

Titan King 121

Chapter 121 Let's drink to a brighter tomorrow for the horde

Thundar and Earthshaker stood beside Elder Rendall, both looking somewhat ashamed.

Lilith was understandable—she had been personally trained by Orion during last year's dark creature invasion, so it was no surprise they couldn't match her. As for Prophet Onyx, his strength had long been above theirs.

Thundar, however, felt embarrassed that Delilah had surpassed him, her strength now exceeding his own.

Rendall's words, though blunt, were meant to show his concern for the two of them.

"Don't worry, I'm almost there," Thundar said, patting the hilt of his greatsword. He had slain many dark creatures the previous night, and with a few more dark source crystals, he was confident he could claim the next spot after Delilah.

"I have faith in you," Rendall said, giving Thundar a reassuring pat on the shoulder.

"And you, Earthshaker?" Rendall asked, turning to the buffalofolk elder.

Earthshaker smiled and shook his head.

Among the elders, Earthshaker had the weakest foundation. Back in the Wildhorn Tribe, he had been almost entirely sidelined by Torak Wildhorn. At that time, all the hard and dirty work had fallen to Earthshaker.

Earthshaker was clever, though. He knew that as Orion's slave, he had a natural closeness to the chieftain. However, his own strength was lacking, and the buffalofolk were a weaker tribe, so he hadn't even been selected as one of the council elders.

Among the four council elders, Earthshaker couldn't compare to any of them. Now, with Rendall and Prophet Onyx having ascended to Alpha-level, the gap between them had only widened.

"I believe in you," Thundar said, giving Earthshaker a light slap on the back. The two had fought side by side for a long time and had become close friends.

Thundar knew better than anyone how recklessly Earthshaker fought, throwing himself into battle without regard for his own safety.

Earthshaker chuckled, his hand unconsciously reaching up to touch his horns.

In truth, Earthshaker was content with his current life. His people were well-fed, clothed, and safe. He was deeply satisfied with the peace they had found.

Moreover, in the Stoneheart Horde, no one oppressed or restricted him.

Earthshaker felt that the Stoneheart Horde was the best home the buffalofolk could have.

Now, aside from working to improve his own strength, Earthshaker was completely content.

Three hours later, in the chieftain's tent, Orion, Rendall, and Onyx sat around a table laden with meat and ale.

Orion raised his cup, toasting with Rendall and Onyx. After they had downed three cups together, Orion began to speak casually as they ate.

"Prophet, from now on, you, Rendall, and I will rotate shifts, guarding and monitoring the southern gate and the underground crevice beneath the eastern mountains."

Previously, due to a lack of manpower, Orion hadn't assigned Alpha-level warriors to monitor the crevice beneath the eastern mountains. But now that Prophet Onyx had ascended to Alpha-level, Orion immediately included it in their patrols.

The reason was simple: the spiked worm was too terrifying. Even now, the thought of it sent chills down Orion's spine.

Prophet Onyx nodded without objection. Protecting the horde and eliminating any potential threats was the responsibility of Alpha-level warriors.

"Also, winter is more than halfway over, and the dark beast tides are nearing their end."

"Make your preparations. In the spring, we'll leave the Black Forest together and see what the outside world has to offer."

Prophet Onyx remained silent, but Elder Rendall spoke up.

"Chieftain, if we all leave, who will guard Moonshadow Valley?"

Orion didn't answer immediately. He sliced a piece of beast meat with his knife, eating it slowly before looking up.

"I plan to leave my wife, Lilith, in charge of defending our home."

"I'll also leave Lysinthia, Thundar, and Earthshaker to assist her."

"As my wife, it's time for her to take on more responsibility for the horde."

Orion's tone was calm. With only the three Alpha-level warriors present, there was no need for pretense.

At that moment, Lilith and Lysinthia were already at the southern gate, taking their turn on night watch.

"Besides, this will give her the chance to accumulate more contributions to the horde before she ascends to Alpha-level."

"In our horde, Alpha-level resources aren't just given to those with strength. They must also have made significant contributions to the horde."

Rendall and Prophet Onyx nodded in agreement. Orion's reasoning was sound.

The three of them had ascended to Alpha-level, and in the future, they would undoubtedly gather more resources. Those resources needed to be used on capable tribesmen, not wasted on ingrates or traitors.

"This expedition will leave Moonshadow Valley vulnerable, but it's also a test for Lilith."

"As my wife, she will have to face even greater challenges in the future."

Rendall and Prophet Onyx nodded again, both deep in thought.

Orion, however, remained relaxed.

He refilled his cup and raised it once more.

"Elder Rendall, Prophet Onyx, trust me—our future lies beyond Moonshadow Valley. Let's drink to a brighter tomorrow for the horde!"

That night, in the eastern mountains of Moonshadow Valley, Prophet Onyx took his turn on watch after leaving the chieftain's tent.

Since the Obsidian Golem tribe had submitted to Orion, the eastern and western mountains had been designated as their territory.

The mountains, with their abundance of large rocks, were the perfect environment for the Obsidian Golems.

"Prophet, should we...?" Rockwell, the current chieftain of the Obsidian Golem tribe, approached Prophet Onyx from behind, his eyes gleaming with fervor.

Prophet Onyx stood at the edge of the canyon, staring down into the underground crevice. He didn't turn around.

"Rockwell, you've never been outside. You don't know how many powerful beings there are out there, or how vast the world truly is."

"I know what you're thinking, and I don't blame you."

"When winter ends, you'll come with me on the expedition. You'll see the outside world for yourself."

"When you return, if you still have these thoughts, I'll ask the chieftain to exile you and anyone else who shares your mindset."

Rockwell froze, staring at Prophet Onyx's back, disappointment flashing in his eyes.

"Prophet, you..."

In Rockwell's mind, the Obsidian Golem tribe's natural talents meant that once they ascended to Alpha-level, their strength would rival that of the giants.

Rockwell wasn't suggesting rebellion against Orion. He simply believed that now that the Obsidian Golems had their own Alpha-level warrior, they didn't need to submit entirely to Orion's rule.

But before he could even voice his thoughts, Prophet Onyx had already shut him down.

Without Prophet Onyx, Rockwell didn't have the courage to face Orion on his own.

"Rockwell, wake up!"

"You're a member of the elders now. Alpha-level resources are available to you. Why aren't you fighting for them?"

"Don't you want to become an Alpha-level warrior?"

Chapter 122 Messenger Arden

With Prophet Onyx successfully ascending to Alpha-level, the elders of the Stoneheart Horde seemed to be filled with a newfound energy, as if they had been injected with adrenaline. They faced the dark creatures with unparalleled enthusiasm.

Many Hero-level warriors saw hope in this, while others within the horde began scheming for their own advantage. After all, with the growing number of members, there were bound to be all kinds of people with different motives.

What hadn't changed, however, was the relentless snowfall and the ongoing dark beast tides.

Another month passed in the blink of an eye.

During this time, Orion consumed a significant amount of dark source crystals. Unfortunately, only the Hero-level and above dark source crystals provided him with any noticeable improvement. The rest had little to no effect.

Despite this, the accumulation of dark source crystals still led to considerable growth for Orion.

His current stats were as follows:

- Strength: 2253/5000 (+4706)

- Agility: 2110/5000 (+246)

- Intelligence: 1925/5000 (+200)

- Constitution: 2524/5000 (+200)

- Resistance: 20% (against all negative states)

- Bloodline Purity: 72% (Titan)

Aside from Intelligence, which hadn't yet surpassed 2000, Orion's Strength, Agility, and Constitution had all exceeded 2000.

However, his Resistance and Bloodline Purity remained unchanged. Orion hadn't yet found a way to improve these attributes, so for now, he could only leave them as they were.

In the chieftain's tent, Orion held Lilith in his arms, her body covered in sweat as she lay against him. He asked her softly, "Are you disappointed that we didn't encounter another Alpha-level dark creature this winter?"

Lilith, her eyes filled with seductive charm, playfully bit Orion's nipple. "A little disappointed, yes. But if it doesn't happen this year, I'll wait until next year."

"After all, the next Alpha-level resource is mine. It's not going anywhere," she added with a confident smile.

Orion tightened his embrace around Lilith. He appreciated her understanding and her steady nature.

"Spring is coming soon. I plan to leave you in charge of Moonshadow Valley while I'm away," Orion said.

Lilith froze for a moment, her arms around Orion stiffening slightly.

"I'll be taking Rendall and Onyx with me," Orion continued. "But I'll leave Lysinthia, Thundar, and Earthshaker behind to assist you."

"Remember, my expectation is that nothing goes wrong."

Orion's hand gripped Lilith's breast as he kissed her deeply, only releasing her when she was on the verge of suffocation.

"My Lilith, show everyone your abilities. Prove that you can manage the horde, that you're worthy of being my wife, and that you deserve the Alpha-level resources."

"And, of course, prove to me that you're capable," Orion added, his tone direct and without pretense.

Seeing the understanding in Lilith's eyes, Orion knew she had grasped the importance of the situation.

He then turned to Lysinthia, who had been pleasuring him with her mouth, and pulled her into his arms as well.

"You too. If you want something, earn it with your abilities," he said.

Seven days later.

Orion had just fallen asleep when the noise outside his tent woke him up.

"Dace, what's going on?" Orion called out.

Outside the tent, Dace, who was on guard duty, responded excitedly, "Chieftain, it's raining! Spring rain!"

Orion's eyes widened for a moment before he collapsed back onto the furs, resuming his sleep.

"It's coming," he muttered to himself.

Yes, it was coming.

Three days after the spring rain, the skies above Moonshadow Valley were once again filled with the sight of the Storm Vulture.

"By the order of Lord Gareth, Orion Stoneheart of the Black Forest is summoned to gather his forces in the south in three days to participate in the Myriad Races Invasion. Refusal is not an option!"

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The message was almost identical to the one they had received the previous year. Many of the giants frowned upon hearing it.

Last year, after receiving this order, they had lost Clymene.

As a result, the giants' gazes toward the Storm Vulture were anything but friendly.

Orion, Rendall, and Prophet Onyx all stepped out of their tents, looking up at the Storm Vulture and the messenger, Arden, who rode upon its back.

"Go back and tell Lord Gareth that I will be there on time," Orion said, his voice cold as he stared at Arden and his Storm Vulture.

Arden frowned. He could sense that Orion had grown stronger.

However, Arden didn't believe that Orion was strong enough to challenge an Alpha-level flying beast like the Storm Vulture.

In Arden's mind, Orion was being disrespectful.

A smirk appeared on Arden's face as he communicated with the Storm Vulture, and together, they released a wave of pressure, intending to intimidate Orion.

But as soon as Arden's pressure was released, three powerful Alpha-level auras surged up from below, meeting his challenge head-on without hesitation.

"Three Alpha-level warriors? How is that possible?" Arden exclaimed in shock. For a moment, he thought Moonshadow Valley might be the territory of some powerful lord.

At that moment, Orion's voice rang out from below, laced with a hint of mockery and menace.

"Messenger, last year, an Alpha-level Thunderhawk was killed here in Moonshadow Valley. Its meat was quite delicious. Would you like to try some?"

Orion's words caused Arden's pupils to shrink to pinpoints.

It was both a threat and a warning.

Arden shook his head vigorously, muttering to himself, "Impossible... It's impossible... He must be lying, trying to scare me!"

"How could it be? The Thunderhawk is incredibly fast, even my Storm Vulture can't catch up to it. It's impossible!"

However, when Arden saw what Orion was holding, his entire body froze in shock.

Orion was holding a small curved knife, casually trimming his nails. Occasionally, arcs of electricity flickered across the blade, giving it an otherworldly appearance.

"That's... the aura of the Thunderhawk..."

"This..."

Arden was left speechless. He stared at Orion for a long moment before finally turning his Storm Vulture around and flying off to deliver the message elsewhere.

As the Storm Vulture disappeared into the distance, the council members gathered around Orion.

Without wasting any time, Orion issued his orders.

"Summon the council for an emergency meeting. Anyone who fails to attend without a valid reason will be expelled from the council!"

Half an hour later, all the council members had gathered, including Orion's wife, Lilith, and Lysinthia.

"Everyone, for the past months, we've been preparing for the Myriad Races Invasion. The time has come for us to march beyond the Black Forest and conquer new lands."

"Soon, I will announce the list of those who will accompany me on this expedition. You will have two days to say your goodbyes to your families."

"Additionally, those who are coming with me will be able to collect a set of bone armor and survival supplies from the warehouse."

"..."

Chapter 123 Thunderwood Forest

Orion and his forces had left Moonshadow Valley and arrived at the southernmost part of the Black Forest, where the dense woods stretched before them.

"Chieftain, once we cross this river, we'll be out of the Black Forest and into Thunderwood Forest," said Thrym, a giant who had survived the last Myriad Races Invasion.

After enduring the trials of the dark beast tides, Thrym had grown even stronger, now reaching Hero-level. For this invasion, Thrym had been appointed as Orion's guide.

Orion nodded silently, his gaze fixed on the distant Thunderwood Forest across the river.

After a long pause, Orion turned to Prophet Onyx and asked, "Prophet, do you know why this forest is called Thunderwood Forest?"

Prophet Onyx, who had been staring at the forest as well, sighed. It had been centuries since he last set foot in this region.

"Chieftain, this forest is home to many high-level thunder-element(lightning-element) magical plants, which have nurtured numerous thunder-affinity races and beasts."

"This is a sanctuary for thunder-element beasts, which is why it's called Thunderwood Forest," Prophet Onyx explained, his voice filled with nostalgia.

"Chieftain, the Lord of Thunderwood Forest, Ariel, hails from the Harpy race, which was born here."

"Harpy are not only attuned to lightning(thunder) but also to wind. They are natural-born fliers," Prophet Onyx added.

Orion nodded, taking in the information before turning to Delilah.

"Have the scouts returned?"

Delilah smiled seductively, brushing a lock of hair behind her ear. Her voice was soft and alluring as she replied, "Chieftain, the scouts have returned."

"They've reported that about five miles ahead, in the dense forest, there are some gnoll scouts hiding."

"Those gnolls have sharp noses, but unfortunately for them, they can't detect succubi... hehe," she added with a playful laugh.

Orion nodded again and asked, "What's their strength like?"

Delilah's expression turned serious as she responded, "Not bad. There are quite a few Hero-level gnolls among them."

"If we engage them head-on, we'll likely lose some of our scouts."

Orion shook his head. He had no intention of letting his scouts suffer losses so soon after leaving the Black Forest.

He raised his hand, and his four guards—Dace, Otho, Beyn, and Torba—stepped forward.

"I have a task for you. Take a squad of bloodline warriors and, with the help of the succubi scouts, clear out the gnolls hiding in the forest ahead."

"As your wish, Chieftain!" the four guards responded in unison. They mounted their Frost Wolves, gave a shout, and led their squad into the forest.

"Chieftain, do you think they can handle it?" Elder Rendall asked, concerned. He knew that Dace and the others had only recently ascended to Hero-level and worried they might not be up to the task.

"Don't worry, they'll manage," Prophet Onyx interjected before Orion could respond.

"Prophet, this isn't something to joke about," Rendall said, his tone serious.

Prophet Onyx chuckled, his gaze fixed on the distant forest. "You're forgetting that Dace and the others are riding Frost Wolves—Hero-level beasts."

"Though the Frost Wolves aren't fully grown yet, they're more than capable of handling a group of gnolls."

"Those gnolls will be so terrified when they see the Frost Wolves that they won't even be able to run," Prophet Onyx added with a smirk. He was well-acquainted with gnolls, a lowly race. Centuries ago, Prophet Onyx could have crushed them with a flick of his booger, and now, they were even less of a threat in his eyes.

Moreover, the four Frost Wolves had been a gift from Prophet Onyx himself, so he knew their capabilities inside and out.

"Prophet is right. Dace and the others have more than enough strength to deal with those gnolls," Orion said, his voice filled with confidence. "Besides, don't you think my guards need some real combat experience?"

With a confident smile, Orion took the lead, crossing the river that marked the boundary between the two regions.

Rendall and Prophet Onyx exchanged glances before quickly following him.

Fifteen minutes later, the distant forest echoed with the sounds of howling wolves and barking gnolls.

As they continued forward, Orion turned to Thrym and asked, "Last time, did you take this same route?"

"Yes, Chieftain," Thrym replied, scanning the surroundings as he remained on high alert. "If we continue in this direction, we'll come across a large grassland. That's where we met Lord Gareth."

Orion nodded and glanced at Prophet Onyx.

Prophet Onyx understood the unspoken question and elaborated, "Chieftain, that grassland is called Eagle Plains. We used to call it the Gathering Grounds."

"I'm not surprised that, after all these centuries, the strong from the four regions still gather there."

Just as Prophet Onyx finished speaking, the barking of the gnolls in the distance ceased, leaving only the continuous howling of the wolves.

"It seems the battle is over. I wonder if they left any survivors," Orion mused.

Another fifteen minutes passed before Dace, Otho, Beyn, and Torba returned, riding their Frost Wolves. Behind them, each had a Hero-level gnoll tied up with ropes.

The four gnolls had their hands bound behind their backs, and they were forced to run on their hind legs, though two of them were hopping due to broken legs.

Orion observed the scene closely, noting that two of the gnolls were missing a leg, while another had lost an eye, and the last one was missing an ear.

"Delilah, they're all yours. Get whatever information you can out of them," Orion said.

Delilah smiled seductively and motioned for two succubi warriors to follow her as she approached the gnolls.

"Oh my, such poor gnolls. Two of you have lost a leg, one of you is blind, and the other is missing an ear," she said with a mocking tone.

The gnolls trembled in fear, unable to meet Delilah's gaze.

Orion had entrusted the interrogation to Delilah because she excelled at illusions. There was no one better suited for the task.

"Brave gnoll warriors, can you tell me why you're here?" Delilah's voice was sweet and enchanting, designed to lure them in.

"If your answers please me, I might let you go. Who knows, I might even let my succubi have some fun with you..."

"But if your answers don't satisfy me, or if you refuse to speak, well... I'll make sure you regret it."

"For example..."

Crack!

One of the succubi warriors standing beside Delilah drew a one-handed sword and, without hesitation, sliced off the genitals of the weakest gnoll.

The gnoll, already the weakest of the group, struggled for a moment before collapsing to the ground, dead.

"Oh dear, how unfortunate. He didn't even get a chance to answer my question," Delilah said with feigned surprise, her gaze shifting to the remaining three gnolls.

"So, which one of you brave gnoll warriors would like to go next?" she asked sweetly.

The three remaining gnolls were so terrified that they soiled themselves.

"I'll talk! Please, spare me!" one of the gnolls cried, groveling on the ground.

"We were ordered by Thunderhawk Knight Reynard to monitor the area for any invading enemies."

Delilah smiled, running her fingers through her hair. "Is that all?"

The gnoll, seeing that Delilah wasn't satisfied with his answer, quickly continued, "Half a month ago, Thunderhawk Knight Reynard ordered us to stay here. If we encountered any enemies, we were to report back to him."

"Master, my name is Scruff, and I'm an elder of the gnoll tribe. I'm willing to serve you! I'll do anything you ask!"

Delilah shook her head, her voice filled with mock pity. "What a shame. I don't like gnolls. After all, I'm the chieftain's woman... hehe."

Crack!

Another gnoll was killed.

Delilah moved gracefully to the remaining two gnolls, her voice dripping with sweetness as she asked, "Now, do either of you have anything else to share with me?"

"..."

Chapter 124 I knew you wouldn't die so easily

After a while, Delilah approached Orion with a playful smile, wrapping her arm around his and guiding his hand directly under her skirt. Without Lilith or Lysinthia around, Delilah felt more at ease, allowing herself to be more forward.

"Chieftain, those gnolls were indeed scouts sent by Thunderhawk Knight Reynard, specifically to monitor us," she whispered seductively. "Also, there's a gnoll chieftain among them who commands his own tribe."

"I spared his life for you, Chieftain," she added with a mischievous grin.

Orion was pleased. His fingers lightly brushed against Delilah's clitoris, causing her body to tense up instantly. She let out a soft moan, her legs trembling slightly.

But Orion didn't continue. He withdrew his hand from under her skirt and turned to Prophet Onyx and Elder Rendall.

"Prophet, Elder, what do you think?" Orion asked, his tone calm.

Prophet Onyx gazed up at the sky, his dark eyes reflecting deep thought.

"Chieftain, based on the actions of these gnoll scouts, I'm certain of one thing."

"The Thunderhawk you killed during last year's beast tide must have been Thunderhawk Knight Reynard's mount."

A smile crept across Orion's face. He had suspected as much.

If the Thunderhawk were still alive, it would have been the ideal scout, not these gnolls.

"Let's keep moving. We need to meet up with Lord Gareth," Orion said, taking a few steps forward before turning back to Delilah.

"As for that gnoll chieftain, enslave him. Bring his tribe under your command."

Delilah, still sensitive from Orion's touch, shuddered slightly. She had nearly climaxed from just a brief caress, but she managed to compose herself in front of the others. After adjusting her clothes, she nodded in agreement.

For the next three days, with the succubi scouts and giant wolf riders leading the way, the group encountered no further suspicious enemies.

On the morning of the fourth day, Orion and his party arrived at Eagle Plains, also known as the Gathering Ground.

There were already others present.

In the distance, Chieftain Slagor and his large contingent of warriors had gathered.

Upon seeing Orion's arrival, Slagor's expression immediately darkened.

However, when he sensed the powerful auras of Prophet Onyx and Elder Rendall, his eyes widened in shock, his face filled with disbelief and fear.

"So, it's you, Slagor. I knew you wouldn't die so easily," Orion said with a smile as he led his group closer to Slagor's position.

"Honorable Orion, it was just a matter of supplies. Once this Myriad Races Invasion is over, I'll repay you double," Slagor said, his voice trembling slightly.

"I want triple," Orion replied, his tone firm.

"You... fine... triple it is," Slagor conceded, his fear and anxiety quickly fading as Orion approached.

Despite his outward calm, Slagor's face remained grim. He had hoped to settle the matter with a simple promise, but Orion had pushed for more.

Orion nodded, satisfied. He knew Slagor was a smart chieftain.

During the battle at Poison Dragon Swamp, Slagor had fled the battlefield when the situation turned dire. Now, in front of his subordinates, he was quick to bow his head and make concessions, proving once again that he was a man who knew when to bend.

"You've brought quite a large force with you," Orion remarked casually, letting the matter drop.

He glanced over Slagor's troops, which numbered in the ten thousands.

Behind Slagor, there were various subhuman creatures and beast races, including a group of swamp crocodiles whose eyes gleamed with red, sending a chill down Orion's spine.

Seeing the swamp crocodiles reminded Orion of his Spider Queen.

"It seems I need to accelerate the growth of my Spider Queen," Orion thought to himself.

After all, this was the Myriad Races Invasion, and Slagor was technically an ally. Orion didn't want to push him too far, lest he turn on them at a critical moment.

Besides, Orion was certain that Lord Gareth's forces had already arrived at Eagle Plains and were likely watching them from nearby. Lord Gareth would not tolerate infighting among her troops before the invasion even began.

Hiss...

At that moment, the sharp cry of an eagle echoed from the sky. A group of Storm Vultures circled above the gathering ground.

Leading them was an Alpha-level Storm Vulture. Moments later, the vultures descended, landing near Orion and Slagor.

"Arden," Orion muttered.

The newcomer was indeed Arden, a summoner of the abyss.

Orion didn't bow or show any signs of submission like Slagor did. He simply nodded in acknowledgment.

Arden's expression was sour. He hadn't forgotten Orion's veiled threat back in Moonshadow Valley, and now, Orion's lack of deference only added to his irritation.

"Did he offend you?" Arden asked, glancing briefly at Orion before turning his attention to Slagor's group.

Without waiting for a response, Arden began walking toward Slagor's forces.

"Arden, it's just a minor disagreement between Orion and me. We've already settled it," Slagor said quickly, sensing the tension between Arden and Orion.

Slagor was sharp. He had already noticed the animosity between Arden and Orion, but he was smart enough to avoid getting caught in the middle.

Arden narrowed his eyes, giving Slagor a brief glance. Slagor, ever the opportunist, bowed his head humbly.

Looking over Slagor's sizable force, Arden decided not to push the issue further.

Meanwhile, Orion, Prophet Onyx, Rendall, and Delilah began discussing quietly among themselves.

"Chieftain, judging by the look on that messenger's face, he's definitely holding a grudge against us," Delilah said, her keen sense for reading people picking up on Arden's hostility.

Orion smiled calmly. Throughout the journey, he had remained composed and steady.

"Let him. As long as we don't offend Lord Gareth, the rest doesn't matter."

"We may have fewer bloodline warriors, but they're all elite and well-equipped. We don't need to bow to anyone," Orion said confidently.

Hearing this, the others grinned.

If anyone were to observe closely, they would notice that the 2,000 bloodline warriors from the Black Forest were all equipped with matching bone armor, each one looking imposing.

Even Delilah, who usually preferred more revealing attire, had donned her bone armor, though she only wore it during battle.

"Do you think Slagor will team up with the messenger to cause us trouble later?" Elder Rendall asked, always suspicious of potential threats to the horde.

"Slagor is cunning, but I don't think he will," Prophet Onyx replied, though he didn't entirely dismiss Rendall's concerns.

"No matter. If they do join forces and try something, I'll kill them both, even if Lord Gareth herself shows up," Orion said, his voice low but filled with deadly intent.

For some reason, ever since leaving the Black Forest, Orion's demeanor had become sharper, more aggressive.

Yet, despite his bold words, Orion's actions remained calm and measured.

He hadn't even summoned his trident or his abyss dragon, which piqued the curiosity of both Prophet Onyx and Elder Rendall.

As the group continued their quiet conversation, a sudden rustling sound filled the air around them.

Chapter 125 Scorpion tribe

The sound had come, but no figures were visible. Everyone, including Orion, scanned their surroundings.

"What's that noise?"

"Why can't we see anyone?"

As the group murmured in confusion, Prophet Onyx spoke in a low, steady voice.

"The sound is coming from underground. It's our neighbors from the western desert."

Prophet Onyx's tone was polite, his words carefully chosen.

Orion looked down and noticed the subtle, undulating movement of the ground in the distance.

"Ah, so it's you, Onyx of the Obsidian Golem tribe. I could feel the thick earth element gathering from afar," a voice called out.

"I thought you had died of old age, but it seems you've broken through!"

Thud, thud, thud...

Suddenly, the lush green grass in the distance was torn apart as three massive black scorpions emerged from the earth. Each scorpion stood at least 30 feet tall, their bodies long and terrifying, with venomous stingers whipping through the air.

Behind the three giant scorpions, a swarm of smaller scorpions of various sizes burst from the ground, creating a scene so overwhelming that even Orion felt a chill run down his spine. The sheer number of scorpions crawling out of the earth was enough to trigger anyone's fear of swarms.

"High Priestess, it's been many years, but you still look as youthful and radiant as ever," Prophet Onyx said, stepping forward from behind Orion and bowing respectfully.

The High Priestess stood atop the leftmost giant scorpion, her mature figure draped in a green veil that concealed her face. Her eyes, however, were sharp and calculating as they scanned the group.

She glanced at Prophet Onyx briefly before shifting her gaze to Orion and Elder Rendall, her eyes lingering on Orion.

"A giant? And a young one at that!" she remarked, her voice dripping with disdain. "I wonder if he's as foolish as that Clymene from last year, another giant who didn't know her place."

Though her voice was soft, everyone present heard her clearly. It was obvious that the High Priestess had spoken deliberately.

"Damn old bitch! I'll smash her brains out with my cock!" Rendall roared, his temper flaring instantly. His words were crude and filled with rage.

Clymene was Orion's sister, and the High Priestess's mockery of her was a direct insult to the Stoneheart Horde.

Orion raised a hand, stopping Rendall from continuing his outburst.

"Dace!" Orion called out.

Dace, who had been with Orion long enough to understand his intentions, quickly handed him a simple spear.

Without a word, Orion stepped forward and hurled the spear.

Whoosh!

The spear tore through the air with a terrifying whistle, streaking toward the High Priestess like a meteor.

Thud!

The High Priestess's giant scorpion mount reacted swiftly, swinging its massive stinger to intercept the spear.

Boom!

Sizzle...

The scorpion let out a pained screech, its entire body trembling violently. Its stinger, now severed, fell to the ground like a heap of scrap metal.

The shocking display of power silenced the entire area.

"High Priestess, show some respect when speaking of the dead. If you continue to spout nonsense, you will pay the price," Orion said coldly.

To be honest, Orion had no interest in this venomous old woman. From her conversation with Prophet Onyx, he could tell that she had lived for centuries.

After throwing the spear, Orion chose not to press the attack. A full-scale battle would be costly for both sides.

Orion could sense that the other two figures riding the giant scorpions were also Alpha-level warriors.

The Desert Oasis scorpion tribe having three Alpha-level warriors was something Orion hadn't anticipated.

Strangely, despite her scorpion being injured, the High Priestess didn't respond. She simply narrowed her eyes, continuing to scrutinize Orion.

Time seemed to stretch on, and just when it seemed like the tension might dissipate, Arden suddenly spoke up.

"The High Priestess, scared off by a mere threat? The scorpion tribe isn't as fearsome as I thought."

His words were like oil thrown onto a smoldering fire. Even Orion's brow furrowed at the blatant provocation.

This damned Arden was trying to stir up trouble between Orion and the High Priestess, fanning the flames of conflict.

Orion's gaze grew colder, and a murderous intent began to brew within him. He was already considering killing Arden.

On the other side, the High Priestess glanced between Orion and Arden, quickly assessing the situation.

Having lived for centuries, the High Priestess was no fool. She saw through Arden's intentions immediately.

However, since Arden had spoken, she couldn't simply let it slide.

"Jarex, go and test the strength of this giant from the Black Forest," the High Priestess commanded.

Jarex was a male scorpion warrior, though calling him "male" was generous. His lower half was still that of a scorpion.

Despite his appearance, Jarex was an Alpha-level warrior.

Jarex urged his giant scorpion forward, his eyes filled with challenge as he stared at Orion.

"Chieftain, let me handle him!" Rendall said, hefting his spiked club as he prepared to step forward.

But Orion remained silent, not giving his approval.

"Chieftain, allow me to go. I'm more familiar with the scorpion tribe," Onyx suggested.

Orion glanced at the arrogant Jarex before nodding in agreement.

"Prophet, be careful. I'll back you up."

"Haha, don't worry, Chieftain. I won't let them look down on us!" Prophet Onyx replied with a hearty laugh.

With that, Prophet Onyx stepped forward, his massive frame causing both the High Priestess and Jarex to frown.

The High Priestess frowned because she knew the strength and resilience of the Obsidian Golem tribe. Their physical power and durability were terrifying.

Jarex frowned because he had expected to fight Orion, not some other warrior. He felt insulted.

"Jarex, fight with all your strength. Don't underestimate him," the High Priestess warned, her gaze fixed on Prophet Onyx.

Jarex, though hot-tempered, wasn't foolish. He knew the High Priestess's words carried weight.

Raising his battle axe, Jarex urged his giant scorpion forward, charging at Prophet Onyx.

As Jarex charged, Prophet Onyx let out a thunderous roar, raising his massive stone axe high above his head, preparing to bring it down with devastating force.

At the same time, Prophet Onyx's skin began to harden, turning to stone, a natural ability of the Obsidian Golem tribe.

Even with his body fully petrified, Prophet Onyx could still move freely, his movements unaffected by the transformation.

Just as Prophet Onyx's stone skin solidified, Jarex's scorpion mount closed the distance, its stinger poised to strike.

Chapter 126 Scorpion Queen

The sound was sharp, like a heavy blow, a blade slicing through flesh, or the tearing of coarse fabric.

Boom!

The giant scorpion was split in two, like a wrecked tank, by Prophet Onyx's massive stone axe. The scorpion's rider, Jarex, had already sensed the danger and leapt away just in time.

Prophet Onyx stood, gripping his stone axe with both hands, his chest heaving as he glared at Jarex with murderous intent.

"Come again!" he roared, his voice booming like thunder. "Come on... come on!"

His heavy, furious shout echoed through the battlefield, shaking not only Jarex but everyone present.

"Ancestors, do you see this?" Prophet Onyx bellowed, his voice filled with emotion. "The Obsidian Golem tribe has once again stepped out of the Black Forest!"

"I will make sure the world sees our strength!"

This strike was more than just a physical blow—it was the release of centuries of pent-up frustration and longing. It embodied the Obsidian Golem tribe's desire for power and recognition in the outside world.

"WAAAGH!"

"WAAAGH!"

The Obsidian Golems behind Orion, along with their giant allies, erupted in cheers, their spirits lifted by Prophet Onyx's awe-inspiring display of power.

In the distance, the High Priestess of the scorpion tribe narrowed her eyes as she watched Prophet Onyx, lost in thought.

Many years ago, she had witnessed the Obsidian Golems charge into battle. Back then, the chieftain of the Obsidian Golems had been her ally.

"The terrifying stone creatures have returned to the battlefield. Could this be the turning point for us?" she mused, her thoughts conflicted.

While the High Priestess was deep in thought, Jarex, who had been shaken by Prophet Onyx's strike, was seething with rage.

"Damn you, Golem! You dare kill my companion? I'll make you pay with your life!" Jarex shouted, raising his battle axe and charging once more.

This time, Jarex was more cautious. He didn't engage Prophet Onyx head-on but instead circled around him, feinting and looking for an opening.

With his scorpion-like lower body, Jarex was fast and agile, darting around Prophet Onyx with ease.

Prophet Onyx swung his stone axe in wide arcs, trying to swat Jarex away like an annoying fly. He hated this evasive fighting style.

"Jarex, you're a coward of the scorpion tribe! You don't even have the courage to face me head-on!" Prophet Onyx taunted, hoping to provoke Jarex into making a mistake.

But Jarex remained silent, growing more and more alarmed as the fight dragged on.

Jarex had only reached Alpha-level in the past century, and he had never fought an Obsidian Golem before. Now, facing Prophet Onyx, he realized just how outmatched he was.

At that moment, the High Priestess, having snapped out of her reverie, noticed Jarex's struggle. She raised her staff and cast a slow curse on Prophet Onyx.

The High Priestess's interference immediately enraged Orion.

"Elder Rendall, I don't care if you use your cock or your club—go smash that scorpion!" Orion ordered, his voice dripping with fury.

"With pleasure!" Rendall replied, his excitement barely contained as he charged forward.

At the same time, Orion extended his hand, and Dace handed him his trident.

This time, Orion was serious.

"That old bitch... always meddling where she shouldn't," Orion muttered, his face twisted into a wicked grin as he locked eyes with the High Priestess.

The High Priestess could feel Orion's gaze on her, and she knew she had been marked. If she made another move, she might not live to see the next moment.

"This man is truly reckless!" Slagor muttered, watching the scene unfold. He knew Orion's temperament well enough to understand that things were about to escalate.

But even Slagor hadn't expected Orion to be this bold. It seemed like the Black Forest and Desert Oasis forces were on the verge of an all-out battle.

"You seem pleased," Arden remarked, standing beside Slagor. His tone was a mix of relief and concern.

"Master Arden, you should be pleased too. Isn't this exactly what you wanted?" Slagor replied, his voice dripping with flattery, though Arden could sense the schadenfreude behind it.

"And if they fight, it'll be all the better for us, won't it?"

Boom!

Suddenly, the battlefield shifted dramatically.

Jarex was sent flying by a powerful blow from Rendall's spiked club, his battle axe slipping from his grasp as he coughed up blood.

Just as Rendall was about to finish Jarex off, the true leader of the scorpion tribe finally spoke.

"Orion, let's end this here. On behalf of the High Priestess, I apologize."

"The strength of the giants and the Obsidian Golems is truly as formidable as the legends say."

The voice was melodic, almost like a song, and it caught everyone's attention.

Orion turned his gaze toward the central giant scorpion, where a woman dressed in red stood. She smiled faintly and spoke in a strange, almost teasing tone.

"And who are you to speak on behalf of the High Priestess? Do you have the authority to apologize for her?" Orion asked, his voice laced with sarcasm.

The woman in red smiled sweetly, her eyes meeting Orion's as she lifted her veil.

"My name is Soraya," she said, her voice soft but commanding. "I am their queen."

As she spoke, the countless scorpions behind her began to hiss and click, as if responding to her words.

Soraya was stunning, with an exotic beauty that captivated those who looked at her. Unlike the Jarex, Soraya was fully humanoid, her intelligence and grace evident in every movement.

"Your Majesty, as you wish, we'll end this here," Orion said, lowering his trident and signaling for Prophet Onyx and Rendall to stand down, as if nothing had happened.

Meanwhile, the giant scorpion that Prophet Onyx had slain was quickly devoured by a swarm of smaller scorpions. In mere moments, the massive creature was reduced to nothing but bones.

As the group watched in shock, another giant scorpion, identical to the one that had been killed, crawled out from behind Soraya.

The injured Jarex leapt onto the new scorpion's back, his face pale and filled with frustration.

The reappearance of the giant scorpion left not only Orion but also Slagor and Arden stunned.

"They truly are the strongest among us," Slagor muttered to himself, silently warning himself never to provoke the scorpions.

Arden, on the other hand, seemed less surprised. Though he was impressed, it wasn't the first time he had witnessed such a scene.

"Chieftain, are you falling for that scorpion queen? Do you want to make her one of your mistresses?" Delilah teased, wrapping her arm around Orion's and pressing her breasts against him, pretending to be jealous.

Orion, however, remained serious, his eyes still fixed on Soraya.

"Did any of you see how she acted just now?" he asked, his tone grave.

Prophet Onyx, Rendall, and Delilah exchanged confused glances.

"What do you mean, Chieftain?" Rendall asked.

"I sensed a wave of elemental energy, but I couldn't see how the scorpion queen made her move," Orion explained, his voice filled with caution.

Her ability to act so subtly, without anyone noticing, made her a dangerous opponent.

Prophet Onyx, Rendall, and Delilah were all taken aback by this revelation.

"Chieftain, are you saying that the giant scorpion that just appeared is the same one Prophet Onyx killed?" Delilah asked, her voice filled with disbelief.

"Yes, it's the same one. The life force is identical," Orion confirmed.

The group was left speechless, their minds reeling from the implications.

Chapter 127 Who do you think you are?

As soon as both sides stopped fighting, a dragon beast's roar echoed from the nearby dense forest.

Lord Gareth appeared, making her entrance at the most opportune moment.

Massive trees were toppled, and the heavy footsteps of an Abyssal Dragon rumbled through the ground as Lord Gareth calmly emerged from the forest.

Behind her followed a large group of bloodline warriors from the Abyssal Chasm.

Orion could sense it clearly—among Lord Gareth's subordinates, there were two Alpha-level powerhouses.

In other words, there were three Alpha-level warriors from the Abyssal Chasm alone.

In addition to that, there was a Storm Vulture and an Abyssal Dragon.

This lineup was far more formidable than those from the Poison Dragon Swamp or the Desert Oasis.

Lord Gareth glanced around at the crowd, and when her eyes landed on Orion, Prophet Onyx, and Rendall behind him, they lit up slightly.

"Orion, you've done well!"

Orion waved his hand and bowed politely.

"How dare you! In the presence of our great lord, why do you not kneel and pay your respects?"

A sudden shout rang out, directed straight at Orion.

Orion squinted but said nothing.

However, out of the corner of his eye, he noticed Slagor, Arden, the High Priestess, Jarex, and Soraya all kneeling on one knee in reverence.

Even Prophet Onyx and Rendall behind him had, at some point, knelt down.

Orion looked at Lord Gareth, who seemed oblivious to the scene, her gaze fixed on the distant plains and forests.

Orion understood. This was a power play, an attempt to force him into submission.

Still, Orion remained silent. He simply took out his weapon, the Bloodthirsty Trident, and held it in his hand.

Standing tall, Orion smiled as he looked at the Alpha-level warrior who had just shouted at him.

It was a fiend serpent with snake-like eyes.

The fiend serpents hailed from the Abyssal Chasm and were a subordinate tribe of Lord Gareth.

In terms of bloodline, the fiend serpents carried a trace of draconic lineage.

Orion's lips curled into a smirk, revealing two rows of gleaming white teeth as he sneered at the Alpha-level fiend serpent.

Lord Gareth hadn't said a word, yet her dog was already jumping out to bite.

Orion's response was simple: say nothing and prepare to beat the dog.

He raised his trident, pointing it at the fiend serpent, silently mocking him.

The fiend serpent, Ridi, was one of Lord Gareth's direct subordinates, a skilled assassin, and the most vicious dog in her pack.

Orion's trident pointed directly at Ridi, and Ridi felt like he was about to lose his mind.

In the past, whenever he shouted, Alpha-level warriors would immediately fall in line, obedient and submissive.

But today, not only did Orion refuse to comply, he even drew his weapon, wearing a defiant expression that seemed to say, "What are you gonna do about it?"

"You damn giant! I told you to kneel before Lord Gareth! Are you deaf?"

Ridi shouted again, trying to intimidate Orion further.

Yet Orion remained calm, his trident still aimed at Ridi.

"Chieftain, perhaps we should back down," Prophet Onyx whispered after a long pause, trying to advise Orion.

After all, with a Legendary-level powerhouse backing them, Prophet Onyx thought it unwise to provoke a direct confrontation.

Orion didn't respond, nor did he acknowledge Prophet Onyx.

His silence made Prophet Onyx immediately understand his intent, so he stopped trying to persuade him.

Rendall, on the other hand, tried to stand up several times, only to be held down firmly by Prophet Onyx.

Prophet Onyx knew very well that just because Orion dared to stand didn't mean Rendall or he could do the same.

The atmosphere was tense and silent.

But to Ridi, this silence was nothing short of an insult, a blatant challenge to his authority.

"You damn giant! You're asking for death!"

With that, Ridi drew his dagger and transformed into a shadow, rushing toward Orion with murderous intent.

As Ridi closed in, the killing intent in Orion's eyes grew stronger.

"Die!"

Orion's voice was low and hoarse, like the roar of a Titan god from the depths of the abyss.

At the same time, Orion activated his Titan's Rage and Swift Charge abilities, shooting forward like a flash of light.

Thud!

The trident was long, and so it was strong!

Ridi was impaled on Orion's trident, but Orion controlled his strength perfectly, stopping the weapon from piercing all the way through.

Orion lifted the trident high, grinning.

In the next moment, he slammed the trident into the ground, pinning Ridi to the earth.

With Ridi's eyes wide in shock and pain, Orion raised his right foot and stomped hard on his face.

"Who do you think you are?"

Orion's voice was cold and indifferent as he spoke.

And he didn't look down at Ridi when he said it—he was looking at Lord Gareth.

So, no one could tell if Orion's words were meant for Ridi or for Lord Gareth.

But regardless of who they were meant for, no one responded to Orion.

After a long silence, Orion finally looked down at the pitiful Ridi.

"Such a pathetic lapdog."

"Remember, next time the trident won't go through your right chest—it'll go through your left."

Orion pulled the trident out and kicked Ridi's body aside.

On the other side, Chieftain Slagor was utterly shocked by Orion's brazen display.

"This guy's insane! He actually dared to injure Lord Gareth's direct subordinate!"

"How could he... how dare he?"

"Where does he get the nerve?"

Slagor's mind was in turmoil, waves of disbelief crashing through him.

"He... he really dared... and he's so strong!"

"Ridi couldn't even last a single round against him!"

If Slagor thought Orion was crazy, Arden was downright terrified.

Arden knew full well that he had only dared to stir up trouble between Orion and the High Priestess because Lord Gareth had his back.

But now, Orion's actions were sending a clear message to everyone: he didn't care about Lord Gareth's authority.

Orion would kill whoever he wanted, whenever he wanted!

That was what truly terrified every Alpha-level warrior present.

As everyone's thoughts raced, Lord Gareth suddenly withdrew her gaze from the distant horizon and spoke seriously.

"How confident are you that you could kill me?"

Chapter 128 I'd drain her of her strength, leaving her at the mercy of my cock

Lord Gareth's words were like a solar flare, sending shockwaves through the surrounding Alpha-level warriors, leaving them visibly shaken.

Orion put away his trident, looking humbly at Lord Gareth.

Now that the master had shown up, there was no need to keep beating the dog—it was time to talk.

"Ten percent."

Orion was being modest. In truth, with his Titan bloodline and the Blood Sacrifice skill, he had at least a fifty percent chance of killing Lord Gareth. But he downplayed it, saying only ten percent.

On one hand, Orion was hiding his true strength; on the other, he was flattering Lord Gareth.

"Ten percent is already quite high," Lord Gareth said calmly, showing no sign of anger.

"The terms I promised you remain unchanged. You can claim a piece of land and make it your territory."

As soon as she said this, Slagor and Soraya's faces changed.

In the myriad races invasion, carving out territory was something only Legendary-level powerhouses were entitled to. For an Alpha-level warrior, it was unheard of.

Suddenly, all the Alpha-level warriors looked at Orion with a new sense of respect.

Orion said nothing—neither agreeing nor refusing.

"I assume you're heading for Thunderhawk City this time. There's no issue with you attacking in that direction, right?" Lord Gareth asked.

Orion responded respectfully, "Thank you, Lord Gareth, for your generosity."

Lord Gareth nodded, then added after a moment of thought, "Once you've taken Thunderhawk City, continue south and conquer Stormrage City."

"If you manage to take Stormrage City, keep heading south and meet me at Starfall City. There, you'll help me defeat Ariel, the lord of Thunderwood Forest."

This time, Orion only nodded, without fully committing.

Though Orion had shown great strength earlier, he was well aware of the vast gap between himself and a Legendary-level powerhouse—like the Great Rift Valley in East Africa, an insurmountable divide.

Orion's confidence came from his Blood Sacrifice skill.

With a fifty percent chance to instantly kill an opponent one level higher than himself, it was a powerful trump card, even if it was based on probability.

Of course, using this skill would cost Orion half of his life energy.

And this life energy wasn't just stamina or vitality—it likely included his lifespan, and possibly even his attributes would be affected.

In short, unless absolutely necessary, Orion didn't want to use this skill.

After assigning Orion his tasks, Lord Gareth didn't mention the incident between him and Ridi.

She turned her attention to Soraya, the queen of the Desert Oasis.

"The scorpion tribe will begin their invasion from the west. With your current strength, you shouldn't need to fear that Thunder Beast anymore."

"As you wish, Lord Gareth. I will complete the task you've given me!" Soraya accepted the order without protest.

Lord Gareth nodded and then shifted her gaze to Slagor.

"Slagor, you will invade from the east. If you encounter enemies you can't handle, you may ask Orion for help."

"As you wish!" Slagor responded, not daring to object.

However, the thought of possibly having to deal with Orion made Slagor uneasy.

"This time, you must succeed!" Lord Gareth declared. "Thunderwood Forest is only our first target. Our true goal lies far to the south, in a land where the sun never sets."

"If your races wish to grow stronger, if you want to increase your power, we must continue invading southward."

Orion remained silent, letting Lord Gareth continue her grand speech.

...

Half a day later, the group dispersed. Orion led his forces southward, slightly to the east, with Slagor and Lord Gareth's main army flanking him on either side.

Before leaving, Soraya, the queen of the Desert Oasis, made a point to say goodbye to Orion.

"Orion, when the myriad races invasion is over, you're welcome to visit the desert!"

"We've been neighbors for so many years; it's time we got a little closer!"

Orion nodded, exchanging a few polite words before they parted ways.

Next came Chieftain Slagor.

He waited until Soraya was far off before approaching Orion, trying to cozy up to him.

"Chieftain Orion, let me tell you something—you'd better stay away from that scorpion queen."

"I've heard that Soraya is nothing but a bitch who sleeps around."

Orion frowned. He felt like Slagor was hinting at something, but at the same time, it seemed like he wasn't saying much at all.

"Did you see those scorpions?" Slagor pointed to the retreating scorpion tribe, whispering conspiratorially.

"Rumor has it that every single one of those scorpions was birthed by Soraya herself."

"Orion, just think about it—how many males must she have drained dry to give birth to that many scorpions?"

Orion's face darkened at Slagor's words. He shot him a glance before turning to leave.

"Prophet, what do you think? How much of what Slagor said is true?"

Prophet Onyx was still in shock, his mind replaying the scene of Orion effortlessly killing the fiend serpent Ridi.

Especially when Orion had boldly declared in front of everyone that he had a ten percent chance of killing Lord Gareth.

Such words, such actions, had filled Prophet Onyx with awe and reverence.

"Prophet..."

"Ah... Great Chieftain, what can I do for you?" Prophet Onyx snapped back to reality after Rendall nudged him, hearing Orion's call.

His tone was unusually respectful, even using the word "great."

"Prophet, what do you think? About the scorpion tribe?"

Prophet Onyx shook his head, speaking plainly. "Not credible."

"Chieftain, you may not know this, but the scorpion tribe was already very powerful long before Soraya became queen."

"For example, the High Priestess—she's been an Alpha-level warrior for hundreds of years."

"And even back then, the scorpion tribe had a large population."

Hearing this, Orion found it more believable.

Still, Slagor's warning amused him.

"Does Slagor really think Soraya has her eyes on me and plans to drain me dry?"

"Can't he tell? With my powerful body and cock, even Soraya wouldn't stand a chance. I'd drain her of her strength, leaving her at the mercy of my cock!"

The absurd thought crossed Orion's mind, but he quickly dismissed it as unrealistic.

His focus now was on invading Thunderhawk City and retrieving the heads of his sister Clymene and the elders.

With that thought, Orion's gaze grew sharper, filled with bloodlust and fury.

"Dace, go get Thrym. I want to reach Thunderhawk City as fast as possible!"

Dace acknowledged the order, and soon Thrym appeared before Orion.

Thrym's heart was pounding with excitement, his eyes filled with reverence as he looked at Orion.

Thrym had never imagined he would have the chance to return to Thunderhawk City, let alone the opportunity to wash away the shame of the giants.

"Chieftain, if we invade in this direction, we'll reach Thunderhawk City in no more than a month!"

Chapter 129 Gnoll Dirtclaw

The trees in Thunderwood Forest were even taller and denser than those in the Black Forest.

Under one of the massive trees, two guides stood before Orion. One was the giant warrior Thrym, and the other was a gnoll chieftain named Dirtclaw, who had been enslaved by Delilah.

"Master, this giant warrior is correct. If we invade in this direction, we'll reach Thunderhawk City in no more than a month," Dirtclaw said.

"But if you want to gather more resources, I suggest veering slightly east. That's where the gnoll territory lies."

"That land is rich with a high-grade magical plant called Foxtail. This year is a harvest year, and it hasn't been collected yet."

The information from Dirtclaw piqued Orion's interest. However, the gnoll seemed to be holding something back, and Orion decided it was time to put some pressure on him.

"Delilah, your gnoll slave has too many little schemes. Starve him for half a month."

Delilah flashing a seductive smile.

"As you wish, my dear chieftain."

At this, Dirtclaw's face immediately fell.

"Dirtclaw, tell the chieftain what you're really thinking!" Delilah commanded, her tone both playful and commanding.

Dirtclaw dared not disobey Delilah's order. He stammered, "Master, there are two other gnoll chieftains in my territory. I want to take this opportunity to eliminate them and become the sole leader of all the gnolls."

"Master, uniting all the gnoll tribes would be a great benefit to you as well."

Delilah smiled faintly, her expression unreadable.

Orion, however, stared into the forest ahead, deep in thought.

After a long pause, Orion finally spoke.

"How many gnolls are in your territory?"

Dirtclaw's eyes lit up. He knew that the real decision-maker in this group was the powerful chieftain standing before him.

"Respected chieftain, the gnoll territory currently has over thirty thousand inhabitants. Excluding the elderly, women, and children, there are more than eight thousand adult gnoll warriors."

Thirty thousand. That was an enormous number.

Because thirty thousand mouths meant a terrifying amount of food consumed daily.

Orion fell silent, hesitating for a moment.

Sensing his uncertainty, Delilah stepped up behind him and spoke softly.

"My dear chieftain, this is actually quite simple to handle."

Orion turned, his eyes filled with anticipation, signaling for Delilah to continue.

"If what Dirtclaw says is true, and most of the gnolls are elderly, women, and children, we can leave them behind to wait. The rest of the gnolls can be conscripted."

Delilah gazed into Orion's eyes, and seeing no trace of mercy in them, she continued.

"We'll divide them into two groups. The normal bloodline warriors will be integrated into our fighting force."

"As for the old and disabled, we'll form them into a cannon fodder unit and have them clear the way for us."

"Those who survive the ordeal will be the elites, worthy of further training."

Delilah's plan was clear: repurpose the gnoll dead weight and keep only the useful and trainable ones.

Though ruthless, Orion agreed with the plan.

"Heh... Looks like I made the right choice bringing you along this time."

"You handle this. Have your gnoll slave Dirtclaw carry it out."

Orion reached out and gently stroked Delilah's face, which was identical to that of his wife, Lilith.

Thankfully, their voices were slightly different; otherwise, Orion sometimes wouldn't be able to tell whether the woman before him was Lilith or Delilah.

"As you wish, my dear chieftain!"

Soon, Dirtclaw received his orders.

Dirtclaw was pleased because Orion hadn't harmed the foundation of the gnoll tribe—the women and children.

As for the elderly and disabled, they were nothing but burdens to Dirtclaw, and he believed they deserved to be eliminated.

So, Dirtclaw readily accepted the command.

The group then shifted their course slightly eastward, heading toward the gnoll territory.

Half a month later, they arrived at the gnoll territory within Thunderwood Forest.

The gnoll territory was a flat forested plain, with little elevation and few rocks.

In fact, the gnoll population had once exceeded fifty thousand. The reason only thirty thousand remained was that, following the orders of Thunderhawk Knight Reynard, these gnolls had dispatched ten thousand bloodline warriors to Thunderhawk City.

Scattered throughout the forest were numerous wooden tents, with smoke rising from many of them.

Suddenly, a few wolf howls echoed from the surrounding forest, startling all the gnolls.

Even the two remaining gnoll chieftains, Vilemaw and Mudsnout, rushed out of their tents.

"Damn it, Vilemaw! It's your tribe's turn to patrol today. Why did you let the wolves into our territory?" Mudsnout, one of the two gnoll chieftains, shouted angrily.

Vilemaw squinted, sniffing the air, trying to catch a scent.

"Mudsnout, I was just in the tent with you. I didn't do anything. Are you trying to frame me?"

Mudsnout spat on the ground, cursing.

"Maybe you didn't slack off, but what about your tribesmen?"

"Vilemaw, I'm warning you—this is a special time. It's the myriad races invasion. Don't tell me you don't understand the importance of vigilance."

Vilemaw was equally frustrated. He had already instructed his bloodline warriors to stay alert.

Yet, something had still gone wrong.

"Mudsnout, enough. I'll go check it out myself!"

But just as Vilemaw finished speaking, the gnoll settlement was filled with the sounds of wolf howls, screams, and the unmistakable rumble of an army charging.

Both Vilemaw and Mudsnout had fought in wars before, and they were highly sensitive to the vibrations of an approaching force.

"This is bad! We're under attack!"

"Don't panic! Gather the troops and fight back!"

...

Chaos erupted as the gnoll settlement was invaded by the combined forces of the Black Forest.

"Remember, prioritize seizing magical plants and crystal cores, then weapons and armor, and lastly, food!"

"If you find any special loot, report it to me immediately!"

Orion stood in the forest just outside the gnoll settlement, once again reminding Delilah, who stood beside him.

Delilah was in charge of managing all of Orion's scouts, who were also responsible for collecting the spoils of war.

Even though Orion had given these instructions countless times, he couldn't help but remind Delilah again.

Chapter 130 Behead him in front of everyone to prove your loyalty

Compared to the giants, Buffalofolk, and Obsidian Golems, the gnolls were far weaker in combat.

Fortunately, the gnolls had numbers on their side. Though they were caught off guard, they managed to organize a somewhat effective counterattack after the initial chaos.

The gnolls wielded mostly spiked maces and bone clubs, though a few carried axes and javelins. Occasionally, a gnoll with a wooden shield could be seen charging through the crowd.

However, once Rendall joined the battle, the momentum the gnolls had painstakingly built was shattered in an instant.

"That's an Alpha level giant! Run for your lives!"

"Oh my god, I can't believe this! How is this possible?"

...

In the rear, Vilemaw and Mudsnot, the two gnoll chieftains, exchanged uneasy glances as they watched Rendall, who seemed like a Titan descending from the heavens. A sense of dread filled their hearts.

The gnoll formation broke apart, descending into chaos as they scattered in all directions.

But before long, the howls of wolves echoed from the surrounding forest, driving the fleeing gnolls back into their camp.

This cycle of fleeing and returning continued for over three hours.

Finally, after more than three hours, the gnoll settlement fell silent.

Orion, Onyx, Delilah, and Dirtclaw slowly entered the gnolls camp.

"It's Dirtclaw!"

"Damn it, Dirtclaw betrayed our High Chief!"

"Dirtclaw, you traitor!"

...

The moment Dirtclaw appeared, he was met with a barrage of curses from his fellow gnolls.

But Dirtclaw paid no mind to their insults. In his eyes, he was about to become the new chieftain of the tribe. As for the High Chief, who was far away in Thunderhawk City, Dirtclaw had long since stopped considering him a threat.

"Respected master, this way, please!" Dirtclaw said, using his filthy sleeve to wipe down a bench for Orion, looking utterly servile.

"Who are the two gnoll chieftains you mentioned? Bring them to me," Orion said as he sat down, getting straight to business.

Dirtclaw immediately ran off and soon returned, dragging Vilemaw and Mudsnout from the crowd of gnolls.

"Damn you, Dirtclaw! Do you care nothing for the safety of our tribe?"

"Dirtclaw, tell me, who are these people?"

Dirtclaw ignored Vilemaw and Mudsnout's protests and instead approached Orion and Delilah, eager to claim credit for his actions.

Orion glanced at Vilemaw and Mudsnout before turning to Dirtclaw with a serious expression.

"Dirtclaw, I appoint you as the sole chieftain of the gnoll tribe. If anyone resists, point them out, and we'll kill them immediately."

"Of course, treat those who submit to you well."

Dirtclaw grinned wickedly and began pointing out all the gnolls he had long disliked.

Orion waved his hand, signaling for his guards—Dace, Otho, Beyn, and Torba, four giant warriors—to step forward and await orders.

"Dace, you four will accompany Dirtclaw and kill every gnoll he identifies."

"Understood, chieftain!"

And so, within minutes, the gnoll camp was filled with the sounds of screams.

A wave of fear spread through the gnoll settlement, and soon, everyone was on edge, fearing for their lives.

"Delilah, enslave these two gnolls as well," Orion said, gesturing toward Vilemaw and Mudsnout.

Delilah nodded and approached Vilemaw, preparing to bind him with a contract.

However, things didn't go as planned.

Just as the contract was about to be sealed, a magical sigil appeared on Vilemaw's forehead, and his head exploded in a burst of blood and gore.

The sight left everyone stunned, including Orion.

"What just happened?" Orion asked, standing up and quickly moving to Delilah's side. After confirming she was unharmed, he spoke again.

"Chieftain, that gnoll had already been enslaved by someone else. The explosion was caused by contract backlash. He died from the backlash," Delilah explained.

Orion frowned. A gnoll chieftain being enslaved wasn't a big deal, but what concerned him was who had enslaved Vilemaw.

"Do you know who enslaved him?"

Delilah shook her head, her face showing a hint of disgust as she wiped the blood from her clothes. The explosion had splattered her with Vilemaw's blood.

"Forget it. Don't bother with a contract for the other one."

"When Dirtclaw returns, have him execute the other chieftain in front of the entire tribe."

Orion had initially planned to keep the other gnoll chieftain, Mudsnot, alive, as he was a rare hero-level gnoll. But after what had just happened, Orion abandoned that idea.

He decided to have Dirtclaw behead Mudsnot as a show of loyalty, ensuring that the gnoll tribe would fully submit to him.

Though the method was brutal and ruthless, it was highly effective.

Half an hour later, Dirtclaw returned, escorted by the four giant guards, looking excited as he stood before Orion.

"Dirtclaw, behead him in front of everyone to prove your loyalty!" Orion commanded.

Dirtclaw froze for a moment, but quickly recovered.

"Respected chieftain, as you wish!"

Orion nodded silently, and one of his guards handed Dirtclaw a large cleaver.

Dirtclaw raised the cleaver and approached Mudsnout.

"Mudsnout, my friend, farewell!"

"I'll take good care of your ten wives and eighteen daughters!"

Dirtclaw's words were so loaded with information that even Orion couldn't help but twitch at the corners of his mouth.

Thwack!

With a single swing, Mudsnout's head rolled to the ground, and the two chieftains of the gnoll tribe were no more.

From that moment on, Dirtclaw was the highest-ranking gnoll left.

At Delilah's prompting, Dirtclaw began his performance.

"My fellow gnolls, if it weren't for me, your good days would be over!"

"Your High Chief will soon die on the battlefield!"

"And Thunderhawk Knight Reynard will be killed soon after!"

"Now, Thunderwood Forest has been taken over by the powerful warriors behind me. Our only way forward is to follow them and invade southward!"

"From this moment on, I declare myself the sole chieftain of the gnoll tribe. Anyone who resists..."

Under Dirtclaw's persuasion, many gnolls submitted to him.

Of course, some of them were already members of Dirtclaw's tribe, and they now felt a sense of superiority.

As for the other two tribes, aside from the women and children, those who refused to obey were all sent to the cannon fodder unit.

For Dirtclaw, today was a great day.

And for Orion, it wasn't bad either. He had gained some magical plants and a fresh batch of cannon fodder troops.