

## **Ocean Lord 731**

### *Chapter 731 Eliminate Hidden Dangers, Level 59*

Time passed quickly, and a month went by.

The situation in the main world was subtly changing, a heavy atmosphere quietly spread across the continents. Beneath the calm sea surface, turbulent undercurrents surged, and everyone sensed that something was amiss.

The hidden malice seemed to be drawing nearer.

Various orderly forces remained in a state of tense mobilization for war, deploying troops, preparing for long-term conflict with supplies, restarting war factories, mobilizing reserves...

Due to the vast landmass of this world, extracting resources from the expansive territories was no easy feat for any kingdom.

Even the Elven Empire, a top-tier force, had only mobilized a third of its army in a month, with many Elven lords still scattered across the vast lands, either reallocating resources or on their way to assemble.

And for kingdoms and duchies with lower mobilization capabilities, the situation was even more challenging. Prior to the official war declaration between the Lienhardt and Bass Kingdoms, it took nearly half a year for both sides to fully prepare.

However, unlike these indigenous forces, players were already geared up and ready. Millions of players displayed a surprising power that astonished all indigenous forces.

In units of one or several players, upon receiving tasks from the indigenous, they assembled small armies ranging from a thousand to ten thousand troops and launched raids and attacks on the evil forces entrenched across the continent.

Their achievements were remarkable.

They made the evil forces frantic. These glory lords were like cunning mice; they struck and then fled. By the time you mustered heavy troops to pursue, they had vanished without a trace.

They made the evil forces curse these despicable foreigners!

Yet the demons were confident in their own strength. Even with the premature exposure of many alliances of evil forces, they were undeterred.

The demons did not intend to expose the intention of instigating trouble through these evil force alliances. Now it seemed to be a case of fighting fire with fire, diverting the energy of the orderly fraction, forcing them to deploy troops for suppression and defense, and consuming military power and resources. This way, they could achieve the goal of weakening the forces of the orderly camp.

This was cunning strategy.

However, the appearance of players undoubtedly rendered such plans futile.

Orderly forces were astonished to find that with a certain reward, no supervision was needed. These players, fueled with energy like they were on a winning streak, rallied their armies and charged ahead, wreaking havoc and inflicting heavy casualties on the demon's evil alliances. They didn't even require deploying excessive troops.

What originally required a large expenditure of resources and troops to resolve and suppress now only required half the cost.

There was no need to go through the hassle of gathering resources or subjecting their own people to casualties. By simply offering a reward that they didn't view as costly, they were more than willing to take on these challenging tasks.

Such a bloody gain!

This made many orderly forces applaud their integrity.

Players were satisfied with the rewards from the indigenous orderly forces, and the indigenous orderly forces were also pleased with the performance and service of the players.

Everyone was happy.

It was a win-win situation!

The external situation was changing rapidly, and the flames of war were igniting.

The Ocean Crown was also in a phase of accelerated development.

In the span of a month, with strong assistance from the subsidiary territories such as the Great Luminescent Sea and the Starshine Islands, the Ocean Crown steadily received a large amount of resources.

The Great Luminescent Sea extracted resources from the abyssal layers of darkness, totaling three million units of rare resources and one million units of spirit crystals.

With the joint efforts of the newly appointed Herman and Kieran on the Starshine Islands, they also generated a hefty profit, inputting a whopping four million units of rare resources.

All the rare resources purchased from the Lienhardt generations had also been accounted for, totaling six million units of rare resources.

In addition to this, the Ocean Crown's own export of goods also brought in a considerable amount, totaling 1.5 million units of rare resources and 200,000 units of spirit crystals. These 200,000 units of spirit crystals were all obtained by selling top-grade merfabric.

All the income added up to a total of 14-5 million units of rare resources and 1.2 million units of spirit crystals. Adding the existing inventory, it totaled 16.6 million units of rare resources and 1.22 million units of spirit crystals.

Although most of the rare resources were used for the construction of the Heraklion Temple.

The Ocean Crown had few projects for resource output, besides the construction of wonders, another important part was recruiting troops.

Once a week, four recruitment opportunities in a month.

Recruiting nine types of troops consumed 532,000 units of rare resources and 181,200 units of spirit crystals, adding 3,380 troops. The Ocean Crown currently had a total of 18,710 main force troops, a full eighteen thousand soldiers.

Even if Ji Chen were to exclude the crab guardians, which were only fifth-tier troops, the remaining eight sixth-tier troops totaled 16,050, approximately sixteen thousand soldiers.

If such a force were deployed during the war between Lienhardt and the Bass Kingdom, not only could they easily crush the Bass Kingdom, but they could also annihilate Lienhardt in the process.

The Ocean Crown's insistence on elite troops had shown increasingly powerful capabilities as time went on.

Each troop had the ability to overpower multiple, even dozens of adversaries on their own, and when confronted with lower-tier enemies, they displayed overwhelming strength..

### *Chapter 732 Eliminate Hidden Dangers, Level 59 (2)*

During this period, the armies and heroes of the Ocean Crown remained active, often on the move.

On the land, there was a coalition of demons, and similarly, there were also evil forces in the sea. Thousands of years ago, a sea-dwelling race turned against the orderly fraction and aligned themselves with the evil faction—the evil Naga clan.

Although the evil Naga clan was a member of the evil fraction, they chose to retreat to the depths of the ocean to avoid the reckoning of the orderly fraction because they were suppressed after the demon's defeat.

In fact, it was because of the geographical barrier of the ocean that these betrayers managed to preserve their tribes. They thrived and multiplied in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, and even prospered.

However, this evil tribe that had not been thoroughly cleansed and hurt finally faced sanctions.

Using a troop as a legion, led by a legendary-tier hero or a legacy-tier hero, they attacked the evil Naga tribes entrenched in various places in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

In the central part of the Eastern Pacific, in the deep sea, there was a medium- sized Naga tribe.

The muddy seabed and the surging water broke the tranquility that had been maintained here for hundreds of years.

Teams of ocean blood dragons suddenly emerged from the darkness, using dragon flames that could still bum fiercely underwater, mercilessly incinerating everything here.

Countless evil Naga, with grim faces, were burned to ashes by the dragon flames amidst their wailing and suffering.

The commanding hero, Benbo, looked on coldly at all this, transforming into a dragon form to destroy the chieftain of this tribe of evil Naga, bestowing upon them an equal destruction.

Similar scenes occurred in various places in the ocean.

The Naga Iron Colossus, the Sea Crystal Wurm, the Dragon Horn Beast... Several armies split up and quickly eliminated the evil Naga tribes scattered all over with astonishing efficiency and overwhelming strength.

This time, it was not only to eliminate hidden dangers in advance for resisting demons but also to level up the Ocean Crown's main army.

By the time the tasks and goals were mostly completed, the average level of the Ocean Crown's main army had reached level 53. Although there was still a considerable gap from the sixth-tier limit of level 69, it was already not far off from the average level of the main army of top forces like the Elven Empire.

In addition, the various heroes leading the army also had an average level of 55, with Alice already reaching level 57, just three levels away from 60.

As the commander of all the armies and heroes of the Ocean Crown, Ji Chen's level had always been a long-standing topic of interest, not only among players but also among indigenous inhabitants.

According to the calculated formula based on experience gained, lords would receive a certain proportion of experience from the kills made by their troops.

However, the amount of experience accumulated from so many troop kills was also extremely substantial and objective. At the top of the experience chain, Ji Chen's level had now reached a high of 59, just one step away from level 60.

Player lords could gain experience from the kills made by their troops, which meant they could level up even if they sat at home, and this speed would increase as the number of troops increased.

This was in stark contrast to indigenous lords, who needed to train and kill on their own to increase their strength.

While indigenous lords had to actively seek out opportunities to level up, player lords could level up passively. Therefore, as long as they could hold onto their territory until now, player lords generally wouldn't have low levels.

The stronger the territory, the stronger the personal strength of the player, this was a law.

Ji Chen, who stayed in his territory, could see continuous prompts of enemies killed coming from the upper left corner of the lord interface. With each prompt flashing by, the experience bar subtly moved forward.

A small curve formed at the corner of his mouth involuntarily.

It was very satisfying to be able to grow in strength while sitting down like this.

Every time he surpassed ten levels, he would automatically comprehend a new skill. Now that the experience bar was already filled one-fifth, all he needed to do was to fill this level of experience, and then he could comprehend another gold-tier skill.

After calming down, Ji Chen stepped towards the construction site of the Temple of Heraklion.

After more than two months of construction, this miraculous building was also about to reach the point of comprehensive completion. Workers from the Ocean Crown were bustling about, constructing the spire atop the temple's pinnacle. It was expected to be completely finished today.

The construction of the Temple of Heraklion had already invested millions of units of rare resources in the early stage. It wasn't until the various profits were received that its construction could continue. Up to now, it had invested as much as fifteen million units of rare resources!

This amount of resources was enough to produce another legendary-tier hero for the Ocean Crown!

Not only did residents of the Ocean Crown come to stop and watch around, but even foreign merchants, indigenous people, and players came over, eager to witness the completion of this magnificent building.

With a group of members from the King Kong Island guild, I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings gazed at the Temple of Heraklion from the rooftop of the inn, sighing.

The Kobold strategist exclaimed, "Damn, it must have cost a lot of resources to build this wonder. He really bears to use all those resources for it."

I\_Love\_Black\_Sockings glanced at him and said, "Since the Big Boss Islander is willing to spend so many resources on construction, it means that the benefits brought by this wonder are definitely much greater than this amount of resources."

It's evident just from the name that this is the pinnacle "wonder" in the construction plans, a distinctive building that offers a range of benefits and effects, unquestionably valuable.

Currently, the only known wonder building built by players was this "Temple of Heraklion". All others were built by indigenous people, including the elf's "Life Ancient Tree", the dwarves' lost "Sun Furnace", the gnomes' "Gigantooth City", and so on.

Therefore, the Ocean Crown, which owned it, was still very much in the spotlight of the players.

Amidst the chatter, the last piece of material was installed on the spire's pinnacle.

Suddenly, the entire building emitted a majestic and vast aura, as if it had come to life.

An invisible force field quickly spread out from its center, completely covering the entire New Moon Islands and the nearby sea.

**"Ding- Wonder Building: Temple of Heraklion completed!"**

**"Ding- Your core territory: Ocean Crown will receive the following benefits:**

- 1. 50% reduction of materials needed in recruiting oceanic troops within the territory.
- 2. Keep the populace's morale fixed at above 95 points; the subjects will never betray.
- 3. Greatly increase the attractiveness of the territory, greatly attracting refugees, merchant caravans, and marine hero units from the outside world.
- 4. Within the range of the wonder's influence, the subjects will gain the ability to operate underwater."

Ji Chen was also a bit thrilled. This colossal wonder, towering dozens to hundreds of meters high, would soon stand as the unmistakable landmark of the New Moon Islands, akin to a lighthouse, visible from miles around.

Suppressing the excitement in his heart, he had a thought.

Checking its functions.

In addition to the four benefits mentioned above, the Temple of Heraklion can also recruit a batch of guardian troops every week:

[Special Effect]: (D Produce exclusive unit – Heraklion Guards (Sixth Tier, Six Stars) every week without consuming resources. These units cannot leave the temple's vicinity of ten kilometers. Fifty units are recruited every week.

Without hesitation, Ji Chen recruited fifty Heraklion Guards.

Amidst the astonished gazes of the onlookers, the temple gates slowly opened, and monstrous beasts, the size of trucks, covered in scales, with meat wings on their backs and lion-headed dragon horns, walked out.

Cruelty and coldness were reflected in their blood-red pupils.

Arranged in groups of ten, fifty Heraklion Guards lined up in front of Ji Chen, lowering their heads like obedient dogs and bowing their bodies to show submission.

Ji Chen looked at these fierce beasts, which almost had a “not easy to provoke” sign written all over their faces, feeling quite satisfied. Although the sixth tier was no longer the strongest unit of the Ocean Crown, being able to recruit fifty of them every week was still good.

These Heraklion Guards would be the local defense force of the Ocean Crown in the future. With their strength at the sixth tier and six stars, they were enough to deter most outsiders with malicious intentions.

### *Chapter 733 Heraklion Guards, Afraid of Being Crushed*

in addition, the energy possessed by this Heraklion Guardian was also very peculiar and powerful.

[Heraklion Guardian]

[Race]: Oceanic

[Tier]: Sixth Tier, 6 stars

[Skills]: Aquatic Manipulation (Orange skill, able to use all mid-to-low-tier water spells, some high-tier water spells, reduces water spell damage by 50%) Insight (Orange skill, possesses eyes that can see into the soul, able to discern the good and evil in living beings)

Undead (Orange skill, within a radius of ten kilometers from the Heraklion Temple, can use the temple's power to repair its own injuries and strength, immortal until the temple is destroyed)

Restraint (Orange skill, Heraklion Guardians rely on the temple to survive, unable to leave the area within a radius of ten kilometers from the temple)

Minions (Orange skill, the sharpness of fangs and claws is increased by 200%, with an additional 30% armor-piercing effect)

Enchanted Thick Scales (Orange skill, defense of scales increased by 200%, able to absorb 50% of impact force, immune to low-tier spells)

[Unit Characteristics]: Affiliated guardians of the Heraklion Temple, will evolve alongside the temple's evolution

[Bloodline Ability]: Temple Bloodline (all attributes increased by 500%, flying speed additionally increased by 200%, capable of long-term invisibility, concealing form and aura)

[Exclusive unit of the Heraklion Temple, possessing the power of immortality within the temple's coverage]

Among the several skills, Ji Chen attached great importance to "Insight". Simply put, that skill was like a weakened version of Alice's ability.

Alice could see into the soul, forcibly viewing the memories of living beings, while the Heraklion Guardian could also see into the soul, but could only discern good from evil.

It was clear which side was superior and which was inferior at a glance. However, the Heraklion Guardian obviously had an advantage that Alice could not match, and that was quantity.

No matter how powerful Alice was, she was only one person, and she could only pay attention to a few important targets, but the former had dozens of them, and there would be more in the future.

The Heraklion Guardians could be deployed as a permanent force within the Crown of the Ocean. While serving as combat guardians, they could also act as counter-espionage units, perhaps finding some evil individuals looking to cause trouble.

Ji Chen became interested and waved to indicate that they should start working. After the Heraklion Guardians bowed again, the flesh wings on their backs quickly flapped, flying into the air to patrol.

Their diligent appearance was a bit like that of loyal dogs guarding the house. During the flight, they also did not forget to sweep their blood-red eyes over the surrounding creatures, and their noses were twitching as if sniffing something.

Suddenly, one of the Heraklion Guardians plunged straight down and landed in front of a young sailor, baring its teeth and making low, threatening sounds like "wuwuwu".

The surrounding onlookers immediately distanced themselves from this ferocious beast, leaving a space empty, with only the beast and the sailor in front of it.

The sailor looked at the terrifying beast, as large as a truck, staring at him intently, his face pale, scared to the point where his soul almost fled.

In front of those blood-red eyes, he felt as if he were being seen through, his heart trembling and feeling a bit guilty.

In a panic, his emotions unexpectedly calmed down slightly, and he shouted loudly.

"Help, this beast is going to kill someone!"

“The Crown of the Ocean is going to kill innocent people!

But his cries received no support from anyone, as the surrounding onlookers watched coldly.

It was obvious to anyone that something was amiss. How could that thing be soaring peacefully in the sky one moment and then suddenly dive down to fix its gaze on you?

Ji Chen watched as the Heraklion Guardian quickly found its target, feeling somewhat surprised, and approached slowly.

Looking at the crowd around him, he explained in a dignified voice.

“The Heraklion Guardian has the ability to discern good from evil. If one harbors ill intentions or malice, it will target them.”

The onlookers suddenly realized, so that was the reason. With that, they felt relieved. These merchants, who themselves had no combat power, were most afraid of lords who relied on their strong power to plunder recklessly.

To be honest, even if this epic-tier Lord of the Ocean were to kill them here, even without any reason, there probably wouldn't be any responsibility or consequences.

Even the country they belonged to would not say anything at all.

This was a world where strength was paramount, where strength was everything, and those without power always tread on thin ice.

Fortunately, Ji Chen was not the kind of strongman who bullied others and killed innocent people. On the contrary, he strived to maintain order and rules in his territory, which was why they liked to come to the Crown of the Ocean for trading.

Upon hearing the commotion, a group of Crown of the Ocean soldiers quickly rushed over.

Ji Chen gestured to the sailor, who was already trembling on the ground, and spoke slowly, “Take him away for questioning. Find out his purpose for coming to the Crown of the Ocean, as well as the merchants and caravan that hired him. If the merchants who hired him also have ill intentions, then arrest them all.”

“Yes, sir!”

Watching the sailor, pale-faced, being taken away, many onlookers dispersed, each reminding themselves quietly.

They must not harbor any ill intention when they were in the Crown of the Ocean, otherwise, they wouldn't see the light of the next day.

It was just a small incident.

The next morning.

On the highest floor of the largest castle in the castle compound, there was a sudden knock on the door. Ji Chen paused for a moment, placed his utensils down, and rose to open the door.

*Chapter 734 - Heraklion Guards, Afraid of Being Crushed (2)*

## Heraklion Guards, Afraid of Being Crushed (2)

Wilus' steady face appeared before him.

“Lord, the dragons from Dragon Island have arrived!”

In the sky, tens of hundreds of dragons floated about ten kilometers away from the New Moon Islands, casting shadows on the sea. The imposing dragon's presence made countless marine creatures shiver in fear, either freezing in place or frantically fleeing.

Leading the dragon group was a golden dragon nearly fifty meters long, covered in scales as radiant as gold.

Every time it flapped its broad wings, akin to two ship sails, sharp gusts of wind swept through the surrounding space, with faint and erratic spatial fissures shimmering in the air.

At first glance, it seemed as if endless sharp rays were piercing through, causing discomfort to the eyes.

“Serena, is the employer located on those islands?”

“Yes, Your Excellency Babatos.”

Beside the golden dragon stood a slightly smaller but still massive white dragon, about thirty to forty meters in length, capable of human speech.

“That's the Crown of the Ocean, ruled by a human Lord of Glory named Ji Chen, whose strength has already reached the Epic tier within just a year.”

“A Glory Lord who has risen to the Epic tier within such a short time must have encountered some significant opportunities,” Babatos' voice boomed, “but what concerns me more is whether he can pay the hired fee.”

“I've already investigated that,” Serena said, “Ji Chen has made an agreement with the elves to develop Gloria, the lost ancient elven capital. This cannot be false.

Furthermore, I've looked into all of Ji Chen's territories. Apart from his core domain, the Crown of the Ocean, he also holds the Starshine Islands, the Fish Tail Island in Lienhardt, and a mysterious affiliated domain yet to be discovered.

Through investigations into incoming and outgoing merchant ships, the monthly profits from his exports alone amount to at least millions. Even if he defaults, we can recover the funds through other means.

In addition, Ji Chen seems to have an unclear relationship with the daughter of the Grand Duke of Lienhardt, a human woman named Monica.

In the event of high-risk situations or unforeseen circumstances, such as his death in a demon invasion, we can leverage this relationship to obtain some funds or insurance from Monica and the Grand Duke.”

Serena elaborated on the results of her investigations over the past month, prompting Babatos to nod approvingly.

Their Dragon Island had been in the mercenary business for thousands of years, and they had long perfected various regulations and procedures to prevent any adverse events from affecting the payment of commissions. This naturally included conducting a series of investigations into employers before accepting their hiring requests.

In fact, considering the suddenness of this task, they had accepted the hiring request without completing the investigation beforehand, which might pose business risks.

However, given that this was an unprecedentedly large deal, these procedural violations could be selectively ignored. They believed that His Majesty the Dragon Emperor, for the sake of the interests of many dragons, would not object as long as real gold coins were deposited in the treasury in the end.

“This territory is not simple; I can sense the presence of many powerful beings within.”

“Based on the investigation, this human has at least two or more Legendary-tier individuals under his command, and four or more Legacy-tier heroes. He also commands a sixth-tier army of at least tens of thousands of troops.

Such strength places him among the top echelons, even among the billions of Glory players. I suggest that we establish friendly relations with him this time, so that Dragon Island may have further cooperation opportunities in the future.”

Suddenly hiring so many dragons from Dragon Island, the Crown of the Ocean undoubtedly was a land of immense potential and wealth. They couldn’t just let go of such a big client.

Babatos pondered, “Serena, you have more contact with human society. Do you know the common ways humans establish friendly relations?”

“Generally, noble humans often use marriage between their female heirs to form alliances. Marriage is one of the most common ways to strengthen relationships among human nobles,” Serena paused slightly before continuing, “Of course, some noble humans also send beautiful young men and women to each other to enhance their relationships. This strategy is called seduction or the art of seduction.”

“We seem to have no other vested interest in this territory and this Lord of Glory aside from the employment relationship.”

Babatos expressed his confusion but then seemed to recall something. “Serena, I remember your human form seems to fit human aesthetics quite well. Could we use this strategy?”

Serena actually pondered this seriously, remembering how she had heard some Lords of Glory praise her humanoid form when she was in the elven kingdom.

They shouted things like “White-haired red-eyed dragon lady, I’m dying” or “Dragon sister, step on me.” Though strange, it seemed to be complimentary from their expressions.

But would these humans be able to withstand a step from her small human-sized body?

“...In theory, it might work. However, based on the intelligence, the several female hero units around him and the daughter of the human Grand Duke are all considered top-tier in human aesthetics, possessing either great power or high status.

Therefore, it is not ruled out that he simply prefers beautiful, powerful, and high-status females.”

Ji Chen had no idea he had been depicted in such a way by these dragons.

Babatos nodded deeply in agreement, feeling somewhat in accord with the human he had yet to meet. Humans or not, their dragon race also favored powerful and beautifully scaled female dragons.

Powerful strength and beautiful scales meant powerful bloodlines, making it easier to produce powerful dragon offspring.

Of course, because of their dragon nature, the rumor about them targeting strange races was an enduring one. Generally, lawful dragons placed great importance on their own and their offspring’s bloodline, so how could they engage in impure activities with those races with inferior bloodlines.

Moreover, with their powerful dragon bloodline, how could ordinary races withstand their draconic might and bloodline power?

Most of those strange and malformed dragon offspring populations were simply creations of chaotic dragons, with no connection whatsoever to their lawful dragon lineage of Dragon Island.

“That human indeed possesses considerable strength. I can sense an extraordinary bloodline within him. From the perspective of producing powerful offspring, he is indeed a good candidate.”

Serena paused for a moment before continuing, “But we need to consider one issue. Humans are still humans, and despite their powerful magical abilities, their physical bodies are not outstanding among many races. So, we need to consider whether the female dragon form would harm his body during mating.

In simple terms, we need to consider whether we might break his waist or damage his reproductive organs, as generally, humans seem unable to autonomously recover from physical damage.”

The nearby dragons listened to the increasingly off-topic conversation between the two dragon big shots with embarrassment.

Gazing at the serene New Moon Islands in the distance, bathed in the blue sky and fluffy white clouds, they noticed an unusual force field encompassing a ten-kilometer radius. Anyone who ventured inside would find themselves under its suppressive effect.

Fortunately, such a conversation did not continue for too long. A team of flying nagas approached from the direction of the New Moon Islands. The aura emanating from the leader of the nagas shook many dragons.

A legendary-tier hero!

Herald flapped his wings and arrived near Babatos and Serena. He glanced at the many dragons flying behind them and spoke solemnly.

“Lord Jichen is already waiting for you. Please follow me..’

*Chapter 735 - Dragon Island’s Dragon Team, Serena’s Ambition*

Dragon Island’s Dragon Team, Serena’s Ambition

Under Herald’s lead, the dragon party managed to evade the suppression effect of the “Small Twin-Winged Demon Statue” and enter the Crown of the Ocean.

When Babatos saw the rumored Lord of the Ocean Crown, he couldn’t help but feel somewhat surprised.

Originally, he thought this Lord of Glory was just an ordinary Epic tier, but unexpectedly, it turned out to be a “Domain” Epic tier.

Epic tiers also had different levels, and those who possessed a domain were undoubtedly the most formidable.

Ji Chen looked at the gigantic dragon, resembling a small hill, staring at him with eyes filled with surprise.

In a calm tone, he said, “Sir Dragon, welcome to the Crown of the Ocean. The defense against the demon invasion will undoubtedly rely on the wholehearted efforts of the members of Dragon Island.”

The golden dragon spoke in a human voice, sounding solemn, “Since you have enough gold coins to pay our fee, we will fulfill our duty to defend your territory against demon attacks as previously agreed with you and Serena.” “Naturally, but where is Serena?”

“Lord Ji Chen.”

A familiar voice sounded from beside him, followed by a white light and a tall and cold figure, wearing white scales and snow-white hair cascading down like a waterfall, with blood-red eyes resembling high-quality rubies.

It was none other than the dragon maiden Serena.

“Let me introduce you. This is our mission captain for this hire, Elder Babatos,” Serena said. “We have brought all the dragons without tasks this time, totaling three hundred and five. The rest of the dragons will arrive one after another in the next week.”

Ji Chen nodded slightly. “Could you introduce the strength of these dragons to me?”

“Of course, the employer has the right to know about the hired dragons,” Serena nodded. “These dragons are roughly divided into five tiers. The first tier naturally includes Elder Babatos, who is the most powerful dragon in this hire, just half a step away from being an Epic tier.”

Half a step from being an Epic tier?

Ji Chen paused. Dragon Island seemed to be taking this quite seriously. No matter how greedy dragons might be, they wouldn’t use a powerhouse of this level as mercenaries.

Among humans, there were specialized mercenaries who engaged in combat, and naturally, there were also bosses who held high positions and were only responsible for collecting payments. And this golden dragon named Babatos was obviously one of those bosses.

Seeing Ji Chen had no objections, Serena continued, “The second tier consists of three legendary dragon heroes, including myself. The third tier has nineteen legacy-tier dragon heroes, the fourth tier has sixty-five rare-tier dragon heroes, and the fifth tier has two hundred and seventeen excellent-tier dragon heroes.”

Ji Chen raised an eyebrow slightly.

They were all hero units. Was this army the pinnacle of Dragon Island’s strength?

Only pure-blooded dragons could be considered true members of Dragon Island. Each dragon’s lineage was traceable, and the strong bloodline ideology meant that every Dragon Island dragon was at least an excellent-tier hero.

If it came to individual strength, Dragon Island thoroughly followed the elite soldier route.

However, even though there were many dragons here, Ji Chen didn’t believe that these were all of Dragon Island’s strength. Those dragons who had truly aged were like nuclear bombs in terms of deterrent power.

Serena said, “Lord Ji Chen, do you find this team of hired dragons satisfactory?”

“Of course, but there’s something I need to emphasize.”

Serena and Babatos looked at each other, then Serena said in a solemn tone, “Please speak.”

Ji Chen said slowly, “The commission will only be paid in full after completely repelling the demon army.”

This demon invasion was not a small war. One misstep and the Crown of the Ocean would be submerged, causing mass extinction. He couldn’t guarantee that these Dragon Island dragons would exert their full strength in executing such a highly dangerous commission.

Serena was momentarily speechless. According to Dragon Island’s past hiring regulations and practices, employers generally paid thirty to fifty percent of the commission upfront, with the remainder paid after the mission’s completion.

Such a request clearly violated the customary practice.

Babatos stared with dragon eyes, pondered for a moment, then looked at Ji Chen and said, "Very well, I agree to this condition."

Ji Chen's expression relaxed, revealing a smile.

"Hope we have a pleasant cooperation."

He instructed Wilus to arrange a place for these dragons to rest, which essentially meant letting them find a place to rest on their own in the jungle in the northwest part of the main island. With so many dragons, the Crown of the Ocean couldn't afford to build nests for each of them individually.

Only Babatos and the three legendary-tier strong dragons, including Serena, who could transform into human forms, were arranged in special guest rooms.

As for the issue of dragon food, Ji Chen had already discussed this with Serena. The dragons would catch sea beasts in the waters around the New Moon Islands to solve their own food problems.

This arrangement was quite beneficial for the Crown of the Ocean. After all, dragons were such large creatures that even a small portion of them would consume a considerable amount of food. If all three hundred dragons relied on the Crown of the Ocean for food, there wouldn't be enough to go around.

Furthermore, the insurance fees and time costs that employers usually had to bear for Dragon Island's dragons when they went on missions were all borne by Dragon Island itself, something unprecedented in the history of dragon hiring..

*Chapter 736 - Dragon Island's Dragon Team, Serena's Ambition (2)*

Dragon Island's Dragon Team, Serena's Ambition (2)

Because Ji Chen had been overly generous.

Ji Chen would cover the substantial commission for hundreds of dragons from the profits of the Gloria Elf Treasury. Even just the portion allocated to Ji Chen amounted to an astronomical sum, based on their estimate of Gloria's wealth.

Facing such a generous reward, a sum that could allow one to hide in their comfortable nest for decades or even centuries, Dragon Island and the dragons readily agreed to these terms.

In the days that followed, dozens or even hundreds of dragons arrived daily from all directions, their majestic presence and echoing roars filling the air across the sea.

The residents of the Ocean Crown and other outsiders were truly amazed; they had never seen such a large gathering of dragons in one place before.

But these dragons, contrary to the impression of dominance and arrogance they left, each obediently headed to rest in the northwest jungle of the main island, which made the residents feel a sense of pride.

The fact that such powerful creatures as dragons were behaving so obediently here seemed to demonstrate the strength of their territory.

It was precisely because of their wise Lord that these dragons could be deterred!

Unconsciously, the residents became even more respectful towards Ji Chen, and fervent emotions permeated the air, seemingly devoid of fear of the demon invasion.

“Ding- The approval rating of the territory residents has increased, and the popularity has risen.”

Ji Chen looked at this system prompt, feeling a bit puzzled.

Why hadn't he noticed the rise in popularity?

The popularity of the Ocean Crown had been stuck at 99 points for some time now, and he hadn't been able to find a way to raise that last point, as if the system were intentionally keeping it stuck.

But there was another possibility: this one point of popularity was restricted by something, and that restriction needed to be lifted before it could be increased. Otherwise, it would remain stuck at 99 points forever.

“Lord Ji Chen, is everything alright?”

The voice brought Ji Chen back to reality, and he looked at Serena sitting across the table, smiling gently and shaking his head, “Nothing, let's continue eating.”

Serena pondered for a moment, set down her utensils, and said, “If you are worried that we, Dragon Island, will not do our best to resist the demons, then you are worrying too much.

Although we are mercenaries hired for commissions, deep down, we still have the pride and honor of being dragons. We will not easily violate contracts.

Moreover, we are not simply here to make money. The demon invasion is a major event for the entire world. We, the dragons of Dragon Island, naturally cannot stand aside. It just so happened that you found us, so we came to your aid and contributed our strength to resist the demons.”

Ji Chen showed no surprise at this explanation, shrugged, and said, “It seems that no matter what, you still have to earn some money to feel at ease.”

Serena was taken aback for a moment, then smiled gently.

Ji Chen also set down his utensils and curiously asked, “So Serena, can you tell me why you suddenly wanted to have dinner alone with me?”

Serena pursed her lips and said, “Can't I have dinner with you without any reason?”

Ji Chen clearly didn't believe this answer. If there weren't any other purposes or matters, how could this humanoid dragon be so... gentle?

Upon closer inspection.

Compared to the majestic figure adorned in white scales on the day of arrival, Serena, who was now sitting across the round table, was wearing a white silk court dress. A belt embroidered with dragon patterns using golden threads outlined her stunning curves. Her long, snow-white hair was tied halfway with a hairband decorated with silver needles, elegantly draped over her right chest.

Shifting his gaze, beneath the cool and stunning visage was a neck as graceful as a swan's, followed by vast expanses of milky-white skin, and further below, nestled between the peaks and valleys admired by countless beings, lay a depth hidden beneath the courtly gown.

At first sight of Serena's appearance, Ji Chen was almost scared out of his wits.

What could have happened to turn a humanoid dragon into such a charming dragon maiden?

Seeing Serena like this, Ji Chen could only shake his head helplessly. Well, since there's nothing else to do, might as well just eat.

Little did he expect that this white-haired, red-eyed dragon lady from Dragon Island wouldn't give him any time to relax. With another glance, she spoke again, "Lord Ji Chen, do you know whether offspring can be successfully born from the union between dragons and humans?"

Ji Chen was taken aback for a moment, not immediately understanding why she was asking this, but still thought for a moment before responding.

"It's probably unlikely for offspring to be born."

"Indeed." Serena nodded, her strands of hair swaying gently. "According to the bloodline memories of the Orderly Dragons of Dragon Island, when a human-form dragon mates with a human, in most cases, nothing happens.

Because the dragon's bloodline contains too much powerful energy, whether it's a female dragon and a human male, or a male dragon and a human female, most of the energy required to produce offspring will be destroyed by the power of the bloodline, becoming meaningless material."

"What if the human bloodline is equally powerful, not inferior to the dragon bloodline?"

Serena picked up the napkin on the table, gently nibbled at it, and said, "This situation is also recorded in the bloodline memories. Thousands of years ago, there was indeed a legendary-tier female dragon from Dragon Island who fell in love with a human male hero of the same legendary status. The two produced offspring.

At birth, the offspring appeared in human form, but with dragon-like features on their heads."

Ji Chen became interested and asked further, "Then what about their potential?"

He enjoyed hearing rumors about the offspring of a legendary-tier female dragon and a legendary-tier human hero.

Serena straightened up a bit, making her chest appear even more prominent, her face solemn.

"The child was a legacy tier hero unit since birth, with the potential to reach the epic tier."

Wow, isn't this just  $1+1>2$ ?

Two legendary tiers combined to become an epic tier.

“Based on our long-term research, we have come to a general conclusion that the younger the high-bloodline dragon, and the younger the legendary or higher-tier human hero, the easier it is to produce powerful half-dragon offspring.”

Serena leaned forward, her pupils flashing with inexplicable emotions.

“Lord Ji Chen, I am currently the youngest generation of dragons on Dragon Island, with strength and bloodline among the top females of many dragons. And you, achieving the epic tier at such a young age, with noble bloodlines that are difficult to fathom...

If we were to mate, we would surely give birth to the most powerful half-dragon offspring in history, and even contend for the position of the next Dragon Emperor.”

Ji Chen was completely stunned, caught off guard by her words.

“...Do you know what you're saying?”

Serena leaned back in her chair, calm. “Of course I do. This is the best choice considering the birth of offspring from bloodlines. However, we also need to consider the willingness of both parties. After all, I can't give birth to offspring alone.”

Ji Chen was speechless.

Sighing, Ji Chen found this situation quite troublesome. “Are all of your dragons so... straightforward?”

“Of course. Dragons despise the weak, respect the strong, and take what they want. My mother was taken by my father as a mate,” Serena said indifferently, “But I can't beat you, so I'm sitting down to discuss with you.”

If I were weaker than you, wouldn't I be taken forcefully?

No, if I were weaker than her, I wouldn't be targeted like this.

For a moment, Ji Chen felt embarrassed by the thought.

“Lord Ji Chen, whenever you're ready to decide, just come to me. I'll be here waiting,” Serena said with a smile. “But don't take too long to decide. Human lives are short, their prime moments fleeting, and their bloodlines weaken quickly with age. Delaying too much might mean missing out on the chance to produce the best offspring.”

“So, you have to act quickly!” she said earnestly at last.

Ji Chen was once again speechless.

Watching this dragon maiden speaking so persistently about giving birth to offspring, perhaps Dragon Island was also concerned about the fertility rate of dragons now, otherwise they wouldn't let Serena develop such a strong urge.

He couldn't help but exclaim inwardly, “Wow..

## *Chapter 737 - The Demons Are Here*

### The Demons Are Here

One month later.

Southern Continent.

That was a continent almost entirely composed of deserts, with undulating sand dunes stretching from the easternmost to the westernmost tip, bathed in intense sunlight throughout the day. Human civilizations existed only in the river deltas, along the riversides, and scattered oases.

For hundreds, even thousands of years, various desert kingdoms on the Southern Continent have waged wars around oases and rivers, fighting for water sources, population, and resources.

Under the endless yellow sand lay the countless white bones of wars fought over millennia.

However, with a piece of news spreading from the Kingdom of Ugisai located in the northwest of the Southern Continent, most of the desert kingdoms ceased ongoing or imminent wars.

A demon that had been suppressed for hundreds of thousands of years was about to invade the main world.

At first, most desert kingdoms did not believe this news. After all, in the past century, the oases on which major kingdoms relied for survival had gradually shrunk, and the once roaring rivers had become increasingly dry. Perhaps this was a conspiracy by the Kingdom of Ugisai to seize the remaining scarce water sources.

However, as the Kingdom of Ugisai actively invited many desert kingdoms to discuss this matter together, other desert kingdoms, with a mentality of “let’s see what tricks you’re playing,” sent representatives to participate in the discussion.

However, what shocked them was that one of the princes of the Kingdom of Ugisai presented many indisputable pieces of evidence during the meeting.

The demons were indeed about to invade, and the first stop of the invasion was the Southern Continent where they were located!

The news spread throughout the continent with the desert winds.

All the desert kingdoms were in an uproar.

The Northern Continent, Eastern Continent, and Western Continent had long been aware of this matter. Top powers such as elves, gnomes, human empires, and Dragon Island had already begun war mobilizations, while they had just learned about it now!

Panic rose.

Many desert nobles opted to depart with their families, rushing to board ships and carriages departing from the Southern Continent, abandoning the land protected by the desert’s spirit.

However, there were many desert nobles who were unwilling to abandon their estates and chose to stay, exhausting their wealth to train their armies.

In just a few weeks, various desert kingdoms, which were originally relatively united, suddenly split into several factions with significant internal disagreements.

Some chose to defend, some hesitated, some fled.

Many desert kingdoms, especially royal families, became anxious seeing so many people wanting to flee and ordered no one to leave, keeping them all to resist the demons.

Once again, the yellow sand was stained red with blood, but this time, it was the blood of their own people flowing.

The Kingdom of Ugisai also fell into this great division.

But its royal family remained rational and did not use coercive means to prevent people from leaving, only persuading continuously. However, faced with the terrifying threat posed by the demons, the port of Ariasha on the Southern Ocean nearby was still crowded with ships and crowds wanting to escape.

In the palace conference hall.

King Ugisai and the entire royal family wore troubled expressions.

“Royal Father, we can’t let those people leave anymore! If everyone leaves, who will stay to resist the demons?”

A crown prince, wearing a white headscarf and adorned with jewel rings on all ten fingers, spoke urgently.

“Not only are civilians leaving, even some soldiers have managed to sneak onto ships and leave. Just yesterday, four squads of one hundred soldiers each disappeared.”

“But we can’t stop them...”

“Why can’t we? Just like other desert kingdoms, we can directly block the borders with our army and prepare everyone for war!” The crown prince spoke with a fierce tone. “Issue a temporary decree, and anyone who dares to flee at this time will be executed!”

The elderly king furrowed his brow in silence.

Ari glanced at the king and shook his head. “Doing so would undoubtedly plunge the country into the abyss. Before the war even starts, the hearts of the people may already scatter.”

The crown prince scoffed, “The kingdom is on the verge of collapse, and you’re still concerned about these trivial matters? Ari, you are still so indecisive. It’s good to establish a close relationship with the people during peacetime, but in times of chaos, the law must be strict. Don’t you understand!?”

Ignoring Ari’s silence, the crown prince bowed to the elderly king. “Royal Father, please order the entire country to implement the blockade and mobilize all forces to resist the demons!”

Seeing the determined expression of the crown prince, the king's complexion gradually wavered. It seemed he had made up his mind, and he hoarsely said, "Do as Mijat suggests."

Disappointed, Ari covered his forehead, understanding that this might not be the best solution, but it was the most appropriate choice for now.

The meeting dispersed.

Ari walked out of the hall, his gaze passing over the walls of the royal city and beyond the trees of the oasis, looking towards the vast yellow sand. Suddenly, he heard a cold snort behind him.

"Ari, it seems that your trip to the Northern Continent hasn't brought any improvement. You even lost your ship and had to come back on someone else's boat." Crown Prince Mijat approached, his face carrying a hint of mockery. "With your indecisive behavior just now, you are simply unfit to be a qualified prince, let alone inherit the throne."

Ari's expression darkened. "This has nothing to do with you."

Mijat was his half-brother from the same father but different mothers. Originally, their relationship was not like this. When they were younger, despite not sharing the same mother, their bond was stronger than that of blood brothers.

But when did things suddenly change like this?

*Chapter 738: The Demons Are Here (2)*

It all began when the king announced that the throne would no longer automatically pass to the eldest son, but rather be selected from a pool of eligible princes.

That always loving and gentle older brother suddenly changed, as if taking off a mask, becoming cold and ruthless, eager for quick success and instant benefits, resorting to aggressive and ruthless means.

It was as if he had been possessed by some evil force.

He no longer treated him kindly, seeing him as an enemy.

He had previously volunteered to go to the Northern Continent, not without the intention of gaining merit to vie for the throne.

But after experiencing so much along the way, seeing the outside world, although there were many bitter experiences, it also allowed him to break free from this small kingdom and witness countless wonders.

In his heart, Ari no longer desires that throne.

Of course, one should be like Lord Ji Chen, possessing great strength, commanding forces outside, and crusading against evil!

Seeing that Ari didn't refute, Mijat shook his head as if very disappointed. "Indeed, you are the same as before, still so weak, not daring to refute even now. I really don't understand why so many people are willing to follow you."

It's a pity that they all died in a foreign land and were unable to return home because of your foolish actions."

It seemed to hit a sensitive spot, and Ari's eyes widened in anger.

However, Mijat ignored his anger and continued, "Am I wrong to say this? Of the hundreds of servants and guards on that ship, only a few came back unscathed with you. The rest either perished at sea or died at the jaws of beasts.

I heard you wanted to seek help from the elves to curb the desert's expansion? The idea is not bad, but too idealistic. How could those lofty elves care about you?

Oh, by the way, I heard you earned your return fare in an elf tavern. You really embarrassed the Kingdom of Ugisai..."

"Enough!" Ari shouted angrily, "My journey is not without purpose. At least I went with the intention to solve our problems and I brought back news of the demon invasion. But you are indifferent, scheming in this small court, plotting your conspiracies for the throne!"

Mijat's face changed slightly, his gaze becoming fierce, like an angry desert lion about to roar, causing Ari to instinctively shrink back.

Mijat looked deeply at Ari. "Then why not go back to the Northern Continent and dream your little dreams again? After all, your face is not bad, perhaps you can win the favor of the nobles."

Ari clenched his fists, his face full of anger, about to retort when he suddenly thought of something.

"What did you say?"

Mijat looked at Ari, who was angry at first and suddenly stopped, furrowing his brows.

"Anyway, since you've been there once, you're familiar with the place. At least you can survive like a coward..."

"Yes, I'll go again!"

Ari's expression became excited, his eyes gleaming, "I want to go to the Crown of the Ocean again! To seek help from Lord Ji Chen!"

Mijat watched Ari run out of the palace like a fool, and he was stunned.

But soon, a hint of satisfaction flashed in his eyes.

"Go, go as far as you can."

After another month, everything was almost ready.

A total of four hundred and fifty-eight registered dragons on Dragon Island had all arrived at the Crown of the Ocean. More precisely, it should be four hundred and sixty-two, because three legendary-tier dragon powerhouses and the golden dragon Babatos were not on the register.

This time, it was only because of Lord Ji Chen's astonishing hiring scale and the importance of the demon invasion that they joined the hired ranks.

Food reserves filled the underground warehouses, and ammunition filled every inch of space in the kobold caves.

On the main island coastline, a towering and massive thick wall surrounded the entire island, with dense towers standing on top and behind the wall, and battlements housing enchantment cannons and alchemical ballistas.

Behind the walls, on each anti-aircraft position, numerous anti-aircraft alchemical cannons and anti-aircraft spell turrets pointed towards the sky like inverted onions, their density making even dragons think twice.

It could be said that the Crown of the Ocean now resembled a hedgehog full of spikes, daunting to behold.

On this day, Ji Chen, standing on the city wall, suddenly raised his head as if enlightened, looking towards the distant horizon, his eyes seeming to penetrate space and project to the unreachable southern sea area.

In the southern sea area, at more than a dozen places on the seabed, the previously calm sea suddenly boiled violently. One by one, black fissures, as if from the abyss, slowly opened like the jaws of a giant beast, and countless evil-smelling black waters gushed out, instantly staining the surrounding seawater black and spreading rapidly around.

In the black water, demons with bared teeth and claws surged out: abyssal fiends, water demons, half-beast demons, tentacle demons...

Countless demons, nurtured by the ocean environment for maritime warfare, surged out like a black torrent, annihilating all living beings and polluting the environment wherever they went.

At the same time, on the sandy southern continent, dozens of huge black fissures split the sky and the ground.

Like substantial black mist, it surged out, turning the sky into darkness, completely blocking the scorching sun, and plunging the world into black-red darkness.

Countless demons, in orderly formations, slowly stepped onto the yellow sand.

In their eyes, filled with chaos, brutality, and evil, they looked at this new world, breathing in the fresh air completely different from the chaotic abyss.

Their faces were gradually stained with excitement and greed.

They... had returned!

This time, they vowed to launch revenge against all orderly forces, letting them know who the true masters of this world were!

The barriers of order were penetrated.

The entire main world experienced violent fluctuations, the sky dimmed without light, and even fine cracks appeared, with elemental energy in disarray.

Such anomalies were noticed by all forces, and a thought spontaneously emerged in their minds.

The demons are here!

The evil allied forces also saw such omens, each one becoming extremely excited.

The demons had finally arrived. If they had come any later, they would have been killed by the orderly forces and those glory lords!

For a moment, many evil forces suddenly erupted in large-scale riots, according to the original agreement with the demons, diverting the attention of the orderly fraction and buying time for the demons to establish themselves in the main world.

The forces of the orderly fraction were not to be trifled with either. Anticipating their intentions in advance, they had made sufficient preparations, and armies fully armed began to suppress and eliminate them.

The desert nations on the southern continent were closest to the fissures where the demons invaded, and even between the two groups of fissures, the vibrations they felt were the deepest.

In a medium-sized oasis located in the southern region of the continent, within a small town named Kossait, the residents witnessed the sudden appearance of a hundred-meter-long crevice less than a kilometer away from their town.

Everyone was puzzled.

Because they were in a remote location, they didn't even know about the demon invasion.

The chubby mayor, escorted by guards, arrived at the low earthen wall of the town and looked at the crack emitting black mist, his chubby face full of confusion.

He asked in a low voice to the guard beside him.

“Do you know what this thing is?”

The guard shook his head. He didn't know what it was either, but it didn't look like a good thing.

But then, one of the guards said, “Mayor, this might be the entrance to a mystic realm. It is rumored that within those realms lie countless treasures and treasures!”

The mayor's face brightened. Treasure?

He loved treasure the most!

Immediately, he loudly addressed the townspeople.

“This crack appeared near my territory, so naturally it belongs to me. None of you are allowed to approach or enter it, understand?”

The townspeople nodded timidly.

The mayor was very satisfied with the reaction of these lowly people. He was just about to order the guards to organize an expedition to explore the mystic realm and obtain the treasure.

Suddenly, the crack began to wriggle, and a large mass of black objects flew out.

The mayor widened his eyes, and as he saw these black objects, fear was written all over his face, and instinctively he pushed aside the guard next to him and ran towards the town.

However, his attempt to flee drew attention, and those black objects swooped down, accompanied by eerie screams, their sharp claws and fangs piercing through the fat body, tearing it into two halves.

At this moment, the townspeople finally saw what it was.

It was none other than a monstrous creature with a green face, fangs, and two horns on its back!

These were the first batch of winged demons to leave the rift, and upon seeing the town below, each one screamed excitedly and plunged downwards.

Fresh flesh and blood!

*Chapter 739: Battle Begins!*

In the main world, which had been peaceful until now, it erupted like a pot boiling over when water was suddenly added, exploding in an instant.

Every inch of land reverberated with the sounds of battle, and the number of fallen creatures increased exponentially, with wails echoing across the wilderness.

The demon army under the Dreadlord had already spread across the southern seas, while the Greed Lord landed in the southern part of the central continent through fissures, advancing northwards, destroying gathering places and kingdoms along the way, enslaving humans and other races.

The Decay Lord appeared in the southernmost part of the western continent, the Mordor Strait, and within a few days, created an area of decayed land covering hundreds of square kilometers, gradually polluting the environment, and establishing demon-producing barracks and war facilities.

As for the Void Lord and the Undead Lord, there was no news yet, possibly because the information hadn't reached the Crown of the Ocean.

However, to Ji Chen's surprise, the Dreadlord Bahama did not immediately attack northward, aiming directly for the Stormy Sea and the New Moon Islands. Instead, he steadily seized the southern seas, then sent out reconnaissance teams to explore the central sea.

Even with a massive military force, Bahama remained cautious, deploying troops and formations, arousing Ji Chen's curiosity about this opponent whom he had never met but had clashed with several times.

His interest was subtly piqued.

Facing the enemy's reconnaissance teams, the Crown of the Ocean naturally could not sit idly by and dispatched numerous reconnaissance teams to intercept.

Striving to sever the enemy's probing tentacles.

The Crown of the Ocean clashed with the demons for the first time under the seemingly calm sea surface.

A mixed team composed of Naga Iron Colossus, Dragon Horn Beast, and Sea Crystal Wurm, combining close combat, spell attacks, and maneuverability, set off southwest after leaving the Stormy Sea.

Meeting a demon squad of nearly equal size hundreds of miles from the sea fissure, both sides quickly became enraged and without hesitation, plunged into a fierce battle.

On the demon side were the Water Fiends, Half-Beast Demons, and Tentacle Demons. Water Fiends were spellcasters capable of using demon and water spells to a certain extent, Half-Beast Demons were a type of demon with a mixture of a large number of sea creature genes, serving as meat shields, and Tentacle Demons were a type of demon resembling an octopus, with dozens of tentacles bundled together like hair, capable of restraining enemies.

In terms of configuration, both sides were evenly matched, relying on sheer strength.

The Water Fiends, Tier 5, 6 stars.

The Half-Beast Demons, Tier 5, 7 stars.

The Tentacle Demons, Tier 5, 5 stars.

The Naga Iron Colossus, Tier 6, 4 stars.

The Dragon Horn Beast, Tier 6, 5 stars.

The Sea Crystal Wurm, Tier 6, 3 stars.

In terms of surface strength alone, the Crown of the Ocean team presented an overwhelming advantage in tiers.

Furthermore, with the intelligence provided by Lainekel, the strengths and weaknesses of these aquatic demons were revealed. The Crown of the Ocean team played to their strengths, avoiding weaknesses, utilizing their natural high maneuverability and ranged attack capabilities to pick off the Water Fiends and Tentacle Demons from a distance, preventing them from exerting their crowd control abilities.

Then, the Naga Iron Colossus pressed forward for close combat, quickly dispatching the Half-Beast Demons, delivering the final blow to the enemy, and completing a perfect skirmish.

Only the Naga Iron Colossus sustained slight injuries, while the other two units remained unscathed.

This scene repeated itself in various parts of the ocean.

However, Balzarna seemed to disregard these losses, continually sending out large numbers of demon squads to infiltrate towards the Stormy Sea and the New Moon Islands, gradually mapping out the nearby sea terrain.

This was Balzarna's strategy; the Crown of the Ocean's army numbered only in the tens of thousands, while the demon army numbered in the hundreds of thousands, presenting an overwhelming numerical advantage. By sacrificing a small number of demons to obtain crucial intelligence, they not only avoided losses but even profited.

Not only in the sea but there were also demon squads continuously infiltrating the skies.

Benefiting from the Crown of the Ocean's many amphibious units, capable of operating freely between the sky and the ocean, intense battles unfolded in the sky as well.

While the Crown of the Ocean still remained relatively calm, the hint of a bloody scent carried by the sea breeze suggested that true war was not far off.

Upon receiving news of demons appearing in the southern seas, many merchants and outsiders quickly left the Crown of the Ocean, returning to the relatively safer other islands and the Northern Continent. Now, apart from the residents of the New Moon Islands, there were only the players of the King Kong Island guild and the dragons of Dragon Island.

Lord's castle, command headquarters.

"In the past few days, we have clashed multiple times with the demon reconnaissance teams and achieved considerable results, killing a demon squad of about a thousand, while we only lost three squads of about ten," Alice reported.

Hearing this battle report, Ji Chen nodded involuntarily.

Thirty versus one thousand, roughly a war loss ratio of 1:30, which was still within his tolerance range.

After all, the demon reconnaissance teams dispatched were not particularly high-tier demons, mostly low-tier demons, and the higher-tier demons had not been deployed.

Under the suppression of tiers, if there were still high casualties, it would be somewhat unfair considering the resources invested in reinforcing them.

Ji Chen tapped his fingers on the tabletop. "Moving forward, the reconnaissance teams will no longer be made up exclusively of Crown of the Ocean units. Instead, they will be a collaboration between the King Kong Island guild and the Luminescent Sea clan for maritime exploration, while the Crown of the Ocean will continue to oversee operations in the sky."

*Chapter 740: The Battle Begins!(2)*

Sonia and I\_Love\_Black\_Socks nodded simultaneously. Such an arrangement couldn't be more appropriate. Since the strength of the Demon Reconnaissance Team had already been tested, there was no need to waste the elite forces of the Ocean Crown Champions.

As they say, top-tier horses naturally match up against other top-tier horses, and lower-tier horses against lower-tier ones.

The forces of the King Kong Island Guild and the Great Luminescent Sea's army were just right.

After the war meeting ended, everyone dispersed to prepare for the upcoming battles.

Ji Chen opened the Lord Panel, where the current number of troops in the territory was updated, including the forces of the King Kong Island Guild, the Elven Empire, and Dragon Island.

Since the last recruitment one month ago, the Ocean Crown had recruited another 3,430 troops, swelling the ranks of the sixth-tier army to 19,120.

There were 3,080 Naga Iron Colossi, 3,080 Ocean Blood Dragons, 3,080 Dragon Horn Beasts, 750 Sea Crystal Wyrms, 850 Heavy Armor Toothfish Knights, 1,300 Lobster Nymph Spirit Archers, 780 Leviathan Dragons, 600 Light Sea Sovereigns, totaling about nineteen thousand troops.

Fifth-tier troops included 3,220 Crab Guardians, 2,570 Lobster Guardian Knights, 1,520 Water Nymph Archers, and 2,670 Silver Sea Pixies, totaling 99,812 troops, about ten thousand in each thousand-person team.

In addition to various scattered third and fourth-tier troops, the Ocean Crown's army probably had about three ten-thousand-person teams.

After several months of rest and recuperation, the forces of the Great Luminescent Sea had seen significant improvements in both quantity and tier. They now possessed two ten-thousand-person teams of fifth-tier 6 to 9-star troops, and three ten-thousand-person teams of fifth-tier 1 to 5-star troops, totaling five ten-thousand-person teams.

The five batches of troops from the King Kong Island Guild had all arrived, with approximately fifteen ten-thousand-person teams of fourth-tier 5 to 9-star troops, seven ten-thousand-person teams of fifth-tier 1 to 5-star troops, four ten-thousand-person teams of fifth-tier 6 to 9-star troops, and five thousand-person teams of sixth-tier 1 to 2-star troops, totaling twenty-six ten-thousand-person teams.

The rest were all fourth-tier 5-star or lower troops, not even fit for cannon fodder, so they were not brought along.

Additionally, the Ocean Crown received support from Laphia, consisting of five elite elf thousand-person teams, including three ten-thousand-person teams of sixth-tier 5-star Royal Elf Rangers and two ten-thousand-person teams of sixth-tier 8-star Royal Griffon Divine Archers.

There were a total of 462 giant dragons on Dragon Island.

This was a formidable force second only to the sixth-tier army of the Ocean Crown. Each giant dragon was a hero unit, possessing combat power far surpassing troops of the same level, and would be the backbone of the resistance against the advanced forces of the Demon Army.

The entire Ocean Crown had a total of over three hundred and forty thousand troops, of high quality.

The goal of this war was to at least block the Demon Army in the Stormy Sea, firmly hold the front line of the New Moon Islands, safeguard the sea route between Lienhardt-Maple Principality and the Elven Empire, and persist until reinforcements from the Northern Continent arrived.

This was the objective, as well as the bottom line.

Once the New Moon Islands were lost, the demons would occupy this vital lifeline at sea, leading to the interruption of communication between the eastern and western parts of the Northern Continent, making it impossible to organize a concentrated naval fleet for counterattack, with extremely serious consequences.

Three days later.

As if having gathered enough information, the Demon Army finally began to move slowly, heading towards the New Moon Islands.

The sky was filled with dark clouds, pressing down as if looming overhead, while brilliant thunder serpents danced freely.

As far as the eye could see on the boundless sea, at the utmost limit of vision, a darker line appeared on the dim horizon, surging forth with billowing black mist.

It was a tide of black, composed of countless grim-faced demons, arranged in square formations, with dozens of squares forming even larger formations. Though they swam on the surface of the sea, it seemed as if they were treading on the ground, their hearts beating rapidly.

A strange, evil, twisted melody, as if from the abyss, emanated from the Demon Army, assaulting the ears with intense negative energy.

“That’s the demonic melody, used to disturb the mind and will. Weak beings who hear it will quickly fall into madness. But as long as you maintain your mental fortitude, you can become immune to it!” Lainekel said with a slightly tense expression on the city wall.

The others’ expressions changed slightly. Keeping their spirits strong, they indeed found that the eerie sound no longer reached their ears.

Prior to this, all residents of the Ocean Crown had been evacuated to the underground lizardmen world of the Ocean Crown, where the heavy rocks provided a barrier against such sounds.

However, the lower the tier of the troops, the greater the impact. They were all somewhat agitated by this pervasive sound.

Alice noticed this and immediately began to sing.

Her beautiful voice rang out under the gloomy sky, like gentle hands soothing the restlessness of many troops and heroes.

Many eyes turned to the exquisite figure, filled with gratitude.

“Thank you, Lady Alice, for your help.”

“Thank you, Miss!”

The Kobold Strategist looked at his guild leader, who looked like a lovesick fool, and couldn’t help but remind her in a low voice, “Guild Leader, you’re drooling.”

I\_Love\_Black\_Socks wiped the moisture from the corner of his mouth and said enviously, “When will I have such a good-looking and capable subordinate?”

“...When you say ‘capable’, you mean strong in strength, right?”

Distracted by this tangent, the Kobold Strategist and the other players from King Kong Island calmed down a bit, while I\_Love\_Black\_Socks looked at them with a smile.

Suddenly patting the Kobold Strategist's shoulder, I\_Love\_Black\_Socks said, "I'll take the lead, what are you all afraid of? Even if the sky falls, we've got the Islander to hold it up. There's nothing to fear!"

The Kobold Strategist winced in pain, quickly escaping from I\_Love\_Black\_Socks' grasp, "That's a good encouragement, but don't hit me!"

The guild members were immediately amused, and the tense atmosphere dissipated, replaced by a renewed sense of determination.

"That's right, the Islander is epic-tier. With him here, the Wester-Mid Ocean is the safest place!"

"Indeed, we have hundreds of thousands of troops here, not to mention so many dragons, we're as stable as can be..."

Ji Chen glanced at I\_Love\_Black\_Socks and the others, shaking his head with a light laugh.

As the Demon Army drew nearer, his expression gradually became serious.

With a firm voice, he loudly declared, "Prepare the entire army!"

Teams of a thousand soared into the air, swirling in the sky to form rotating black clouds. Lizardmen warriors climbed the city walls, operating alchemical cannons and machinery they had practiced hundreds of times.

Long-range units ascended the arrow towers and battlements, wielding powerful bows and crossbows aimed into the distance. Royal Elven Rangers moved with mechanical precision, lining up behind the crenellations, their arrows gradually shining with elemental light.

Countless marine units formed ranks along the coastline, clad in armor gleaming with a chilling light.

Heroes gripped their weapons, their faces showing no fear or hesitation, only a fierce determination burning in their eyes.

The dark and oppressive Demon Army, lacking in strategy or planning, surged forward without hesitation.

Countless demons, claws bared, charged toward the southern coastline.

As they entered the range of the cannons and arrows, the spell towers, alchemical cannons, and enchanted crossbows erupted with deafening blasts.

Countless explosions sent up plumes of white smoke, as hundreds of various projectiles arced through the air, following predetermined trajectories to accurately strike the foremost demons.

Boom—

Countless water columns shot into the sky, blossoming like flowers of water accompanied by the putrid stench of black blood and shredded flesh on the sea surface.

Arrows, like locusts in the gloomy sky, seemed to stealthily arrive unnoticed.

Some arrows silently disappeared into the sea, but many more rained down on the demons like a torrential downpour, each one causing a spurt of fresh blood.

Over just a few kilometers, the constant barrage of bombs and arrows was like a massive plow, thoroughly tilling the entire sea surface, with the splashes resembling churned-up earth and the demons akin to startled moles being blasted into the sky one by one.

**“Beautiful! Blow these damn demons to pieces!”**

I\_Love\_Black\_Socks hammered excitedly on the female wall, but the Kobold Strategist frowned tightly. He saw that although the bombardment was intense, countless demons were either worthless cannon fodder or mere scraps of meat.

However, even more demons were continuously charging from behind.

Every single one of them, without a doubt, were low-ranking, bottom-tier demons.

Certainly, this initial surge served merely as the demons’ disposable pawns and sacrificial unit, intended to exhaust their ammunition.