

R Cultivator 146

Chapter 146: The Rich Berg Island

As the first light of dawn illuminated the horizon, the storm finally relented, revealing a clear path to their destination. By morning, Tyler's ship approached Rich Berg Island, a sight to behold after the tumultuous journey. The island came into view, its grand architecture and meticulously designed pathways standing in stark contrast to the wild ocean they had just crossed.

Rich Berg Island was a marvel of design and innovation. Towering buildings lined the neatly paved pathways, their exteriors gleaming in the morning sun. The air was abuzz with activity as people hurried along the streets, many dressed in finely tailored garments, clearly professionals heading to work. Above the bustling streets, numerous flying carriages and boats moved through the sky, ferrying passengers to various destinations on the island. These elegant vehicles floated gracefully, their soft hums filling the air, offering an efficient means of travel across the island's expanse.

"I thought Rich Berg Island was supposed to be a floating island," Tyler remarked as they approached.

Lily Gomes, standing beside him, nodded. "It is, but with so many visitors, they've decided to keep it anchored. They only activate the floating mechanism in emergencies, like a tsunami or an enemy attack."

At the port, the scene was no less impressive. A constant flow of ships arrived and departed, the docks alive with the sounds of sailors and merchants conducting their business. The sheer number of vessels, from small fishing boats to grand merchant ships, highlighted the island's significance as a major trade hub. The organised chaos of the port was a testament to the island's prosperity and strategic importance.

As Tyler's ship docked at the busy port, he noted the expensive docking fees, though they were no burden to him. Lily, always the knowledgeable guide, continued to explain. "There are two powerhouses on Rich Berg Island. The Bank of Atlantis, which manages the island, and the Kong Family, who own a secret realm here. Only with a Kong Family token can someone enter that realm."

"Secret realm?" Tyler's interest was piqued.

Lily smiled. "It holds Aura stones, exquisite herbs, and many other valuable items."

But Tyler quickly lost interest, his mind wandering elsewhere.

Before they disembarked, Tyler instructed Silvia to stay close to Lily as she went shopping. Mathilda, Darla, Mana, and Taka joined them, excited for the excursion.

"It's a girls' group!" Mathilda declared with enthusiasm.

"Yeah!" Silvia, Lily, Mana, and Darla shouted in agreement.

"B-But I'm a man, here," Taka, the octopus fishman, protested.

"Girls and squid group!" Mathilda corrected with a laugh.

"Yeah!" the group echoed, leaving Taka to mumble, "I'm an octopus, not a squid," as he followed along.

Girls love to hang out with Taka Because of his Tentacles. *Cough* because he carries a lot of stuff with his Tentacles.

Even though they had storage items, showing off their purchases was something the Girls loved to do.

Tyler and Astrid, with her disguised as an ordinary water mage, strolled through the bustling streets of Rich Berg Island. The morning sun had fully risen, casting a warm glow on the island's grand buildings and neatly paved pathways. The air was filled with the hum of activity as people hurried about their business, and flying carriages zipped overhead.

As they walked side by side, Astrid glanced at Tyler. "So, what are we going to do?" she asked, her voice curious.

"First, we need to find a passenger ship that sails to the Rosefall Kingdom," Tyler replied, his tone casual but focused.

Their conversation flowed naturally as they wandered the streets, touching on various topics. Eventually, the subject shifted to Silvia, the young elf who was part of their crew.

"Silvia wants to become a mage?" Tyler inquired, his interest piqued.

Astrid nodded. "Yes. She's probably around 11 or 12 years old and already a 5th-grade Heaven cultivator with dual attributes of Water and Wood."

"Elves are natural-born mages," Astrid continued. "It's best if you let her join an academy. Her potential is immense. I also noticed she has a slight affinity for the Light attribute."

"I'll keep that in mind," Tyler said thoughtfully, appreciating the insight.

Their footsteps led them to an office at the port, a place that kept meticulous records of all the ships that docked there and provided schedules for passenger ships. Inside, Tyler scanned the available options. There were numerous ships travelling to different islands, and even a rare one that came only once every six months, heading to the North. The ticket prices were steep, but the steady stream of passengers showed no sign of slowing down.

"Hmmm... Let's decide later," Tyler remarked, his gaze shifting as he turned to leave the office. Astrid, puzzled by his sudden change of mood, followed him outside.

"What happened?" she asked, noticing the tension in his posture as they walked a short distance.

"Someone is following us," Tyler said quietly, his voice calm but alert. "I don't know if it's just a random thug or someone after you."

Astrid's heart skipped a beat. "What are we going to do?" she asked, her eyes scanning the crowd nervously.

"Just walk into that alley," Tyler instructed, pointing to a dark, narrow passageway between two tall buildings.

Without hesitation, Astrid followed Tyler into the alley, her pulse quickening. A man wearing a hood trailed them, his movements careful but intent.

Pow *Bam* *Boom!*

Before the man could react, Tyler launched a swift attack. The force of the blows sent the man reeling, and his hood fell off, revealing a handsome face framed by brown hair.

"Lutz? Tyler, stop!" Astrid cried out in shock, rushing forward to catch the falling man.

Tyler paused, his fist still raised, as he looked down at the unconscious figure. "This is Lutz?" he asked, his expression wary.

Astrid nodded, concern etched on her face as she gently cradled Lutz in her arms. Tyler didn't lower his guard, his eyes still scanning Lutz because he has some suspicion.

A few minutes later, Lutz opened his eyes, finding himself lying on a lap. "Astrid?" he murmured.

"No, it's me," Tyler said with a grin.

Lutz, slightly surprised, quickly stood up and bowed. "Sorry for being sneaky, and thank you for taking care of her."

Tyler nodded, but as ice began to form on the ground, binding Lutz's legs, Astrid called out, "Tyler..."

Tyler ignored her and pressed Lutz, "Now tell me, how did you know she is Astrid?"

Lutz hesitated but eventually confessed, "I was there when she visited Grandma."

"Then why didn't you meet me?" Astrid asked, hurt.

Lutz's face fell. "I felt guilty for what happened to you. I wasn't strong enough to protect you."

"It's not your fault," Astrid said with resolve. "It's the prime minister's greed that led to this turmoil. I still don't know who poisoned my father, but I will make them pay."

"I promise I will find the person who poisoned Uncle," Lutz vowed.

"Wait, you were in your grandmother's house?" Tyler asked.

"Yes," Lutz confirmed.

"But I couldn't sense your presence," Tyler said, suspicious.

"Lutz is a water mage with the best concealing ability," Astrid explained proudly. "It's hard to find him in hide-and-seek, especially in water."

"But you always find me," Lutz said in a defeated tone.

"That's because you always hide in the castle fountain or the well," Astrid teased.

"Stop flirting," Tyler said, irritated.

"We're not!" both of them protested, blushing.

"If he's so good at concealment, why did I find him now?" Tyler asked, still suspicious.

"It's... because..." Lutz stammered, but under Tyler's piercing gaze, he confessed, "It's because you two were together. A man and a woman going on a date and then suddenly walking into an alley... I panicked."

Bang

Lutz was knocked down by a blushing Astrid. "What nonsense are you talking about?" she fumed, giving him two more kicks for good measure.

Lutz tried to move, but the ice binding his legs made it impossible. "Huh? Can you melt this ice?" he asked, glancing at Tyler.

"It will dissolve in a few hours," Tyler replied nonchalantly.

Before Lutz could protest further, Astrid kicked the ice, shattering it with ease. Lutz stumbled slightly, regaining his balance, but before he could say anything, Tyler's expression turned serious.

"What happened?" Astrid asked, noticing the sudden change in his demeanour.

"The girls are in trouble. Someone's targeting Silvia," Tyler said, his voice tense. He had just received a message from Mana, alerting him to the danger.

A cold realisation hit him as he remembered the mysterious figure who had targeted Silvia back when they joined the Crimson Blood Sect. "Is it them?" Tyler muttered to himself, his mind racing with possibilities.

Without wasting another moment, Tyler grabbed Astrid's hand and started moving quickly. "We need to get to them, now!" he urged, his usual calmness replaced by urgency.

Lutz felt a pang of something as he noticed Tyler holding her hand. He opened his mouth to say something, but before he could utter a word, they quickly dashed away.

Determined not to be left behind, Lutz called out, "I'm also coming!" He hurried after them, his legs moving swiftly as he caught up, unwilling to let them face whatever danger lay ahead without him.

Chapter 147: Kong Shen

The girls strolled through the bustling streets of Rich Berg Island, heading towards the clothing shop they had eagerly planned to visit. The shop, nestled between tall stone buildings, exuded a medieval charm with its timber-framed exterior and intricately carved wooden sign that swayed gently in the breeze. The entrance was adorned with iron lanterns, their soft glow inviting customers inside.

As they stepped into the shop, the air was filled with the scent of freshly woven fabrics and the faint aroma of herbs from the nearby apothecary. The interior was spacious, with rows of wooden shelves lined with vibrant rolls of fabric, ranging from rich velvets to delicate silks. Garments of various styles hung on display, from simple peasant dresses to elaborately embroidered robes fit for nobility. The walls were adorned with tapestries depicting scenes of knights, maidens, and mythical creatures, adding to the shop's enchanting atmosphere.

Silvia's eyes sparkled with excitement as she began to browse through the garments, her fingers trailing over the fine materials. Mathilda, ever the leader, guided the group, picking out outfits with an expert eye. Lily and Darla eagerly followed, each finding something that caught their interest. Even Mana, usually more reserved, found herself captivated by the intricate designs and craftsmanship.

Taka, the octopus fishman, hovered behind them, his tentacles skillfully carrying the growing pile of clothes the girls selected. Although he grumbled about being included in the "Girls and Squid group," his quiet murmurs went unnoticed as the girls lost themselves in the joy of shopping.

Though they had storage items, the satisfaction of holding up their purchases and admiring them in the shop was something they all cherished. It was a simple pleasure, but one that brought them together, their laughter filling the shop as they tried on different outfits, each more extravagant than the last.

As Lily Gomes noticed the subtle presence of someone trailing them, her instincts immediately sharpened. Her eyes scanned the crowd, catching a fleeting glimpse of a shadow darting between the rooftops. Without hesitation, she subtly signaled the girls to keep moving forward while she veered off to confront the mysterious figure.

Slipping through the narrow alleyways, Lily moved swiftly, her eyes fixed on the figure in a black dress that danced across the rooftops with ease. Her mind raced as she pursued, the familiar thrill of a chase igniting her senses.

"You came back, huh?" Lily called out as she gained on the figure, her voice laced with a mix of irritation and anticipation.

The figure halted at the edge of a rooftop, turning slowly to face Lily. With a swift motion, the hood was lowered, revealing the striking features of a tanned-skinned woman with a dangerously alluring figure. It was Isadora Nightkiss, the infamous "Manhunter."

Lily's eyes narrowed in suspicion. "I thought you were part of the Phantom Pirates," she said, her tone cold and probing.

Isadora smirked, her lips curling in a mocking smile. "Oh, why are you such a loser? Losing that girl to unknown pirates... I just came here to check whether it was real or not." She paused, her gaze assessing Lily's reaction. "Looks like you did lose her to a pirate. How boring..."

Lily's eyes narrowed further as she carefully chose her next words, ensuring Isadora believed her ruse that the group had no connection to the Phantom Pirates. Satisfied with the confusion she had sown, Isadora turned and darted off into the shadows, leaving Lily to decide it was better not to pursue her, at least for the time being.

Meanwhile, after Lily's departure, the girls continued their shopping spree and then made their way to a nearby restaurant. As they approached the entrance, they were met by a waiter who quickly stepped forward to intercept them.

"I'm really sorry, but the whole restaurant has been booked by the Kong Family's young master," the waiter explained, bowing apologetically.

Just as the girls were about to turn away, a group of well-dressed men entered the scene, led by a young man with an air of arrogance. He was tall, with sharp features and piercing eyes that glinted with amusement as they swept over the group. His lavish attire, adorned with symbols of wealth and status, marked him as someone of importance.

"Young Master Kong," the waiter greeted him with a deep bow.

The man, Kong Shen, the youngest scion of the powerful Kong Family, offered a charming smile that didn't reach his eyes. His gaze lingered on the group of girls, but his attention was particularly drawn to the young elf, Silvia. His eyes widened slightly as he took in her delicate features and ethereal aura.

"You ladies are welcome to join me for a meal," Kong Shen said smoothly, his voice laced with entitlement. "It would be an honor to dine with such beauties."

Mathilda stepped forward, her expression calm but resolute. "Thank you for the offer, but we're not interested."

Kong Shen's smile faltered slightly, his eyes narrowing at the polite refusal. "Do you think you're in a position to refuse my hospitality?" His tone grew colder, and with a snap of his fingers, he ordered his lackeys to move forward.

"Teach them some manners."

As the lackeys stepped towards the girls, their menacing grins evident, Mathilda's eyes flashed with annoyance. "Seriously? Aren't you too arrogant?" she retorted, pulling a small vial from her pocket. With a swift motion, she tossed the pill at the approaching men.

The pill burst into a thick, noxious cloud of smoke as soon as it hit the ground. The lackeys staggered back, coughing and clawing at their skin as red spots began to spread across their faces and hands. Small pustules erupted, followed by a sickening popping sound as the spots burst, releasing more of the vile smoke.

The girls instinctively stepped back, their faces twisted in disgust. Even Taka, who had seen his fair share of strange things, looked appalled.

"Poison pills?" Mana muttered under her breath, impressed.

Kong Shen's expression darkened as he watched his lackeys writhing in pain and panic. The confident smirk he'd worn earlier was gone, replaced by a seething anger. He hadn't expected such a strong and immediate retaliation.

Mathilda's voice cut through the tension like a blade. "This is a warning," she declared firmly, her eyes cold and unwavering. "We came here to shop, not to cause trouble. But if you insist on pushing us, you'll regret it."

Lily then appeared beside Mathilda, her expression hardening as she exuded a terrifying pressure that made the air around them feel heavy and oppressive. The sheer force of her presence caused Kong Shen to instinctively take a step back, a flicker of regret flashing in his eyes as he realized the danger he had underestimated.

"We're leaving," Lily said with finality, her tone leaving no room for argument.

Kong Shen's jaw tightened, but he didn't dare to move or make another demand. The realization that he was dealing with individuals far more powerful than he initially thought held him in place. He could feel the weight of Lily's gaze, and for a brief moment, he understood that crossing them any further would lead to consequences he wasn't prepared to face.

As the girls turned and began to walk away, Kong Shen could only stand there, his pride wounded. His eyes narrowed, glaring at their retreating figures, silently vowing to make them pay for this humiliation. But deep down, he knew that any attempt at revenge would require careful planning—these were not ordinary travelers.

"His eyes were focused on Silvia. Looks like he wants our cute elf," Lily analyzed, her voice tinged with irritation.

"Ah... No... This cutie pie is ours," Mathilda declared, wrapping her arms protectively around Silvia, who blushed under the attention.

"Why was he even arrogant? How is he even alive?" Darla wondered aloud, her confusion evident.

"He said Kong Family, right? One of the top powerhouses on this island. The other one is the Bank of Atlantis, but they don't really care about anything other than their branch here," Mathilda explained, her tone thoughtful as she pieced together the situation.

"He will definitely try to do something," Lily said, her expression darkening as she considered the potential consequences.

"Ah... It's a pain in the ass," Mana mumbled, her tone conveying more annoyance than concern. While they weren't worried about retaliation, they all felt dealing with Kong Shen was an unnecessary complication.

"Just tell our captain, and he'll handle it," Lily suggested, her tone casual. To her, it was a small matter that Tyler could easily take care of.

"Oh... He's on a date with the angel... I'll be a party pooper," Mana said mischievously, her lips curling into a grin as she sent a voice transmission to Tyler. As his Ghost Spirit, she had the ability to communicate with him over a certain distance, making it easy to reach him even in moments like this.

The group exchanged knowing glances, a silent agreement passing between them. Whatever trouble Kong Shen might stir up, they knew they had Tyler to rely on. The encounter had been an annoyance, but it wasn't anything they couldn't handle together.

Chapter 148: Song of Ghost Princess

"So, it's just the typical young master drama?" Tyler asked, sensing that Mana might have exaggerated the situation.

"You were off enjoying time alone with an angel, so Mana decided to drag you into this," Mana replied with a mischievous grin.

Tyler chuckled and patted Silvia on the head as she enjoyed a pastry, her innocent expression making him smile.

"By the way... Who is this guy?" Lily asked, her gaze shifting to the unfamiliar figure standing before them.

"Hello, I am Lutz. Lutz Evergreen, Astrid's childhood friend," Lutz introduced himself, bowing slightly. All eyes turned to the disguised Astrid, who gave a small nod to confirm his identity.

"Hello, Mr. Lutz," Lily said with a polite smile, though her tone carried a hint of suspicion. "I heard that the candied fruits at the stall on 3rd Street are quite delicious. Could you get us each one?"

"Huh... Yeah... Sure," Lutz replied, clearly taken aback by the sudden request. Though confused, he headed off to buy the treats. The rest of the group understood that Lily didn't fully trust the newcomer. Lutz, too, realised this as he walked away.

As soon as he was out of earshot, Lily spoke up. "I met the 'Manhunter.' She came to check if we really lost the angel to the Phantom Pirates."

"At the port, I noticed some pirate ships docked. These pirates are really out in the open," Tyler added, his voice thoughtful.

"Well, no one dares to make trouble here unless..." Lily trailed off, her tone ominous.

"Unless?" Tyler prompted.

"Unless there's something worth causing trouble for," Lily finished, her eyes narrowing.

"What are you going to do about that Young Master Kong?" Mathilda asked, clearly irritated by the memory of the arrogant young master.

"We can't just sit around waiting for them to retaliate," Tyler said, his expression shifting to one of determination. "If a bigger problem arises, they'll be forced to forget about the smaller issues. And... we might be able to use this chance to secure her safety."

With a plan forming in his mind, Tyler made his way to the Kong Clan office to purchase a ticket for the Secret Realm. The entrance to this realm was a massive archway in the middle of the city, towering as high as a three-story building and radiating an imposing, majestic aura. The arch was adorned with

intricate runes and arrays, and at its centre was a glowing barrier that blocked access to the portal leading into the Secret Realm.

The ticket he bought would allow him to break the barrier just enough for a single person to enter. The Kong Clan had strict regulations, ensuring that no more than ten people could enter at the same time. Anyone else would have to wait until the barrier closed again before the next person could enter.

After securing the ticket, Tyler regrouped with his crew, who were now munching on candied fruits.

"Taka, return to the ship with Darla and Silvia. Silvia, make sure to disguise yourself using the mask. Mana and Lily, you're coming with me. Mathilda, I need you to handle something..." Tyler gave clear instructions, detailing the next steps of their plan.

Meanwhile, back at the Kong Clan's estate, Young Master Kong Shen was pacing impatiently.

"Did you find out where that group is from?" he asked, his tone dripping with disdain.

"Yes, Young Master. They're just traveling merchants from the south," his servant reported.

"Tsk... Just ordinary merchants daring to oppose me? How pathetic," Kong Shen sneered, his arrogance palpable. He had already decided to teach them a lesson in a few days.

"Young Master, something is happening at the Secret Realm entrance!" another servant rushed in, his voice urgent.

"Huh? What's the commotion? Are some pirates causing trouble? My father and the elders can handle that," Kong Shen said dismissively, waving his hand as if it were a trivial matter.

"Not just some pirates... All the pirates," the servant clarified, his voice trembling slightly with the gravity of the situation.

Kong Shen's expression shifted from arrogance to concern as he realized the scale of the threat.

"Who's responsible for this?" Kong Shen demanded, his voice tinged with frustration.

The servant, visibly nervous, quickly answered, "It's a new pirate group called the Phantom Pirates."

Near the entrance of the Secret Realm, a mysterious man clad in a red-black outfit and a Phantom mask strolled leisurely. In his hand, he held chains that connected to a beautiful girl, her hands bound by cuffs that glinted ominously in the light. Walking beside him was a seductive figure in a sleek black dress, her Phantom mask adding an air of danger to her already tempting presence. She held a whip in her hand, its mere sight enough to give her the appearance of a temptress.

On the other side of the man was another strikingly beautiful woman, also donning a Phantom mask. Her presence sent chills through anyone who glanced her way, her aura exuding an icy intimidation.

"That's Phantom Blackwood, the other one is called Temptress, and that's Ghost Princess!" someone in the crowd shouted, sparking a wave of whispers. No one noticed that it was Mana who had shouted from the crowd before stealthily flying back to the group.

Tyler and Lily had to stifle their laughter at the dramatic introduction.

"Isn't that the Half-Angel everyone's been searching for?" murmured the onlookers, eyes widening as they recognized the girl in chains. The tension grew as the pirates in the area began to surround them, closing in one by one.

The trio remained unfazed by the encroaching pirates, their steps measured and steady as they approached the entrance to the Secret Realm. Instead of immediately entering, Tyler, in his Phantom Blackwood persona, stood before the door, appearing to wait for something—or someone. He was waiting for all the pirates to gather.

"Huh... Do you want tickets to enter the Secret Realm, sir?" a man from the Kong Family asked, his voice laced with a mix of confusion and fear.

Tyler's voice, deep and slightly robotic through the Phantom mask, responded calmly, "I already have my own tickets. Don't worry. I'm just waiting for the right time to open it."

Among the crowd, Isadora Nightkiss, the infamous 'Manhunter,' observed the scene with keen interest, her eyes flickering over the Phantom Pirates with curiosity and recognition.

As more and more pirates converged on the Kong Family's Secret Realm entrance, the Kong Family began to panic. The numbers were becoming overwhelming, and the tension in the air was palpable.

"Now... almost everyone is here," Tyler said, his voice cutting through the murmurs of the crowd. "Let's start the show."

"Princess," Tyler signalled, his voice a low command that carried an air of anticipation.

Ghost Princess stepped forward, her presence commanding the attention of everyone around. She began to sing, her voice weaving a hauntingly beautiful melody that resonated with the hearts of all who listened:

Three moons above, they dance in the night,

Casting their glow, a soft silver light,

In the sky, they drift and sway,

Guiding lost souls far, far away.

Whispers of dreams, in shadows they play,

Reflecting the stars in a celestial ballet,

Three moons above, so serene, so high,

In their embrace, the night doth lie.

As her voice echoed through the air, the surrounding pirates were utterly mesmerized, their senses consumed by the ethereal song. The melody painted vivid images in their minds, lulling them into a deep, enchanted trance.

For Isadora Nightkiss, the scene became all too real. She found herself standing as a child in the middle of the ocean at night, gazing up at the three moons that hung like guardians in the sky. The serenity of the moment was almost too perfect, but then, something inside her snapped. She broke free from the illusion, her body drenched in sweat, her breath coming in sharp gasps.

"What a powerful illusion. This must be a strong soul technique," Isadora muttered, her eyes wide as she glanced around, noticing that the others were still caught in the ghostly trance, their eyes glazed over.

Her astonishment deepened as she watched Tyler, now moving with calculated precision, take out hundreds upon hundreds of tickets to the Secret Realm. With a casual flick of his hand, he threw them all at the entrance door in one sweeping motion.

The barrier that protected the entrance to the Secret Realm began to crack under the immense pressure. Normally, if more than ten tickets were used at once, the barrier would weaken, leaving a hole that would take an hour to mend. But with hundreds of tickets being thrown at it simultaneously?

Boom.

The entire barrier shattered, splintering with a deafening sound that echoed through the air. The once-impenetrable shield was gone, revealing the entrance to the Secret Realm, now open for all to see.

The air buzzed with tension as the pirates and others snapped out of their daze. The haunting melody of the Ghost Princess still echoed faintly in their minds, but the scene before them had changed

dramatically. The Phantom Pirates, along with the mysterious girl they had in chains, were nowhere to be seen.

"Where did they go?" someone in the crowd muttered, confusion and frustration thick in the air.

"After them!" another pirate shouted, his voice full of desperation. The crowd began to stir, searching frantically for any trace of the elusive Phantoms.

But before they could scatter, a whisper drifted through the air, reaching the ears of every pirate present. The voice was deep, slightly robotic, and unmistakably menacing.

"The barrier to the secret realm that contains treasures and wealth is open. Are you sure you want to chase after the Phantoms and miss out on the riches inside?"

Chapter 149: New Bounties

Phantom Blackwood's voice, calm and calculating, hung in the air like a spell. The words struck a chord in the hearts of the pirates. They paused, looking at one another, the allure of treasure far more compelling than pursuing the vanished Phantoms.

The decision was unanimous. Without another word, the pirates turned their backs on the hunt and rushed toward the entrance of the secret realm, their greed driving them forward. The temptation of untold riches was too powerful to resist.

Isadora Nightkiss, however, was different. she dashed away, her form blending with the shadows as she began her pursuit of the Phantom Pirates. She wouldn't let them slip away so easily. Back at the entrance to the secret realm, chaos reigned. The Kong Family's guards and attendants were overwhelmed, helpless in the face of the rushing pirates.

"Where are the elders? The Family Head?" one of the Kong Family members muttered, fear creeping into his voice as he watched the scene unfold. They could only hope that reinforcements would arrive soon to bring order to the chaos that had erupted at their doorstep.

For now, all they could do was wait and watch as the pirates swarmed into the secret realm, eager to claim whatever lay within. The situation had spiraled out of control, and the repercussions were bound to be severe.

In the midst of the chaos unfolding at the Kong Family Secret Realm entrance, four seemingly ordinary practitioners made their way calmly along the streets of Rich Berg Island. Unbeknownst to the frenzied pirates and the Kong Family guards, these individuals were none other than Tyler, Lily, Mana, and Astrid, all expertly disguised to blend into the crowd.

As they walked, Isadora Nightkiss dashed past them, her eyes sharp and focused as she searched for the elusive Phantom Pirates. She paid no attention to the four practitioners, completely unaware that they were, in fact, the very people she was seeking.

Lily couldn't help but tease Tyler as they strolled along. "I didn't know you had more of those Master Level Disguise Charms," she said with a smirk, her tone playful. Inwardly, she added, *'Even though we only bought one.'* Tyler chuckled awkwardly in response, casting a glance at Astrid, who was also in disguise.

Their walk soon led them to a quiet part of the island, where Tyler turned to Astrid with a serious expression. "I think this is goodbye," he said, his voice tinged with both sadness and finality.

Astrid, ever graceful, bowed her head in gratitude. "Thank you for everything," she said sincerely. Mana, ever affectionate, pulled Astrid into a tight hug, and Astrid returned the embrace warmly.

"Please tell Silvia, Darla, and Mr. Taka my goodbye," Astrid added softly, her eyes glistening with emotion. Lily, ever efficient, quickly grabbed Astrid by the arm, and with a nod to the others, they disappeared towards the sea.

Meanwhile, Tyler watched them go, a contemplative look on his face. "Now... since the Kong Family is preoccupied with the secret realm entrance, let's wrap this up with one last task," he said, determination in his voice.

At the same time, Lily, now soaring above the sea with her sword, made her way toward a ship bound for the Rosefall Kingdom. She landed gracefully on the deck with Astrid, who was still disguised. A girl

approached them, accompanied by Lutz. As the girl canceled her disguise charm, she transformed back into Mathilda.

Mathilda had booked a ticket in disguise, ensuring that Astrid could safely continue her journey under the guise of Mathilda. The two shared a heartfelt goodbye hug, knowing that this was a crucial moment in their plan. With that, Mathilda departed with Lily, leaving Astrid to watch them with mixed emotions as they flew back to Tyler's ship.

Back at the Kong Family estate, the situation was rapidly deteriorating. A servant, rushing to deliver urgent news to Young Master Kong Shen, froze in his tracks upon entering the room. His eyes widened in shock as he saw the other servants turned into ice statues, their expressions frozen in terror. To his horror, Young Master Kong Shen was nowhere to be found.

While the Kong Family was plunged into turmoil, Tyler returned to his ship, carrying the unconscious body of Kong Shen over his shoulder. He handed the young master off to Situ, who stood by dutifully.

"Put him in the cell," Tyler ordered, his tone brisk.

"Sir, about the other pirates..." Situ began, reminding him of the loose ends they still needed to tie up.

Tyler snapped his fingers as if suddenly remembering something. "Oh, I almost forgot about them. Bring them here. Let's collect the bounty money. And I need to visit the Bank of Atlantis branch as well."

Next Day...

The sun rose gently over the horizon, casting golden rays across the deck of the ship. The crew was just beginning to stir when a sudden burst of excitement broke the morning calm.

"Look, look, look!" Mana shouted, flying down from above with a wide grin, waving three freshly printed bounty posters in her hands. Her excitement was contagious as she landed in the middle of the group, her wings fluttering slightly in her eagerness.

Everyone gathered around as she displayed the first poster. The image was of a sexy woman in black, holding a whip with a mischievous grin on her face.

****Temptress – 40 million Lydia****

Lily grinned as she looked at the poster, recognizing herself instantly. "Well, at least they got my good side," she joked, flicking her hair over her shoulder.

The second poster featured a young lady wearing a Phantom mask, her presence eerie and captivating at the same time.

****Ghost Princess – 50 million Lydia****

Mana couldn't help but smirk as she saw the image. "Hey, I'm higher than you!" she teased, poking Lily in the side playfully.

Lily rolled her eyes, though a smile tugged at her lips. "It's probably because you used your ability to hypnotize everyone. They think you're more dangerous."

"Well, it doesn't matter," Tyler interrupted, his voice calm but with a hint of amusement. He was holding the final poster, examining it closely. "We're going to the bank," he added, handing the poster over to Lily.

The last poster was the most imposing of the three, featuring a tall, mysterious figure in a dark red and black outfit, his face obscured by a Phantom mask. The caption underneath read:

****Captain Phantom Blackwood – 80 million Lydia****

Tyler's bounty had nearly doubled from the last time, a clear indication of the growing threat he posed to their enemies.

At the Bank of Atlantis, Tyler, Lily, and Mana entered the opulent branch on Rich Berg Island, its marble façade gleaming under the bright sunlight. The interior was equally impressive, with grand chandeliers and polished stone floors that reflected the bank's grandeur. The trio's footsteps echoed softly as they approached the bustling reception area, undeterred by the activity around them. They had a clear purpose in mind.

Tyler stepped forward, addressing the receptionist with a calm yet assertive tone. "I heard that we can turn in bounties here," he said, gesturing subtly towards the chained pirates they had brought along.

The receptionist, a composed woman who had clearly seen her share of unusual requests, gave a small nod. "Oh... The bounty section is on the above floor. Take the stairs on the left."

Following the directions, Tyler, Lily, and Mana ascended the staircase, their movements purposeful. At the bounty counter, they efficiently exchanged their captives, receiving a hefty sum of 40 million Lydia in total. Tyler inspected the transaction with a satisfied nod.

"Is there anything else you need, sir?" the man at the counter inquired, his professional demeanor masking any curiosity about the group's activities.

Tyler glanced at Lily and Mana, who both gave him a curious look before coughing lightly, trying to hide their amusement. Tyler, however, was serious. "I want to open a bank account," he stated.

"hmm..." Lily and Mana hummed.

"Actually, probably three or more." Tyler said, then he paused and continued, "Nope... for everyone on my ship."

The man behind the counter blinked in surprise but quickly composed himself. "Of course, sir. That can be arranged."

Creating a bank account in the Bank of Atlantis was a straightforward process, particularly for individuals of their caliber. Tyler, Lily, and Mana used their Divine Sense to imprint their consciousnesses, a secure method that ensured only they could access their accounts. With this, they could withdraw or deposit money at any branch in the Northern Seas, a convenience that suited Tyler's growing ambitions.

But Tyler wasn't done yet. He made arrangements for the bank staff to send a team to his ship, where they helped the rest of his crew register their own bank accounts. This way, every member of his crew would have access to their earnings, and more importantly, Tyler could streamline his operations.

The efficiency of the process pleased Tyler. With these accounts, he could now start businesses on multiple islands and seamlessly receive payments. This was more than just about security; it was about laying down the foundation for something larger. With access to such a wide financial network, Tyler could expand his influence far beyond.

Chapter 150: Captured

The bustling activity on Rich Berg Island reaches new heights with the grand opening of a new restaurant called *Immortal Bytes*, which has quickly become the talk of the town. The establishment draws in crowds from all corners of the island, eager to experience its unique culinary offerings. Unknown to most, this restaurant is a new venture by Tyler, who has expanded his influence beyond the sea and into the world of business.

Tyler had hired a group of locals and slaves from his ship to staff the restaurant. The manager, once a slave under Tyler's command, now walks with pride and purpose, overseeing the restaurant's operations. This new position is not just a job but a symbol of the freedom Tyler promised, a testament to his ability to transform lives. The manager, alongside their partner, was one of the couples chosen by Situ for this opportunity. Having been granted their freedom, they now have the chance to start fresh, building a new life on Rich Berg Island while ensuring the restaurant's success. Their gratitude towards Tyler is profound, as they never imagined their future would be so bright.

Beyond the restaurant, Tyler has also launched another business venture: the *White Auction Hall*. This establishment is set to become a hub for the sale of rare artifacts, treasures, and other valuable items. The auction hall is meticulously managed, with monthly auctions that promise to attract wealthy buyers and collectors from across the Seas. The slaves on Tyler's ship have been rigorously trained for their roles in this new enterprise, with the promise of eventual freedom driving their hard work and

dedication. Each of them is keenly aware that their efforts in the auction hall could lead to a better future.

As Tyler supervises the preparations, he takes a moment to speak with Situ, who has been instrumental in organizing the new ventures. "Situ... Don't you want to settle down?" Tyler asks, noticing the dedication Situ has shown not just to the business, but to the crew and their well-being.

Situ, ever composed, replies, "It's alright, Master. I will do it when the time is right." Tyler didn't catches the brief glance Situ directs toward Darla, who is walking by with a tea tray.

As Tyler, Lily, and Mana discussed their rapidly growing ventures on Rich Berg Island, the conversation took a turn toward the practicalities of their business operations.

"I heard that rent on Rich Berg Island is sky high? How many years did you rent?" Lily asked, curious about the costs involved.

Tyler's response was casual, yet it carried the weight of someone who had meticulously planned for success. "What rent? I just bought it," he replied with a confident smile.

Lily raised an eyebrow, impressed but not entirely surprised. Tyler's ambition had always been clear, but this was another level.

"We're also selling Mathilda's Essence Rejuvenation Pill," Tyler continued, changing the topic to another success. "That pill is a huge hit. Each one sells for 100 Lydia. Just today, we sold 10,000."

Mana's eyes widened in shock. "Ah... That means it's 100,000 Lydia?" she exclaimed, trying to wrap her head around the numbers.

Lily couldn't help but chuckle at Mana's mistake. "We should drown your math knowledge in the Northern Seas... It's 1,000,000 Lydia."

Realizing her error, Mana stuck her tongue out playfully, acknowledging her silly mistake.

However, Lily's thoughts turned to the potential consequences of their booming sales. "Many people might stock them up and decide to sell them for higher prices later when there's more demand," she warned.

Tyler, unconcerned, waved his hand dismissively. "It's fine," he said, leading them to a nearby workshop. Inside, a sleek, modern machine hummed softly as it worked, its efficiency evident in the orderly rows of pills it produced.

"Oh... The pill maker," Mana said, recognizing the machine.

"Yeah," Tyler confirmed. "This improved version can make 1,000 pills in an hour if there are enough ingredients. As for ingredients, I've already bought some farmland on a nearby island. I also forged a contract with the Bank of Atlantis for security."

Lily nodded, understanding the foresight behind his actions. "So, you're setting up everything to run smoothly even when you're not here."

"Exactly," Tyler said, his tone serious. "I'm not going to be on every island, so I have to prepare everything before leaving. These businesses will generate money while I sail the North."

With everything in place, Tyler's ventures were poised to thrive, allowing him to continue his journey while ensuring a steady stream of income.

Tyler's ship was finally ready to leave Rich Berg Island after a month of preparation. The crew bustled about, making last-minute adjustments and securing supplies for their next journey into the Northern Seas.

On deck, Mathilda leaned against the railing, gazing out at the horizon. "Astrid must have reached the Rosefall Kingdom by now," she remarked, a hint of concern in her voice.

"Probably," Lily replied, absorbed in the newspaper she was reading.

Mathilda turned to her. "Did you get any news?" she asked, curiosity piqued.

"I asked the informants on the island to keep me updated," Lily said, flipping to the next page. Just as she spoke, a seagull swooped down, dropping a small scroll into her lap before flying off. "Speak of the devil," she added, picking up the scroll.

Lily quickly unrolled the small paper scroll, her eyes scanning the contents. Suddenly, she stood up, shock written across her face.

"What happened?" Tyler asked, noticing her reaction as he approached.

Lily looked up at him, her expression grave. "Tyler, Astrid has been captured by the Silver Eye Pirates."

"Huh?" Tyler's eyes widened in disbelief.

Meanwhile, in the misty waters of the Rosefall Sea, the Silver Eye Pirates' ship cut through the fog like a phantom. The ship was eerie and imposing, its dark sails billowing silently in the wind.

Deep within the ship's hold, Astrid lay unconscious, chained to the cold, damp walls of a cell. Next to her, Lutz, equally battered and bruised, was slumped against the floor. Both were barely conscious, their breaths shallow.

Outside the cell, two pirates stood guard, their conversation filled with disdain.

"Hmph... These Phantom Pirates, how can they have a bounty higher than our captain? Just a bunch of nobodies," one of the guards scoffed.

"Do you think they'll come after this girl?" the other guard asked, casting a glance at Astrid.

"So what if they do? Our captain can pulverize them easily," the first guard bragged, confidence oozing from his words.

As Astrid slowly regained consciousness, the cold, damp air of the cell wrapped around her like a shroud. Her head throbbed with pain, and every muscle in her body ached from the rough treatment she had endured. She could barely move her limbs, bound tightly by heavy chains that dug into her wrists and ankles. The dim light from a flickering lantern outside the cell cast eerie shadows across the stone walls, creating an oppressive atmosphere that would have crushed the spirit of anyone less determined.

She blinked a few times, her vision gradually coming into focus. The last thing she remembered was the sense of relief when she thought she had safely reached Rosefall Kingdom. But she suddenly fell unconscious and was brought here to the cell. Lutz's faint groans from beside her brought Astrid's attention back to the present. She turned her head slowly, wincing at the pain that shot through her neck.

Astrid tested the strength of the chains binding her. They were strong, but not unbreakable. She could not even feel a single bit of Prana.

Astrid sat in her cell, trying to make sense of the hushed conversation between two pirates. She had been their captive for nearly two weeks, yet they hadn't handed her over to whoever hired them.

"Why are we still sailing aimlessly? Shouldn't we have delivered her by now?" one pirate grumbled, his voice low but edged with impatience.

"It's not up to us," the other replied, shrugging. "Whoever requested her capture has their own plans. We'll have to wait until the boss figures it out."

A chill ran down Astrid's spine. She had long suspected the involvement of the Prime Minister in her kidnapping, and their words only confirmed her fears.

"Why don't we just enjoy her company while we wait?" The first pirate's tone took on a dark, suggestive note, sending a fresh wave of fear through Astrid.

"No. Captain's orders were clear—not to touch her," the other pirate warned, his voice firm.

Astrid exhaled, relieved, though her heart continued to pound. Suddenly, both pirates fell silent. They exchanged a glance and walked over to her cell. With a creak, the door swung open, and Astrid tensed, unsure of what to expect.

From the shadows, a figure emerged—elegant, alluring, and dangerously beautiful. It was the infamous Manhunter, Isadora Nightkiss.

"Finally, found you," Isadora purred, her voice a silky whisper. She reached out, her touch grazing Astrid's neck, and with that, Astrid's world faded into darkness.

"Target acquired," Isadora said with a satisfied smile as she turned to leave the cell.

But she didn't notice the shadow that had been silently approaching her, blending seamlessly into the darkness of the ship.