turmoil as she looked at the human before her, who seemed as calm as ever. It was as if she had grasped a lifeline and she spoke in a pleading tone, a tone she herself hadn't realized.

"Lord Ji Chen, do you have the means to help us leave?"

As soon as these words were spoken, all the elven elders turned their eyes to him, their eyes filled with a glimmer of hope.

Since this human could pass through the gateway and even easily slaughter deviant ghosts, perhaps he could help them leave.

Ji Chen felt their gazes and nodded slightly, but he didn't continue speaking.

There are no free lunches in the world, and everyone understood that.

An elven elder, second only to Marianne in status and at least a thousand years old, stepped forward and said, "As long as Your Excellency can lead us out of this place, we are willing to offer generous rewards."

"Yes."

Marianne's eyes flashed with determination. "Over countless years, we have collected many rare resources left behind from that ancient god battle in this frozen wilderness. As long as you agree, all those rare resources will be yours." Ji Chen squinted his eyes slightly.

If he could successfully complete the upcoming task, then helping these elves leave would be a simple matter. Being able to earn a generous reward on top of that was an added bonus.

After a brief consideration, Ji Chen nodded and said, "I can agree to your request, but I have one more condition."

"Please go ahead."

"You need to tell me the location of that divine weapon."

Marianne hesitated for a moment and exchanged glances with the other elven elders before nodding slightly.

"That divine weapon is in the Fallen Sea.."

*Chapter 538 - 538: Isn't Pre-Battle Supplies Normal? Scrolls, Robes, and Blue Dragon Blood (2)*

"Fallen Sea?"

Marianne's expression grew solemn, her tone heavy.

"That was once the most intense and bloody battleground in this area, where the blood of countless elves, humans, and orc devotees was spilled."

Even after tens of thousands of years, the countless restless spirits there cannot find peace. Their fanatical beliefs and bloodlust during their lives turned it into a realm of death, where countless deviant ghosts roam.

The divine weapon is located right at the heart of the Fallen Sea. To approach it, you must risk being attacked by a horde of deviant ghosts.

Furthermore, even if you manage to get close, it's not guaranteed that you'll obtain it. Despite the passage of countless millennia, it still holds a power that ordinary individuals can't bear. Perhaps just getting near it might already crush you with the terrifying force it radiates.

Lord Ji Chen, please think carefully."

Marianne spoke with great sincerity. In truth, she didn't hold much hope for Ji Chen and his ability to acquire the divine weapon.

After all, gods were gods, creators of rules, masters of authority, and supreme beings. The weapons they used were equally formidable, not to mention this divine weapon, which contained the boundless power of the ocean.

If a top-tier epic-level powerhouse were to come, there might be a slim chance of obtaining it. However, Marianne had already noticed that Ji Chen's level was not even fifty, though it might qualify him as a strong individual outside.

But for obtaining a divine weapon, the gap was still too vast.

Furthermore, Ji Chen was their only hope to leave this place. If he were to die in the Fallen Sea, that glimmer of hope would be extinguished.

But seeing the unwavering determination in Ji Chen's eyes, Marianne knew she couldn't stop him.

"Thank you for your warning, Lady Marianne, but my mind is made up. Please tell me where the Fallen Sea is."

With a sigh in her heart, Margaret reluctantly said, "The Fallen Sea is in the core region of the frozen wilderness, about a hundred kilometers from Vale Village. I will have Arlin guide you there."

"Thank you for your generosity."

Looking at the group of elven elders, Ji Chen continued, "Regarding the matter of the ships, I have a plan."

Ji Chen's words instantly lifted their spirits. "Two fleets from human kingdoms have also entered this frozen wilderness. If we can obtain their ships, you can use them to cross the ocean and leave this place.

As long as I can acquire that divine weapon, capturing their ships will be effortless. It will also help us deal with the powerful sea beast outside and clear the obstacles for your departure."

Marianne looked at Ji Chen with a knowing expression.

"Are you suggesting that you need our assistance?"

Ji Chen nodded with a smile. "Of course, if you can provide some powerful treasures that can make it easier for me to obtain that divine weapon, it would be even better."



These elves, who had survived that divine war and had been living in this desolate frozen wilderness for tens of thousands of years, surely possessed valuable items.

Besides, there must be supplies before a major battle.

Marianne and the others knew that Ji Chen was bargaining, but they had no choice but to agree.

They led Ji Chen to a heavily guarded ancient tree, which had also been hollowed out on the inside.

This seemed to be the warehouse of Vale Village, and Marianne didn't linger outside. She led Ji Chen to the deepest part.

Three wooden platforms, each entwined with dozens of vines, stood there, each holding a different item.

A scroll, a robe, and a potion.

Ji Chen's eyes lit up.

[Forbidden Curse Scroll – Thunder Abyss]

[Level]: 7 Stars

[Effect]: After use, it can unleash the Forbidden Curse – Thunder Abyss, turning everything within a radius of 500 meters into a forbidden zone of life.

[A one-time spell scroll crafted by an ancient elven powerhouse, with some minor flaws]

[Deep Sea Dragon Scale Robe]

[Level]: 7 Stars

[Effect]: 0 When using water-based spells, it increases spell power by an additional 200% in aquatic environments,

0 Grants the ability to move freely in water and greatly enhances vision,

@ Increases mana recovery by 300%, and stores excess mana when mana is full, up to 10,000 points,

@ Increases morale by an additional 30 points when commanding dragonkin troops and the wearer gains moderate dragon prestige.

[Skills]: 0 Water Dragon Summoning (Summons three elemental water dragons with 50% of the user's strength, capable of independent combat), @ Serene Focus (Can dispel negative effects on oneself and nearby allies, and temporarily increases resistance to various negative effects).

[A powerful robe made from the scales of the Ocean Dragon, possessing incredible power in water.]

[But be aware that wearing it has a certain probability of attracting the hostility of dragon-type creatures.]

[Blue Dragon Blood]

[Level]: Special

[Effect]: Can be used for the evolution of dragonkin creatures.

[The heart's blood of an adult blue dragon, possessing terrifying energy.]

All three items were impressive.

The Forbidden Curse Scroll – Thunder Abyss was a one-time-use spell scroll capable of casting a forbidden curse that only epic-level powerhouses could perform – it was the most powerful and advanced spell that could be used outside of divine magic.

Essentially, it was akin to an epic-level powerhouse's ace in the hole, with immense destructive power..

*Chapter 539 - 539: Isn't Pre-Battle Supplies Normal? Scrolls, Robes, and Blue Dragon Blood (3)*

Among the three items, the only equipment-type treasure was a robe.

From its effects and skills, it seemed to overlap somewhat with his innate talents, but that couldn't hide the fact that it was a powerful robe. Its main color was deep blue, with interspersed golden threads that gave it an exceptionally noble appearance. The embedded blue dragon scales added a touch of dominance.

The last item was a crystal vial containing a crystalline, ice-blue liquid.

However, this crystal vial contained one-fifth of the Blue Dragon Blood, yet it held an extremely concentrated and explosive energy, exuding a dragon's aura that struck fear into the hearts of those who beheld it.

This was the most surprising thing for Ji Chen. Since the last time he had hunted the Marshland Dragon and obtained some Dragon Blood Crystals, he hadn't come across anything related to dragons. This forced the evolution and enhancement of the Dragon Blood Murlocs to come to a halt.

With this priceless Blue Dragon Blood, the Dragon Blood Murlocs could once again undergo a transformation. As for Benbo, who could be considered a hero among the dragonkin creatures, he would undoubtedly reach another level and evolve to become a legendary figure... It was not just a fantasy.

Marianne watched Ji Chen's unwavering focus, her face showing a hint of pride.

Not to mention, the elves' collection was extremely precious, and you wouldn't have found anything like it in the outside world.

She said in a proud tone, "Lord Ji Chen, you are free to choose one item as our support to you... Of course, I recommend selecting the Deep Sea Dragon Scale Robe. It can greatly enhance your strength, which will be of tremendous help when facing numerous Deviant Ghosts."

"I'll take all three of them."

"Very well, your judgment is impeccable..." Marianne suddenly woke up from her reverie, her eyes filled with shock as she looked at Ji Chen. She instinctively said, "This is impossible!"

"Nothing is impossible."

Ji Chen shook his head and advised, “Think about it. If I can’t obtain that divine weapon, then I won’t be able to capture the two human kingdom fleets, and I won’t be able to defeat the powerful sea beasts guarding the gate.

In that case, you won’t be able to leave this frozen wilderness that has trapped you for hundreds of thousands of years, and everything will be back to square one.

What’s the use of keeping these things? It’s better to enhance my strength a bit, so my chances of success are greater.”

Margaret was at a loss for words, her expression extremely complex. Although she said those words, she was reluctant to part with these three precious items, which were the most valuable possessions of Vale Village.

After a long silence, she sighed heavily and reluctantly conceded, “You’ve convinced me. Let’s consider these three items as our support to you. I hope, Lord Ji Chen, that you can truly accomplish everything you’ve mentioned.”

Even though Marianne didn’t have high hopes for Ji Chen, she couldn’t help but think, what if he succeeded?

Even if there was only a one percent chance.

Once he succeeded, they would be able to leave this harsh land and go to the more beautiful main world, reuniting with their kin.

If he didn’t succeed, they would have kept these items for nothing, and they would be utterly useless.

A smile played across Ji Chen’s face as he said, “Once a promise is made, it’s hard to go back on it.”

Hearing this, Marianne seemed to relax a bit and shook her head, saying, “Take these three items and set off quickly.”

Seeing that Marianne was eager for them to leave, Ji Chen didn’t take offense. He happily stowed away the three items, bid farewell, and then followed Arlin out of the valley.

After a brief rest, the group embarked on their journey towards the Fallen Sea..

#### *Chapter 540: Gods and Giants*

After reuniting with Alice, under the guidance of the elven party led by Arlin, they headed towards the Fallen Sea. This frozen wilderness was covered in a labyrinth of intersecting ice rivers, and beneath the thick ice layers were navigable waterways, so there was no need to worry about the Lobster Guardian Knights and Dragon Horn Catfish, pure water-based troops, being unable to march. However, it did take a bit more time.

As they approached the core area of the frozen wilderness, the howling winds grew stronger, and a snowstorm gradually swept in.

Snowflakes, like flying blades, fell, accompanied by a sharp whistling sound.

Elf Arlin, struggling against the blowing snow with her cloak, spoke loudly.

“Lord Ji Chen, I think we should find a place to take shelter from the snowstorm, or we could easily get lost in this frozen wilderness.”

Ji Chen, who was already wearing the Deep Sea Dragon Scale Robe, squinted at the relentless snowstorm, which showed no sign of stopping and even seemed to be intensifying. He pondered.

“How far are we from the Fallen Sea?”

“About two-thirds of the way there.”

“Alright, let’s take a break.”

After saying that, to the surprise of Arlin and the other elves, Ji Chen commanded the army to blast a large hole in the ice and then had them jump in one by one.

“Jump in.”

Arlin and the others exchanged glances. Experience told them that if they jumped into the water, they would be quickly swallowed up by the frigid seawater.

However, when they opened their eyes, they saw a huge bubble enveloping them, keeping the seawater out.

Ji Chen and his troops moved freely in the water as if they were on land. Arlin and the others instantly understood that this was a military unit capable of underwater combat!

No wonder they could cross the ocean to reach this frozen wilderness and even go to the Fallen Sea to obtain that thing.

Thinking of the harsh conditions in the Fallen Sea, Arlin felt that this journey might have a better chance of success with Lord Ji Chen leading them. Perhaps he could really obtain the divine weapon and then lead them out!

This sudden snowstorm not only halted Ji Chen’s advance but also had a similar effect on the Bass Kingdom’s fleet approaching from a different direction, making them come to a sudden stop as well.

Even the most formidable steel warships had no choice but to anchor and tremble in the presence of this devastating snowstorm, enduring its relentless onslaught.

“Damn it, how could a snowstorm suddenly arise?”

Duoru looked at the snowflakes crashing against the windowpane with an angry expression.

Since setting out on the journey to find the divine relic, he felt like he had been having a streak of bad luck.

First, the propeller was entangled in underwater plants, almost leading to an attack by a ridiculously large sea beast. Then, they were attacked by a large group of deviant ghosts right under his nose. Following that, a group of thieves stole his Tree of Life and Water of Life, and now they were suddenly caught in a snowstorm.

Damn it, was someone or something working against him!?

“How far are we from that divine relic?”

Deceiver Duanbi, holding a glowing ancient compass in his hand, answered in a hoarse voice, "About forty to fifty kilometers."

Duoru cursed silently again. If not for this damn snowstorm, they would have arrived long ago. What worried him most now was whether those thieves would find the divine relic ahead of them. That was something he couldn't accept.

But with the snowstorm raging outside so fiercely, those thieves probably can't make any progress either, right?

A day had passed since the snowstorm began.

Ten meters below the ice.

The snowstorm above the ice had no impact here. Thousands of aquatic troops floated like statues around, awaiting the orders of their supreme lord.

"Lord Ji Chen, shall we continue forward?"

Arlin looked surprised at the man before her, dressed in splendid robes and exuding an extraordinary aura.

Ji Chen nodded slightly. Just now, he received a message from Wang Shanyue that the Lienhardt army had already reached the gates of Ilkand City, and the siege would begin shortly. If everything went according to plan, the downfall of the Bass Kingdom was already a countdown.

He couldn't afford to waste more time here. It was essential to acquire the divine weapon quickly and head to the Bass Kingdom to participate in the final battle.

"But the snowstorm is still raging, and we can't proceed on the surface."

"Then we'll move forward underwater," Ji Chen said with an authoritative tone. "You just need to indicate the general direction. I won't lose my way underwater."

Arlin seemed stunned by Ji Chen's words, and she couldn't muster any objection. She nodded obediently.

Using his water control abilities, Ji Chen isolated Arlin and the other elves in a bubble, protecting them from the seawater. With their guidance, the group moved forward under the ice. Although the need to accommodate the elves significantly slowed their pace, they were, in fact, making progress toward their destination.

Two days later.

The snowstorm gradually subsided, and Ji Chen and his group were now very close to their destination.

Finally, after bypassing an ice mountain about the size of a small island, the Ocean Crown troops leaped out of the water like flying fish and landed steadily on the ice. They had reached the so-called Fallen Sea..