

Shota 241

Chapter 241 Investigation (4)

We moved further and further away from the river as we came closer to the source.

But before we reached it, I suddenly received a notification from the system.

When I received this notification, I immediately had our group stop. Then after giving the excuse that I needed to check something, I headed off into the forest alone so that I could see what this notification was about.

When I saw what was written in the notification, I revealed a strange smile.

That was because I had already expected this to be a quest, but the contents of the quest were...too strange.

After all, this was a side quest that I had never seen in all my time playing this game.

In the game, I had already visited Bright Water City countless times and had done every quest that should have been available here. But this was my first time seeing this kind of quest.

[Side Quest] Destroy the undead horde

Bright Water City is being plagued by an undead horde raised by the demons. Please defeat this horde using any method of your choosing.

Reward: Intermediate Reward Pack

An undead horde, this was not something that I had expected nor did I want to deal with.

After all, undead were the hardest kinds of monsters to deal with in the game.

One might think that it was the powerful dragons that were considered the hardest monsters to deal with, but it was actually these undead. That was because of one simple reason, because they were very hard to kill.

These undead had a very special kill condition which wasn't what one would think it was...well, it was related to the head, but it was different from just smashing the head in.

Instead, it was destroying the small core that was inside the head of each of the undead.

Or at least that was how the lore explained it.

The real truth, which was something that had been found after someone dived into the game code, was that there was a small hit box programmed on the head of the undead.

They should have had a normal hitbox that covered the entire head, but because of one coding error, it created a small and random hitbox for each of the undead mobs.

This should have been an easy fix...but the company had decided to create this lore for the undead instead of patching this out of the game...

This was one of the dark spots on this company's prestige, but there weren't any perfect games out there.

The game itself was still considered the best for the genre, so even if there was this annoying mistake, people still played it.

But now that this game had become real life...would the undead still have the same annoying trait as in the game.

There were many things that had been different from in the game, so I couldn't help wondering if this was one of them. It would certainly be easier for us if this was one of the traits that were different...

But I didn't have much hope for this.

I just hoped that we would be able to take care of the undead horde without a problem. I think you should take a look at

At the same time, I couldn't help looking at the part of the quest description that said 'any method of your choosing'. Did that mean that there were other ways to take care of the undead that we didn't know of?

If there were...that would be much easier than smashing a certain and random part of each undead's head...

Once I had finished sorting out my thoughts, I went back to the group who all looked at me with curious looks.

I took a deep breath and said, "It's a horde of undead that is waiting for us in front of here."

Shaka knitted his brows, but Ronnie and Ron both revealed looks of shock and disbelief.

They looked at me as if they were trying to figure out if I was joking or not, but they could see how serious I was which filled them with even more shock.

After a bit of silence, Ronnie asked in a slow voice, "How, how do you know this? Why are you so certain about this?"

I revealed a bitter smile when I heard this since there wasn't anything that I could say in response to this. After all, I couldn't just tell her that I had a AI system that told me these things.

So I just said with a serious look, "I have my ways."

I tried to act as vague and mysterious as possible. This would be convincing in this world of and strange powers.

Ronnie looked at me with a look of doubt still before saying, "Alright, if you say so."

I just gave a shrug and said, "Just wait a bit and you'll see in a bit."

Ronnie revealed a strange look when she heard this.

Ron had been silent the whole time, but he had been seriously looking at Zwein the entire time.

Unlike Ronnie, he had his lifetime of experience to draw on. He had seen many different people, so he could read people much better than Ronnie.

He could see the seriousness that came from Zwein, so he hadn't doubted him. He just wanted to figure out what Zwein was depending on to be this certain.

But before they could say anything else, they suddenly heard a moaning sound.

As soon as they heard this, they immediately hid in the bush and looked in the direction of this sound.

To no one's surprise and to their surprise, they found that there was an undead that was wandering around, proving Zwein's claims.

Both Ronnie and Ron looked at me with incredulous looks, but I completely ignored it as I focused on the undead.

I was seeing if there were any others that were with this undead.

It seemed like this was just a straggler that had broken off from the main horde...

That meant that this was a chance!

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I turned to Shaka who had also been staring at the undead, but the look on his face was different from mine.

It seemed that he was already trying to figure out a way to kill this thing.

So I said, "Don't kill it, capture it."

Shaka was caught off guard by this before looking at me like he was asking me why I said this.

I quickly gave an excuse, "The disease should be coming from these undead. We should capture it alive so we can identify what it is."

But to my surprise, I found that these words incited someone else.

Without hesitation, Ron pulled out his sword and charged at the undead.

As we watched him run at the undead, we all had shocked looks on our faces since we never expected him to be this rash.

But since he had already charged out...we had no choice but to follow up.

Without any further hesitation, I called out some rope from my Storage Ring that I tossed to Shaka and said, "Use him as bait and try to tie up the undead."

Shaka gave a nod before rushing forward with the rope.

Ronnie looked at me with a strange look, as if she was trying to figure out where I had pulled that rope out from.

I did my best to ignore this look until she finally said, "Give me some rope as well."

I was surprised to hear this, but I shook my head and said, "You'll just get in the way."

Ronnie didn't look offended when she heard this and instead, she pulled out a sword that she swung down in front of her. This sword landed right in front of me.

If it had been a single inch forward, it would hit my...thing down there. This thought made me give a shiver as I never expected her to be this fierce.

But the fact that she could control her sword this well showed that she had been properly trained with it.

So what I had said...was like a slap to my face.

With a bitter smile on my face and a shake of the head, I pulled out some rope for her and sent her off.

As for me...I would just get in the way.

I knew my limits and I didn't push over them.

Ron charged right at the undead and with all the noise that he made, he immediately attracted its attention.

Seeing a living person charging at it, the undead didn't hesitate to attack.

It swiped its arms out at Ron who was charging at it, but this undead was slow so Ron had already seen it from a mile away.

Ron was able to easily dodge out of the way of this swiping attack and got behind the undead to swipe out at it with his sword. The undead didn't dodge out of the way, or rather it moved too slowly to dodge out of the way in the first place.

However, the undead acted like it didn't even feel this attack as it suddenly turned around to slash at Ron with its sharp claws again.

Ron was a bit slow to react this time since he didn't expect that his attack would not have any effect at all on the undead.

He had to raise his sword to block the attack and was thrown back by the force of the undead's swing.

Then there was no hesitation at all as the undead chased after Ron.

That was the advantage that undead had over other monsters. Since they were dead in the first place, it wasn't as if they cared about their bodies.

They could do whatever they wanted with these bodies and the dark that had created them would heal everything.

They didn't have to worry about the things that the living would worry about. They could tear their bodies apart to move in ways that living beings couldn't and would be healed by the dark inside of them.

This could even be seen by how the slash on the undead's back was already closing by itself.

This gave them no hesitation at all when it came to their movements, making up for the slow movement that came from being a rotting pile of flesh.

Ron knew that he was in a bad position, so he didn't retreat. He knew that the best way was forward, whether it was dodging the undead or cutting it down.

But before he could clash with the undead, there was a rope that suddenly appeared on the ground in front of them.

This rope suddenly went taut and caught the undead charging forward off guard, causing it to spill towards the ground.

The rope didn't relax there and suddenly went forward with the undead to wrap around its body.

The undead gave a growl at this and reached down to slash at the rope. But before it could, there was a voice that shouted out, "The arms! Now!"

There was another rope that appeared that quickly wrapped around the arms, but this time it didn't go as smoothly.

It seemed like the undead was stronger than the rope, so it was about to rip the rope binding its arms apart.

Ron saw this chance and quickly slashed out with his sword. His sword cut across the arms of the undead, cutting the muscles there to pieces so that it wasn't able to exert any strength.

The undead would heal in time, but right now, it couldn't exert any strength at all.

After this, the ropes quickly tightened around this undead and completely tied it up.

Ron also worked with these ropes that tied up the undead, cutting the muscles of the undead so that it wouldn't be able to resist at all.

This accurate cutting of the muscles of the undead really could be considered skillful. It was a real show of how skilled Ron was.

But that didn't matter since what caught everyone's attention was the undead trapped in the ropes.

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Once the undead had been secured with the rope, I came forward to take a look at it.

It was still struggling even though it had been bound by the rope, but since its muscles had also been cut, it wasn't able to put up much of a struggle in the first place.

As it laid there in front of me, I carefully looked over the features of this undead.

There wasn't anything that was special about it, other than the sharp talons that had developed on its hands. It seemed like it was just a normal undead that could be commonly found in the game.

As I looked over it, the other three all waited with bated breath.

They had also looked over the undead, but there wasn't anything that they could find about this undead creature. Even Ronnie who seemed like she was rather knowledgeable didn't seem to know a thing about this undead.

After a while, I said, "It's just a normal undead."

When they heard this, all three of them looked at me with strange looks since they could also figure this out.

I then said, "It's the kind of basic undead that one can create as long as they use some dark mana on a corpse. This kind of basic undead has a rotting poison that is dangerous when exposed to it for a long time, which means that the fishes there must have been exposed for a long time before dying. That was

why they were scattered all around, they were jumping out of the river to avoid the poison and died in the end from being poisoned."

When Ron heard this, he immediately came forward to grab me by the shoulders before saying, "So you're saying that the young miss is..."

He didn't finish his words, but it was clear what he was implying with this.

I gave a nod and said, "She hasn't been exposed to it long enough for it to affect her, so she should be fine."

At this, they all let out a sigh of relief.

But the one that looked the most relieved was Ronnie.

It seemed that even though she had put on a tough exterior, she had been the one that was the most worried about this.

But this wasn't strange since it was her life that was on the line.

Everyone would be afraid if their life was in danger like this.

After taking a moment to calm down, they all turned their attention back to the undead who was tied up there on the ground.

Shaka pulled out his sword and said, "I'll take care of it now."

But I quickly stopped him by saying, "Wait, don't! Let me examine it first!"

Shaka stopped and turned to look at me with a confused look, as if he couldn't understand what was so important about this undead.

But he still moved back and gave me the space that I needed.

I came closer to the undead before pulling out a makeshift mask made of cloth and a dagger out from the Storage Ring.

With this cloth mask on my face and this dagger, I started stabbing the undead in different parts of its body to see if there was any reaction. I think you should take a look at

However, no matter how I stabbed this undead, it didn't seem to react at all. It was like it hadn't felt the stab at all with the way that it just laid there growling.

It seemed that physical damage didn't do a single thing to the undead, but I had already expected that.

I had hoped that since this was a different world, something would have changed. However, it seemed like I was just fooling myself.

So instead, I started trying different things against this undead.

I had bought quite a few things when we were in the city that I had thrown in my Storage Ring.

I can't say that this was how I imagined that I would be using these things, but if they made it easier to deal with these undead, I was all for it.

Anything that made it easier to deal with the undead, I was happy to use.

The first thing that I tried using was salt.

That was the standard thing to use when dealing with the supernatural, something that had been used in almost every horror movie.

But it seemed that this time, it didn't work.

The undead didn't react at all when I sprinkled the salt over it.

So I tried using many different things on it.

With all of the things that I tried, it was almost as if I was marinating this undead instead of trying to find a way to kill it.

I used all kinds of condiments, but it didn't seem like there was a single one that had an effect on this thing.

So in the end, I gave up trying to use different things on it.

To the side, the others all looked at me with strange looks. It was almost like they were looking at someone who had gone crazy from stress, so there was a bit of worry in their eyes.

Since I couldn't do anything with these things, I decided to use some other gaming knowledge that I picked up.

I pulled out something that had cost me quite a bit of money and then sprinkled it on the undead without hesitation.

This was a potion that I had bought from a shop in the city.

This was an expensive item that could heal one's wounds just by drinking it, though in the game, it was considered a cheap item. If I didn't have the money from Baroness Rose, there was no way that I would have been able to afford this.

When I poured the potion on the undead, I found that nothing seemed to happen at first which made me disappointed.

But then there was smoke that started coming from the undead's skin that seemed to be a good sign.

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However, I was disappointed in the end to see that the bit of smoke was just it.

There was nothing else that happened other than that bit of smoke and the undead started healing not long after.

It seemed that there was a bit of an effect from the potion, but it was just too weak to actually do any damage to the undead.

No one had thought about using potions against the undead when they were playing the game since no one would think that throwing potions at enemies would do anything. However, based on the damage that had been done to the undead when I used the potion, it seemed that only something on the level of a greater potion would be able to kill this undead.

Not to mention that this was the lowest level of undead there was...

If there was a higher grade undead...it might even take something like an elixir to kill it.

But at the very least, I had found that potions would have an effect on them.

The problem was the quantity and quality of these potions.

It wasn't an exaggeration to call these potions expensive, so much so that a commoner family would be able to live an entire month just with the amount that it took to buy one.

So to get that many to deal with however many undead there were...that was not something that I was capable of even with all the wealth that I had as a noble.

It seemed like I had to find another way or we would have to kill each one of the undead the old fashioned way.

I started thinking about all the different things that I had seen in zombie movies before, but there wasn't a single thing that seemed like it would work.

So I completely threw caution to the wind and pulled out everything that I had.

By the time that I was finished, the undead was covered in all kinds of strange liquids and things that really looked very strange.

The three of them just looked at me like I was crazy, but they didn't stop me.

After all, they had seen the effect that the potion had on the undead, so they could already guess what I was looking for.

In the end, I just gave up and said, "Can any of you make a fire?"

All of them revealed confused looks, but Shaka gave a nod and took out some flint.

I picked up a stick and gathered some cloth to wrap around it before holding it forward for Shaka to light it.

A simple torch was different from a fire used to heat up water, the amount of smoke that would be created would be completely different.

Once the torch was lit, I brought it forward towards the undead's body.

The problem was that the undead's body was still soaked in all the strange liquids that I had poured over it, so I had to use something else. I pulled out a bottle of alcohol and smashed it over the undead, completely soaking it in alcohol.

Then using the torch, I lit the undead on fire...or I would have when I realized that lighting the undead on fire was the same as starting a large fire to heat up water. There would be just too much smoke released. I think you should take a look at

We had no idea what was around us, so it was best not to create too big of a sign that we were here.

So I turned to Shaka and asked, "Can you find a cave nearby? I want to burn this undead, but it'll generate too much smoke."

Shaka gave a nod before heading off to find this cave for me.

After Ron and Ronnie exchanged a look, they also headed off to find a cave.

It didn't take long before they came back to report that they had found a cave not far from here.

Working together, we carried the undead over to a nearby hill that had a small cave.

This was a very small cave on the side of the hill that didn't lead much further than a few dozen meters. However, it was a very spacious cave that had plenty of space to hide the smoke that came from burning the body.

So I didn't waste any time lighting the undead on fire.

The alcohol did its job and it took no time for the undead to start burning.

As it burned, the flames completely cauterized all of its skin and it wasn't able to heal even with the dark that was inside of its body.

So slowly but surely, the undead started to turn to ashes from being burnt like this.

It took a while, but it was turned into a pile of ashes in the end.

Of course, we hadn't been watching from inside of the cave the entire time since that would have led to us dying from lack of oxygen and smoke inhalation.

Instead, we had been waiting outside the cave for the smoke from inside the cave to die down.

Once there was no more smoke, we went in to check on the undead that had been burning.

All that was left was a pile of ashes like we had expected, but that was also a problem.

There was no more undead for me to experiment with and we still hadn't found an actual solution to this.

Burning the undead...wasn't viable since there were many ways for them to put out this fire or just avoid it completely.

So it still seemed like the only way to take down the undead that we would possibly face was to kill them all one by one...

At the thought of this, I couldn't help giving a sigh since it seemed like I had just wasted my time with these experiments.

But Ronnie took this chance to ask, "What do we do now?"

I looked at her and said, "We keep following the river and find the rest of them. There's no way that there's only a single one."

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Both Ron and Ronnie hesitated a bit, but in the end, they still decided to come with us.

As we were following the river, I started falling into deep thought again.

If there was a horde of this size, why were there only minor reports that there were rotting plants in this area?

After all, undead required a body to create, so where would they have gotten all those corpses from?

If there were this many corpses being taken, someone should have noticed something...

So could it be that there was some kind of conspiracy?

At this, I suddenly stopped which surprised the other three.

Ronnie looked at me and asked, "What's wrong?"

I turned to Ron and asked, "You have a map of the surrounding area right?"

Ron was caught off guard by this and he turned to look at Ronnie. Seeing her give a nod in response, he took out the piece of paper that he took out before and said, "That's right, but it's not that accurate."

I shook my head and said, "It doesn't matter how accurate it is. I just want to know if there are any villages in the surrounding area."

"Villages?" Ron repeated, but he still looked down at the map to find the information that I wanted.

After a while, he said, "There are three villages in the surrounding area."

I gave a nod and said, "Where's the closest one?"

Ron looked back down at the map before looking around. Then he suddenly pointed in a certain direction before saying, "It should be over there."

I said with a nod, "Alright lead us there."

Ron was confused, but Ronnie was the one that asked, "What about the undead? Weren't we going to find where they came from?"

I said with another nod, "We're going to take a detour first to find something just as important."

Ronnie revealed a confused look when she heard this, but after thinking about everything that they had encountered, she fell silent. It seemed that she had already been silently convinced by the abilities that he had shown.

Even though Zwein didn't have any combat abilities, he had something else that was far more impressive which was his ability to find information. It was no wonder he was someone from Shadow Garden...

So their group quickly followed Ron and headed through the woods towards the village.

After around half an hour, we finally arrived.

But before we could enter the village, I suddenly raised my hand to stop our group.

I had us go into a few trees near the village before taking out a few pairs of binoculars for us. I think you should take a look at

Ron and Ronnie both took the binoculars offered to them without a word, but there was a confused look on their faces as they took them.

They followed our example and looked at the village like we did, but they didn't understand what we were looking for.

That is until Shaka suddenly said, "It seems like they're moving around in a daze there."

I nodded in agreement to this with a bit of appreciation for Shaka.

I hadn't said a thing, but Shaka had already figured it all out just based on the context clues. Of course, it helped since he had an understanding of what kind of the demons could use in the first place.

Ron and Ronnie both had confused looks on their faces until finally Ronnie couldn't help asking, "What is going on here?"

I didn't look at her as I kept looking at the village through the binoculars, but I did say, "Undead need corpses to be created, so where are those corpses coming from?"

Ron and Ronnie both revealed confused looks before a look of understanding suddenly appeared on Ronnie's face. She immediately turned back to look at the village through the binoculars as she said, "You're saying that they are coming from this village?"

I didn't say anything, but the silence was enough of an answer for her.

But then she asked, "How? How has none of this been reported back to the city? If such a thing happened in these villages, they should have immediately sent a report back to the city asking for help investigating this matter."

I gave a sigh and said, "The demons have something called mesmerizing . They can use that to control humans with weaker minds using this . A village like this filled with commoners is easy for a demon to take control of."

Ronnie knitted her brows, but she knew what he was talking about.

She had read about this in a book in the past, but she didn't think of this when she saw the situation in the village. After all, this was something that she had read by accident in the past and not something that she had even cared about.

This was the difference between her and Zwein and Shaka.

They had experience dealing with this matter and could easily think of the reason behind it, but someone like her who had no experience at all wouldn't be able to think of this unless she was guided.

At this, Ronnie started carefully looking over the village and she could see that the villagers were acting strange.

They were going about their lives, but it almost seemed like they were moving in a mechanical manner...almost as if they were being controlled like puppets.

At this, she deeply knitted her brows.

Ron had been silent the whole time, but it was clear by the look on his face that he was also disturbed by this.

Both Shaka and I ignored the two of them as we tried gathering as much information as we could, but then we couldn't ignore them anymore. It was all because of a simple order from Ronnie.

"Ron, go and take care of the villagers. Find the demons and cut them down." Ronnie said in a low and frustrated voice.

When he heard this, Ron drew out his sword without hesitation and was about to jump out of the tree.

But before he could, Shaka quickly came forward to grab him by the collar.

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Ron had already jumped out of the tree when Shaka grabbed his collar, so he was just dangling from the tree being held by Shaka after jumping off.

When Ronnie saw this, she narrowed her eyes to look at us before saying, "What are you doing?"

There was a clear trace of hostility in her voice as she said this.

I shook my head and gave a sigh before suddenly saying, "Stop being rash and think this through. What are you going to do with just two people in a village filled with people controlled by demons?"

Ron and Ronnie were taken aback when they heard this before suddenly revealing awkward looks.

Both of them understood the logic behind these words and they were embarrassed because...they had let their emotions get the better of them.

They hadn't been thinking clearly because of their emotions. They had become too agitated when they heard that the people of the village were being controlled by demons, being turned into corpses to be used as undead material.

But now that they had calmed down because of Zwein's words, they realized that they had been too rash.

Seeing the look on Ron's face, Shaka stopped holding him off the side of the tree and pulled him back up onto the branch.

Both of them just stood there with awkward looks before Ronnie suddenly asked, "What should we do then? We can't just let these demons do whatever they want, can we?"

I shook my head with a sigh before saying, "Stop letting your emotions get the better of you and think clearly. While we can't do anything by ourselves, that doesn't mean that we can't get the city guards to

help us. Once we report this matter, you can be sure that the duke will take this matter seriously and send people to deal with it. But before that, we need to gather as much information as we can without being caught by the demons. If we step on their tail, they will run away and hide in the shadows. When that time comes, we won't even be able to find a trace of them."

Ronnie had been silently listening to my rant and when I was done, she just gave a slight nod.

There was a look of embarrassment that was on her face as she did this, as if she was ashamed of her behaviour.

After another long silence, Ronnie took a deep breath before slapping her cheeks as if she was reinvigorating herself.

She then looked at me and asked, "What should we do?"

I pointed at the village and said, "Just try to find any information that you think will be useful, we'll be doing the same."

In truth, I didn't have any hope that she would find anything useful.

After all, it was clear that she was out of her element here.

It was the same with Ron.

The two of them were clearly shaken by the scene in front of them and in times like this, people who couldn't work calmly would just be liabilities.

It was better to give them some menial work so they felt that they were helpful so that they would be out of the way.

After saying this, I raised the binoculars again and started looking through the village.

However, I wasn't able to find anything in the end. I think you should take a look at

Other than the strange way that the villagers were walking, there wasn't anything special about this place. It seemed like the demons weren't here and had just left the mesmerizing spell on the villagers to control them.

They most likely only came back when they needed something from this village, otherwise they just let the village operate as normal so they wouldn't draw suspicion.

I was about to give up when Shaka suddenly said, "Look at the cemetery."

I was surprised to hear this, but I followed his instructions and looked around the village until I found the cemetery at the edge of the village.

I didn't see anything special about this place at first until I realized that some of the graves had been dug up.

When I saw this, I immediately knitted my brows as I realized what Shaka had found.

They were digging up graves in these villages to find corpses for their undead.

Villages like this would have their own cemetery since the villagers were mostly born here and died here. This was a world where transportation wasn't as developed, so most people lived and died where they were born.

As such, a cemetery was needed to host all of them when they died.

With many generations of villagers, there would certainly be many corpses that they could use to create undead from.

From what I could see, there were at least a hundred graves that had been robbed and that was only what I could see. There was certainly more than just that in this large cemetery.

At the same time, it seemed that there was still at least half a cemetery of graves left for them to rob.

This made me deeply knit my brows.

I knew that there was a horde of undead that had been created, but I had thought that their numbers would be in the hundreds. But now that didn't seem to be the case.

After all, this was just one of three villages in this surrounding area and if this village was controlled, then there was no doubt that the other villages would also be controlled.

At the same time, there wasn't a need to just use human corpses for undead.

They could also use monster corpses to create undead.

With all of these factors added up, the number of undead in the horde should be close to reaching a thousand.

This wasn't just a small horde, this was a completely undead wave.

This would certainly be enough to threaten even the city since they would outnumber the number of guards that the city would have.

The situation just became more and more dire no matter how I looked at it...

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Since there was nothing else left here for me to investigate, I decided that it was time to move.

There were still two other villages that were in this area and I wanted to check them out before following the river to find the horde.

So after getting out of the tree, I turned to Ron to ask, "Where's the next nearest village?"

But both Ron and Ronnie had heavy looks on their faces as they didn't react to what I had said.

They had jumped out of the tree with us, but they were completely out of it.

So I walked over in front of them and suddenly clapped in front of their faces.

When they heard this clap, they immediately snapped out of their daze.

The two of them looked at me with strange looks before Ronnie said, "Shouldn't we go back to the city now? I think that we have more than enough information...plus we should do something for the people of this village as soon as possible."

But I just shook my head and said, "We need to be certain of everything or else we won't be able to give accurate information. For example, do you even know how big the horde of undead is?"

Ronnie opened her mouth, but she closed it and shook her head in the end.

She took a deep breath and forced herself to calm down, but one could see a trace of red coming from the corner of her lips from where she was biting it.

It was clear that she was very anxious to help the people of this village.

I could admire her strong sense of justice, but foolishly throwing away one's life and the lives of others just because of it was not something that I could condone.

Still I didn't push her too far since this was clearly her first time seeing something like this firsthand, so it could be forgiven.

As for Ron...this shouldn't be his first time, so I wasn't as soft on him.

I turned to Ron and said, "Where's the next village?"

Ron was taken aback by the change in tone that I took with him, but he didn't say anything as he quickly looked at the map. Then after looking around a bit, he pointed in a certain direction.

I didn't waste any time talking to the two of them as I started heading in that direction.

The two of them stood there in a daze a bit before turning to look at each other and giving nods. After that, they started following me and Shaka.

The four of us just traveled in silence, but this time, it took us much less time to reach the village. It only took us around half an hour of traveling to reach it.

When we arrived, we did the same thing as before where we entered the trees outside of the village and used the binoculars to investigate the villagers.

Just like with the other village, we could see that the people of this village were also wandering around in a daze.

I didn't need to look at it any longer to figure out that the situation in the village was the same as the other village.

So I immediately turned my attention to the cemetery of this village.

Just like with the other village, there were graves that had been overturned and dug out. It was clear that they were also collecting corpses from this village as well.

I didn't waste any time as I started counting how many graves had been dug up.

When I was done, I turned to Ron and asked, "Where's the third village?" I think you should take a look at

But once again, both Ron and Ronnie had dark looks on their faces as they looked at the village.

So I said in a louder voice, "Where is the third village?"

At this, they snapped out of their daze and turned to look at me.

For once, Ronnie seemed to be looking at me with a look of disappointment as she asked, "You aren't feeling anything seeing the villagers being manipulated like this?"

I just calmly looked at her and said, "What can I do about it?"

Ronnie clenched her fists and said, "Why are we wasting our time like this then? Didn't you already see the situation of the first village? Shouldn't we be finding the masterminds behind this or at least reporting this back to the city? I know you said that we can't do anything, but at least we shouldn't be doing useless things like this."

I gave a sigh before saying, "Why do you think that this is useless?"

Ronnie was about to say something, but I cut her off, "Do you even know how many of the undead there are? Even if we kill the demons, what will happen to the undead? Will they just simply go away?"

Ronnie's mouth dropped down and she didn't know what to say.

I then said, "We've been checking the cemeteries of each village and seeing how many graves they've dug up. That will give us an estimate of how many corpses they have taken to create undead, which will give us an idea of how many undead there are."

Ronnie turned to look at the village again as if she was finally understanding what they were doing.

I shook my head when I saw this.

I had let her come along because separating now might cause too much noise that would alert the demons...but if she was going to act this way and keep letting her emotions get the best of her, it was better to send her back.

Ronnie could see the way that I was looking at her, so all of a sudden, she brought her hands up to her face and slapped her cheeks.

All of us were taken aback by this sudden move from her and we looked at her with looks of amazement.

She took a deep breath and said, "I'm sorry, but it's hard for me to control myself when I see all these people being hurt."

I just calmly said, "Then perhaps it's better for you to go back to the city."

Ronnie shook her head and said, "Let me come with you to the end, I promise that I will be helpful."

I couldn't help being doubtful of this, but seeing the look in her eyes...I knew that it was pointless to argue with her.

After all, she seemed like she would come along even if we did send her back.

If she was this adamant, it was better than sending her back just to have her sneak around and follow us. That would obviously create much more noise that would make it hard for us to do what we wanted.

So in the end, I said with a sigh, "Just control your emotions and stop acting so rash."

Ronnie gave a nod with a firm look in her eyes.

I didn't know how much I would regret this decision later...

Letting her come along with me like this was the worst decision that I had made for both me and Bright Water City.

But there was no medicine for regret.

Chapter 248 Investigation (11)

The third village turned out to be the same as the other three, but this had given me a good idea of how many undead there were in this horde.

Adding the three villages together, with around two hundred corpses taken from each...there should be around six to seven hundred undead created.

Then adding in the undead that they could create from the corpses of monsters and beasts...that meant that there should be around a thousand or so undead like I had already guessed.

This was without a doubt a daunting number since even one undead was hard to deal with, even for the trained guards of the city.

This was a number that even outnumbered the number of guards that were in the city.

So there was no doubt that it would be a hard fight for them if they had to fight them.

Since we had already finished going through all of the villages, the only thing left for us to do was check out the place where the undead were gathered.

If we could find any advantages there, it would be much easier for us to take care of the undead horde than just facing them head on.

When I said this, both Ron and Ronnie revealed firm looks on their faces.

It was as if they had come to some kind of decision, but that made me feel very anxious...since it was clear that the two of them weren't able to hold themselves back.

Instead of going in with them like this, it was better for us to leave them here...

But there was no guarantee that they wouldn't follow us.

So I had to put my foot down.

I said to Ronnie, "You will restrain yourself and not cause any trouble, do you understand? You will listen to me and you will not act rashly, do you understand?"

Both Ronnie and Ron were taken aback when they saw this sudden change from me.

They never expected such fierce words and such a fierce tone to come from me, so they were completely caught off guard by this.

In the end, I said, "If you can't agree to this, then I'm turning back right now. I will not risk my life just because you can't hold yourself back."

When they heard this, both of them revealed worried looks.

That was because they had come to understand the special abilities that I had. They understood that I was someone who was better at handling this than them and if I left, they wouldn't be able to do a thing.

So they needed me to come with them, or else it would all be a waste of time.

So after a while, Ronnie lowered her head and said, "I will listen to you."

But this just annoyed me more since it was clear that she hadn't fully committed my words to her heart.

I shook my head and said, "We're heading back then."

Ronnie looked up in a panic and looked at Ron for help, but he wasn't able to do a thing since he was also as panicked as her.

Finally, Ronnie said in a serious voice, "I will listen to you and will not let my emotions get the better of me."

I didn't respond right away, but rather looked at her and said, "This is the final and most dangerous place. If you make a single mistake, we will be surrounded by undead and attacked by demons. I hope that you will keep this in mind and understand just how dangerous this is." I think you should take a look at

Without giving her a chance to say anything, I got in our carriage and headed off towards the river.

Ronnie and Ron just stood there in silence with heavy looks on their faces for a bit before getting in their carriage to follow us.

We made our way back to the river quite quickly and we followed it even further down.

But since these three villages were in the range of activity for whoever was behind this, it was clear that the gathering area of the undead wasn't that far away.

In fact, it was a mountain that was just a few kilometers further downriver.

As for how I knew it was this mountain, it was because of the river itself.

Once we moved past this mountain, the infestation further downriver wasn't as widespread. So it was clear that this was the source of the disease and it was flowing downriver from there.

After heading back to the mountain, we started looking for tracks that would show us where they were hiding.

Shaka was the one that was the best at this and it took him no time for him to find certain tracks.

These weren't tracks of any living being.

Rather, these were the tracks that were left by something being dragged across the ground.

Judging by how deep the marks left were, it was clear that something quite heavy was dragged here. For example, several corpses that would be used to create undead with?

It seemed that they were in the right place, so now that all was left was to find the place where the undead were hiding.

That was also done by Shaka.

With these tracks, he was able to easily find a cave on the side of the mountain. The tracks that seemed like something was being dragged here led to this place.

As we stood at the entrance of the cave, we had to decide what to do next.

I immediately said, "I'll go in alone and see what I can find."

After I said this, both Ron and Ronnie rejected this proposal.

Instead of trying to convince them with words, I knew that it was easier to convince them with action.

So without hesitation, I pulled out the Detection Ward and put it on my collar.

As soon as I did, both of them immediately fell silent.

Then they started looking around as if trying to find where I had gone.

I just stood there for a bit before taking the Detection Ward off.

At this, both of them revealed understanding and embarrassed looks.

Chapter 249 Investigation (12)

With this demonstration, there was no longer any protest from either Ron or Ronnie.

Rather, they started looking at me with strange looks as if they were trying to figure out just how I had done what I had just done.

Of course, they wouldn't figure it out since I wasn't using the Detection Ward right now.

After giving them some time to satisfy their curiosity, out of fear that they would follow me because of it, I said, "I'm going in now. Stay here and stay out of trouble."

As I said this, I couldn't help feeling strange.

It was almost as if I was telling kids to behave before leaving them on their own for a bit...

That usually went very poorly, so I already had a bad premonition.

So to make sure that nothing went wrong, I gave Shaka a look as if telling him to watch over them.

Shaka revealed a bitter smile under his cloak at this, but he still gave a nod in the end.

With that, I entered the cave.

This cave didn't have any light, but that wasn't surprising. Instead, I was wearing a special pair of glasses that Shaka had given me.

These were a special pair of glasses that gave me night vision.

I just wish that he had given me these when I had gone to the Spirit Forest. I definitely could have used these when I had been sneaking around in the night before.

But I was grateful that I had them now.

The mountain that this cave was in was quite large, so the cave itself was also quite long. There were also many different passages that I could take, so I ran into quite a few dead ends as I was exploring.

But after a while, I was able to reach my goal.

That was because I could see the light that was coming from in front of me.

This was a light that wasn't natural, so it was clear that this was some kind of manmade illumination.

I carefully entered the cave in front of me and I was shocked by what I saw...or rather, I was shocked by the number of things that I saw.

It was a horde, a real horde.

There were so many undead just wandering around in this large cave that I couldn't count them at all. However, looking at all of them standing perfectly still in the cave like this, it was clear that there were far more than I had thought there would be.

A thousand?

That was a conservative estimate.

It seemed more likely that there were over two thousand undead and if not, there were at least a thousand and five hundred of them.

The population of Bright Water City in the first place was only around ten thousand people.

Just the number of undead here would be enough to make up a fifth of Bright Water City, one of the largest cities in the kingdom. That was enough of a comparison to show just how many undead were gathered here.

But if there were so many undead gathered here, how had the duke missed all of this.

No matter how one thought about it, he should have seen the signs since this was not something that could be done quickly.

There were only so many undead that one could create and control, so it would take a long time to prepare all of this unless there was also a horde of necromancers here as well.

If that was the case, then the situation would be even worse.

But at the same time, they would have attacked already if they had that many necromancers available.

So the only possibility was that this was something that had been built over a long time.

Even if they had mesmerized the villages around the area, someone should have reported that a long time ago. It wasn't as if those villages were completely cut off from the outside world.

The only possibility of this being completely hidden was that...there were demons that had infiltrated the city as well. They were manipulating those that worked near the duke or even impersonating those working for the duke to keep this information suppressed.

The more he found out about this case, the worse it became and the more stressed he was.

Lin Fan had thought that this would be a simple case of finding a demon and taking care of it, but it just became more and more complicated with each clue that he found.

But still, it wasn't as if this was something that he could ignore.

This case had become so serious that it even threatened the safety of the entire kingdom.

After all, if Bright Water City was wiped out, the amount of corpses that would be available to be turned into the undead...it would be enough to wash over the entire kingdom.

They would spread all over the kingdom, leaving death and destruction in their wake.

As more and more people died, more corpses would be created and more undead would be awakened.

Eventually, this kingdom would be turned into a kingdom of death if this undead horde wasn't stopped here...

But would they be able to take care of the undead horde here?

All of these concerns filled my mind and I became more and more worried, but I forced all those feelings down in the end.

After all, there was nothing that I could do by worrying about this now.

What I needed to do was get back to the city and report everything that I had found to the duke. The duke had soldiers and he was the only one that would be able to handle this situation.

So I turned around to leave.

But before I could leave, there was a sudden sound that rang out through this cave.

It was the sound of a rock falling down the side of the ledge that I was on, dropping down into the cave with all the undead.

Chapter 250 Investigation (13)

I immediately turned in that direction and I found that there was a slim figure standing by another entrance to this cave.

The moment that I saw this figure, I immediately recognized the person that it belonged to.

But at the same time, I could feel the danger that was coming from down below.

The undead all reacted to this sound and turned in the direction that the rock fell down from.

Without hesitation, I ran over and pulled that figure down.

As we fell over, there was a lance made of pure darkness that flew over our heads.

If I had been a bit slower, this lance of dark energy would have pierced right into the slim figure and pinned her to the wall.

As the lance of dark energy pierced into the wall, there was a sharp screech that rang out.

I turned to see that there was a rat that was currently pinned to the wall of the cave by that lance of dark energy.

Seeing this, I let out a sigh of relief, but I didn't dare let my guard down.

I quickly pulled that slim figure out of this place, making sure not to leave any tracks.

As I left, I heard a voice coming from behind me say, "It's just a rat."

Once again, I let out a sigh of relief hearing this, but I didn't relax just yet.

I would relax only when we were out of this place and back in the city.

...

A cloaked figure came up from behind the large horned demon and said, "It's just a rat, why are you so anxious?"

The demon ignored the cloaked figure and went over to the wall to retrieve the black lance stuck there. With one yank, he pulled the lance out of the way and brought the tip over to his face to look at the rat that was stuck there.

After a while, he said, "It's not just a rat."

The cloaked figure didn't say anything in response to this, but it was clear by the way that he acted that he was doubtful.

The demon didn't care about this as he started looking around this area.

Everything seemed normal at first until it seemed like he had found something.

The demon leaned in towards the ground and then with his slender, sharp claws, he picked up something off the ground with two fingers.

He lifted this thing up in front of him before saying, "We had visitors."

The cloaked figure also came over to look at it and when they saw what the demon was holding, they said, "It's just a strand of hair. There are plenty of human undead here, so it could have come from one of them."

The demon shook his head and said, "It doesn't have the smell of the dead on it, this strand has the smell of the living." "I think you should take a look at

The cloaked figure didn't say a thing as it was clear that they were doubtful of this still.

But the cloaked figure still asked, "Then what do you think we should do?"

The demon looked at the undead in the cave and said, "It's time to put the plan in action."

The cloaked figure trembled showing that they were shocked before saying, "It's too early! Everything hasn't been prepared yet! If you move them now, it will ruin the plan!"

But the demon just glared at this cloaked figure and said, "If we don't move now, we won't have a chance. There are rats that have already figured out our plans, so we need to move right away or else they'll come looking for us. When they come, they won't just come with weaklings, but the entire power of the kingdom."

The cloaked figure was clearly still hesitant, but they were also afraid of this demon..

The demon just ignored the cloaked figure and pulled out a black orb.

This was the dark orb that the demon king had bestowed upon him. This was a special orb that allowed this demon to use necromancy even though he didn't have the skills for it.

This was the orb that had created all these undead.

Of course, there was a limitation to the orb, only allowing it to create several dozen undead a day before running out of energy. So the demon had been here for quite a long time creating all of these undead, waiting for the right chance to strike.

But the demon was right, they couldn't wait any longer if they were found out.

Once the demon pulled out the orb, all of the undead in the cave reacted to it.

Not only did this orb allow the demon to create more undead, it also had the ability to control the undead that had been created. It formed an imprint on all of the undead raised that would allow the owner of the orb to control the undead.

As he raised this orb, the cloaked figure was clearly looking at the orb.

However, they didn't make a move since they knew that this orb was soul bound.

That meant that only the one who was bound to it would be able to use it and currently, that was the demon.

The cloaked figure didn't have a way of changing that, so they had no choice but to follow the demon instead of taking this powerful artifact for themselves.

But if there was a chance.

After the demon raised the orb, he said, "Start marching towards the city."

As soon as the undead received this order, they started slowly making their way out of this cave.

There were too many of them that it was slow going at first, but they were still making their way out of the cave.

As the demon watched them, there was a complicated look that appeared in their eyes since the cloaked figure was right. They were forcing their plans to go forward, which would without a doubt affect it.

But right now...they had no choice.

In the end, the demon said, "All for the demon king."