

Titan King 141

Chapter 141 Suppressing dissent

"My dear chieftain, helping Slagor this time isn't just about claiming 50% of the spoils. We can use this opportunity to demand more," Delilah said, her beautiful eyes gleaming with greed.

"And there's another point—Slagor has extensive experience with the Myriad Races Invasion. He likely knows far more about the situation in Thunderwood Forest and the distribution of factions than we do."

Her words immediately made Orion and the others' eyes light up.

What was their biggest challenge right now?

It was their lack of knowledge about the other regions of Thunderwood Forest.

But for Slagor, this wasn't an issue.

By working with Slagor, they could essentially use him as their eyes and ears.

"Chieftain, we can use the cannon fodder troops as leverage, joining forces with Slagor's army to attack the Geckos Tribe at Half-Moon Lake," Delilah continued.

"And after that, we can pressure Slagor into helping us with our next target."

"Slagor's subordinates should serve us, not just him!"

Orion felt fortunate to have brought Delilah along for this Myriad Races Invasion.

The Succubus Queen's perspective was indeed unique and insightful. Even Prophet Onyx couldn't help but regard her with newfound respect.

"Chieftain, if we're going to help Slagor, I suggest delaying for a few days. We need time to negotiate better terms with him," Onyx suggested.

Rendall immediately agreed. "Yes, and we also need time to reorganize the cannon fodder troops."

Orion nodded. The elders' thoughts were aligned, and now it was just a matter of deciding when to set out.

"Here's the plan," Orion said after a moment of thought. "We'll release the lizardman messenger and tell him we're willing to assist, but we demand 70% of the spoils."

"If Slagor agrees, he should send another messenger to escort us."

Seeing no objections, Orion continued, "We'll march eastward for seven days. After that, we'll reassess the situation."

"If Slagor refuses, we'll slow our pace and let him and the Geckos Tribe fight it out. Then we'll swoop in and pick up the pieces."

"If he agrees, I don't mind letting him keep 30% of the spoils."

The elders all nodded in agreement, and the decision to support Slagor was finalized.

Just as Orion was about to continue discussing their next steps with the elders, Torba rushed in, his face pale with urgency.

"Chieftain, bad news! The gnolls in the cannon fodder troops are causing trouble. Dirtclaw is struggling to keep them under control!"

Orion's eyes narrowed, a cold glint of killing intent flashing within them.

"Elder Rendall, you handle this. Use this opportunity to clean up the cannon fodder troops."

"Remember, anyone who dares to step out of line—kill them. Kill until the rest are too terrified to even think about rebelling."

Rendall nodded grimly, his face dark as he stood and left the command center.

As the commander of the cannon fodder troops, Rendall hadn't even had the chance to establish his authority before trouble broke out. This was something he would not tolerate.

Watching Rendall leave with a murderous aura, Orion's expression gradually softened.

"How do you plan to handle the supplies?" Orion asked Delilah, shifting the topic.

From the Gnoll Tribe to Thunderhawk City, they had seized an enormous amount of loot. If they tried to carry it all, it would undoubtedly slow down the entire horde.

"I've divided the supplies into three parts," Delilah replied with a confident smile.

"One portion is stored in the camp for daily consumption, enough to last us a month."

"A smaller portion has been allocated to the women and children of the various tribes. These are our future population reserves, and we need to ensure their survival."

"The rest has been hidden and sealed with a magical formation. We can retrieve it when we return or during our next invasion."

Orion nodded in approval. Delilah's handling of the supplies was meticulous and efficient.

After a moment of thought, Orion added, "Delilah, I'm giving you another task. Those two Garland Tribe slaves—aren't they skilled in cultivating magical plants?"

"Put them to work. Have them search for more magical plants for us."

"Their tribe should have extensive knowledge of the distribution of magical plants in Thunderwood Forest."

Delilah's lips curled into a seductive smile as she accepted the task.

The meeting eventually concluded, and Orion stepped out of the command center.

What drew him outside were the blood-curdling screams coming from the city walls.

Two hours earlier.

Dirtclaw, wielding a whip, had been punishing the gnolls in the cannon fodder troops who refused to acknowledge his authority.

Among them were two gnoll leaders, Blackfang and Curltail, both of whom were stronger than Dirtclaw.

After Scrag's execution, they had chosen to surrender. However, Dirtclaw's relentless humiliation reignited their rebellious spirit.

Surrounded by their gnoll subordinates, the pressure of their gazes forced Blackfang and Curltail to resist.

If they didn't, they would lose all respect within the gnoll tribe.

This was one of the main reasons for the unrest within the cannon fodder troops.

Under Blackfang and Curltail's leadership, chaos erupted, and the cannon fodder troops teetered on the brink of mutiny.

But when Rendall arrived, his Alpha-level aura swept across the camp like a storm, instantly quelling the disorder.

Blackfang, Curltail, and their followers were swiftly captured and dragged to the city walls, where they were executed as a warning to the others.

Their heads were displayed on spikes, and their bloodied corpses hung for all to see.

This brutal display cemented Rendall's authority over the cannon fodder troops.

For the next three days and nights, Rendall personally oversaw the camp, ruthlessly suppressing any dissent until all resistance was crushed.

The next morning.

Orion woke up with Violet's naked body nestled in his arms.

Last night, Violet had finally let go of her inhibitions, fully embracing the pleasure Orion gave her.

She was in a near-constant state of climax throughout the night. Exhausted, she remained sound asleep, her body still faintly trembling from the aftershocks of pleasure.

At the entrance to Orion's tent, Elan from the Skytalon Tribe had been waiting patiently.

"Master, the Thunderhawk has returned!"

"Lead the way," Orion commanded without hesitation.

At the highest point of Thunderhawk City, Orion once again stood face-to-face with the Alpha-level Thunderhawk.

"Have you made up your mind?" Orion asked.

The Thunderhawk preened its feathers with its sharp beak, unbothered by Orion's presence.

"Do you have more of those little treats?" it asked, tilting its head.

Orion smirked and pulled out another bottle of Pet Pills, tossing it toward the bird.

This time, the Thunderhawk didn't hesitate. It caught the pills in its beak and swallowed them in one gulp.

"They taste good, and I can feel them benefiting my body," the Thunderhawk admitted.

Orion took a few steps closer, his movements slow and deliberate.

The Thunderhawk tilted its head, watching him approach without fear or retreat.

"You still haven't answered my question. Have you decided to form a contract with me?" Orion asked.

"If you agree to become my partner, I'll make sure you have an endless supply of those treats."

Orion didn't press further. He knew that earning the Thunderhawk's trust would take time.

As a natural-born hunter, Orion understood the importance of patience.

Without a bond formed from a young age, taming a beast—especially one as proud as a Thunderhawk—was no easy task. Even the Skytalon Tribe, known for their expertise in taming flying beasts, had only managed to tame a handful of Thunderhawks.

Chapter 142 I'll give you a gift in return

This time, the Thunderhawk still didn't sign a contract with Orion.

However, their relationship had grown significantly closer—a small but meaningful step forward.

"I'll give you a gift in return!"

The Thunderhawk spread its wings and soared into the sky.

Half an hour later, it returned, clutching a figure in its sharp talons.

"This impure-blooded creature was wandering around my territory. He must be your enemy!"

Orion smirked and tossed another bottle of Pet Pills to the Thunderhawk.

"Thank you. He is indeed my enemy."

The Thunderhawk let out a few triumphant cries, clearly pleased. To the Thunderhawk, trading an unwelcome intruder for more Pet Pills was an excellent deal.

Thud!

The figure was dropped to the ground, rolling to a stop at Orion's feet.

"If you find more enemies like this, bring them to me. I'll reward you with more treats!"

Leaving those words behind, Orion grabbed the figure and descended the mountain.

Thunderhawk City, Temporary Command Center

Inside the command center, Prophet Onyx, Rendall, Delilah, and Elan were gathered, their expressions grim as they stared at the figure Orion had thrown onto the floor.

The Thunderhawk's "gift" was a harpy, one of the scouts from Lord Ariel's Tribe.

Harpies, members of Ariel's faction in Thunderwood Forest, were naturally gifted with the ability to fly.

However, this particular harpy was already dead, having used a method so subtle that even Orion hadn't noticed it had committed suicide.

"This harpy was caught near Thunderhawk City by the Thunderhawk," Orion explained briefly, then left the matter to the elders.

For a moment, no one spoke, each lost in thought.

"Elan, is this a harpy?" Orion asked.

Elan nodded, pointing at the corpse. "Yes, master. Harpies have wings on their backs, beak-like mouths, and legs resembling talons."

Elan's confirmation deepened the heavy atmosphere in the room.

After a long silence, Prophet Onyx finally spoke.

"Chieftain, it seems the lack of news from Thunderhawk City has drawn Lord Ariel's attention. I suggest we leave Thunderhawk City as soon as possible!"

Prophet Onyx's sense of danger was sharp, and he had already realized the gravity of the situation.

Orion didn't respond immediately. Instead, he turned his gaze to Rendall.

"Chieftain, the cannon fodder troops have been fully reorganized. We're ready to move at any time!" Rendall reported.

Orion nodded and shifted his attention to Delilah.

"The logistics and supplies were prepared three days ago," Delilah said confidently. "I've also sent scouts along our planned route, and so far, no bad news has come back."

Finally, Orion looked at Elan, who shook his head, indicating that there were no issues on his end either.

"Good. Prepare everything. We'll depart tomorrow and head east as planned."

"Understood!"

As Orion began mobilizing the cannon fodder troops to leave Thunderhawk City, events were unfolding in the Fireraven Tribe's territory.

The Fireraven Tribe resided in a forest of red maple trees, with their homes built high in the branches.

Inside one of these wooden houses, Rowena and Lorne sat with troubled expressions.

"Damn it! Those filthy ravens are forcing me to marry that disgusting, vile Seth!" Rowena fumed, her anger palpable as she clenched her fists.

She was furious at the unfair treatment she was receiving, her voice trembling with rage.

A few days ago, news of Reynard's death had reached her. Devastated, Rowena felt as though her entire world had collapsed.

If not for Lorne's comforting presence, she wasn't sure how she would have endured the past few days.

"Lorne, what should we do now?" Rowena asked, her voice tinged with desperation. "Should we try to escape and seek help from the lord?"

Lorne, the only son of Elan and heir to the Skytalon Tribe, had been equally shaken by the news of Reynard's death.

However, the absence of any news about his father's death had given him some relief.

After careful thought, Lorne had concluded that his father, with the help of the three heroic-level flying beasts in their tribe, should have been able to escape. Unless, of course, his father had chosen not to abandon their people.

"Even if we manage to escape, reaching Lord Ariel's territory won't guarantee us any help," Lorne said pragmatically.

His words were harsh but truthful.

Lorne, with his hero-level flying beast, still had some value.

But Rowena, who had failed to form a contract with a Thunderhawk, was essentially useless—a weakling with no leverage.

Without a Skybond with a Thunderhawk, Rowena was far inferior to others of her kind.

It was the same reason why Reynard, despite his strength, had been forced to rely on hit-and-run tactics when fighting Prophet Onyx, unable to engage in close combat.

"Rowena, your only option now is to form a contract with a Thunderhawk as soon as possible," Lorne advised. "Without one, we won't survive in the Fireraven Tribe."

When Rowena and Lorne had first sought refuge with the Fireraven Tribe, they had been treated with respect. The tribe's chieftain had even personally welcomed Rowena.

But the day after news of Reynard's death arrived, their attitude toward Rowena had shifted dramatically.

"It's not that I don't want to," Rowena said bitterly, "but there aren't any Thunderhawks in the Fireraven Tribe's territory!"

"Not even an elite-level one. If there were, I'd sign a contract with it in a heartbeat!"

For the first time, Rowena felt the full weight of her helplessness.

Her brother was dead, leaving her stranded and powerless. Now, the Fireraven Tribe was pressuring her to marry Seth.

Seth, the chieftain's son, was the epitome of everything Rowena despised.

And it wasn't just the marriage that disgusted her. In the Fireraven Tribe, women were considered communal property.

To put it bluntly, marrying Seth meant becoming the plaything of the entire tribe. She would be used and abused by every male in the tribe, with no respite.

This fate was something Rowena would rather die than accept.

Lorne, who had always harbored feelings for Rowena, wanted to comfort her but found himself at a loss for words.

Just then, a series of strange bird calls echoed through the surrounding forest.

Lorne's body stiffened slightly at the sound.

To others, the calls might seem ordinary, but Lorne recognized them as his tribe's secret signals.

He glanced at Rowena, who was still muttering curses under her breath, and said softly, "Rowena, you must be hungry. I'll go find something for you to eat."

"Thank you, Lorne," Rowena replied, her voice softening.

Lorne nodded and left the wooden house.

Once outside, he quickly slipped into the dense forest, moving with practiced ease.

"Lorne, this is a secret message from the chieftain!"

A shadowy figure handed Lorne a sealed letter.

Lorne took it but immediately asked, "Is my father still alive?"

"The chieftain is safe. He instructed you to read the letter and act accordingly."

"And the tribe? Are they alright?"

"The tribe is fine. We've suffered minimal losses."

Hearing this, Lorne finally felt the weight in his chest lift. The anxiety that had been gnawing at him for days began to fade.

"I can't stay here long. If you need me, come to this location," the figure said, leaving behind a hidden address before disappearing into the forest.

Lorne opened the letter, his brows furrowing deeper with each line he read.

After a long moment, he crumpled the letter into a ball and swallowed it whole.

Chapter 143 Guess

"Go... go... go! Everyone, hide yourselves!"

"If anyone exposes our position, I'll whip them to death!"

Dirtclaw barked orders as he cracked his whip, driving the cannon fodder troops into the dense forest.

The cause of this chaos was the harpy circling in the skies above.

It was the sixth day since Orion had led his forces away from Thunderhawk City, and the frequent appearances of harpy today had caused no small amount of trouble.

Not wanting to expose the location of his troops, Orion had ordered everyone to take cover.

However, hiding tens of thousands of cannon fodder troops wasn't exactly an easy task.

Orion stood in the open, gripping the Bone War Trident tightly as he gazed up at the harpies in the sky.

"Chieftain, should we..." Delilah began, but Orion raised a hand to silence her.

He needed to focus.

Delilah, surprised by the interruption, stared at Orion curiously.

Suddenly, Orion took a step forward, sprinting twenty meters before leaping off a massive tree trunk. Using it as a springboard, he launched himself high into the air.

Whoosh!

At the same time, the trident in his hand flew from his grasp, hurtling toward the harpy above.

Boom!

The harpy, flying too low to react, didn't even have time to scream before the trident pierced through its body, exploding it into a mist of blood.

By the time Orion landed gracefully back on the ground, there wasn't even a scrap of the harpy left.

The surrounding troops stared at Orion with awe and reverence. His mastery of the trident was nothing short of godlike.

"Chieftain, the appearance of this harpy is likely not a good sign," Prophet Onyx said, his gaze heavy as he looked toward the depths of the forest.

Orion rolled his neck and stretched his shoulders. After several days without combat, he was itching for more action.

"Prophet, what are your thoughts? Speak freely," Orion said, motioning for Dace to relay the order for the troops to continue moving.

Prophet Onyx nodded, organizing his thoughts before speaking.

"Chieftain, that harpy just now clearly came from the direction of Half-Moon Lake."

"Combined with the harpy the Thunderhawk captured near Thunderhawk City a few days ago, it's clear that their presence is no coincidence."

Orion nodded in agreement.

"I'm wondering," Onyx continued, "how Lord Ariel can spare the manpower to monitor other regions while dealing with Lord Gareth. What does that tell us?"

This question immediately put everyone on edge.

It didn't take a genius to realize that something was wrong.

The most likely explanation was that Lord Gareth was either at a disadvantage or had already been defeated in her confrontation with Lord Ariel.

Orion personally leaned toward the former—that Lord Gareth was at a disadvantage but not yet defeated.

Prophet Onyx's speculation left the group of elders in a heavy silence.

Sensing the tension, Orion spoke up to ease their concerns.

"It's just a guess. There's no need to worry."

"Even if Lord Gareth has been defeated, Lord Ariel won't have come out unscathed."

Orion was confident in this.

From what he knew of Gareth, a powerhouse of that level wouldn't go down without a fight. Unless the opponent had an overwhelming advantage, such battles usually ended in mutual destruction.

"So, it's highly unlikely we'll encounter Lord Ariel."

"And besides, the harpy that came to scout us just now is already dead, isn't it?"

"At least for now, we're safe."

Orion's final words allowed the three elders to relax slightly.

Looking up at the sky, Orion couldn't help but wish he had already formed a contract with the Alpha-level Thunderhawk.

If the Thunderhawk were on his side, it could not only scout the surrounding area for enemies but also eliminate any harpies that dared to approach.

As Orion was lost in thought, a commotion erupted from the forest ahead.

"Chieftain, Dirtclaw has captured a lizardman!"

"Bring him here. Don't kill him," Orion ordered, snapping out of his reverie.

Moments later, a lizardman was dragged before Orion.

The fact that Slagor had sent another messenger so quickly confirmed Orion's suspicions: Slagor's situation was dire.

It was clear that Slagor had agreed to Orion's terms and was now urging him to reach Half-Moon Lake as soon as possible.

"Honorable Chieftain, my chieftain has accepted your terms!" the lizardman messenger said respectfully.

"My chieftain promises that you will receive 80% of the spoils from the Geckos Tribe, with 10% of that as an additional apology."

As expected, Orion's guess was correct.

He waved a hand, signaling for Dirtclaw to take the lizardman away.

Once the messenger was gone, Orion turned to the elders.

"What do you think?" he asked.

"That Slagor is clever," Delilah said, her voice laced with amusement. "He knows how to sweeten the deal."

"Chieftain, there's not much difference between 70% and 80% of the spoils," she continued, twirling the crescent-shaped dagger Orion had gifted her two days ago.

"By offering more, Slagor not only ensures he completes Lord Gareth's mission but also smooths over his relationship with you."

"Still, when dealing with lizardmen, it's best to stay cautious. Slagor is a sly one."

Delilah's seductive demeanor, combined with her sharp insights, made her all the more captivating. Her every movement exuded an irresistible allure.

"Slagor is indeed a cunning fellow," Orion agreed, before turning his attention to Prophet Onyx.

"Chieftain, I believe Slagor is desperate. That's why he's so eager to secure your help," Onyx said.

"If we want to leverage Slagor's forces for our own purposes, we need to move quickly."

"We can't let his troops suffer heavy losses. Otherwise, helping him will be pointless."

Onyx's point was valid. Preserving Slagor's forces was crucial. Only with his army intact could they use him to tackle their next major target: Stormrage City.

This would allow Orion to continue his southern campaign, seizing even more resources.

"Rendall, what about you?" Orion asked, turning to the giant elder.

Rendall scratched his chin, his fingers brushing over his bristly beard.

To be honest, Rendall often felt out of his depth during these discussions. Whenever Prophet Onyx or Delilah shared their insights, he couldn't help but feel a bit foolish.

"You've already covered the important points. I've got nothing to add," Rendall admitted with a shrug.

His blunt honesty made the corners of Orion, Onyx, and Delilah's mouths twitch.

Still, none of them dared laugh outright, not wanting to embarrass him.

"But there's one thing I don't understand," Rendall added after a moment.

"Slagor claims to be a dragon, but he's really just a lizardman—a swamp lizard, right?"

"The Geckos and lizardmen share some blood ties. They're practically cousins. So why can't Slagor handle the Geckos Tribe at Half-Moon Lake?"

Orion frowned. That was a question he hadn't considered.

Chapter 144 Strange noises

Black Forest, Moonshadow Valley

While Orion was leading his forces on a rapid march, Lilith had climbed to the eastern ridge of Moonshadow Valley.

"Thundar, what's the situation?"

Lilith stood atop the stone wall, her expression heavy as she looked down the slope at her tribesmen gathered near the edge of the underground fissure.

"Chieftainess, none of the horde members who went down to investigate the fissure have returned!"

Hearing this grim news, Lilith's delicate brows furrowed slightly for the first time.

"And the strange noises? Have they stopped over the past few days?"

Elder of Combat Thundar shook his head, his face equally grim. The ones sent down were his most trusted warriors.

Now, with no one returning to deliver news, there was only one possibility—they had all perished below.

Lilith stared at the underground fissure for a long time. Before Orion had left, he had specifically instructed her to keep a close watch on it.

A few days ago, strange noises had been echoing from the depths of the fissure. To uncover what was happening below, Thundar had already sent two groups of warriors to investigate.

Unfortunately, none had returned.

"Recall all hordesmen except those monitoring the fissure. I'll think of a solution," Lilith said, turning to leave the ridge.

Thundar nodded and immediately carried out her orders.

Moonshadow Valley, Chieftain's Tent

When Lilith entered the tent, Lysinthia was feeding the Spider Queen Lorelia—a name Lysinthia had given the creature.

Lilith approached and pulled out a pouch of dark source crystals from her robes, holding it out to the recently evolved Spider Queen.

"Little Lorelia, it's time for you to get to work!"

Lilith's plan was simple. She would use the dark source crystals not only to help the Spider Queen continue growing but also to encourage it to lay eggs and hatch a brood of small spiders.

At this stage, the Spider Queen was only at the elite level, and the spiders it hatched would be weak and incapable of combat.

But that didn't matter.

Lilith only needed the spiders to explore the underground fissure and gather information. They didn't need to fight.

"Thank you, Mistress!"

The Spider Queen, now resembling a small girl in her upper body, could speak fluently.

This meant that communication was no longer an issue.

The Spider Queen happily agreed to Lilith's request. After all, laying eggs was a trivial matter for it.

And with a pouch of dark source crystals as a reward, the Spider Queen was more than willing.

Thunderwood Forest, Seven Days Later

Orion and his cannon fodder troops finally arrived in the Half-Moon Lake region.

"Honorable Chieftain Orion, thank you for coming!"

Chieftain Slagor greeted Orion like an old friend, personally leading his subordinates to welcome him.

"You're being awfully enthusiastic. I'm guessing the Geckos at Half-Moon Lake aren't easy to deal with," Orion said, his expression amused as he teased Slagor.

"Uh... hahaha, you guessed right!"

Slagor froze for a moment before laughing awkwardly, showing no sign of embarrassment.

"That damned gecko has a high bloodline. He's not a demi-human—he's a pure gecko!"

"He's a beast, and he's attuned to both water and fire elements, which completely counter me!"

Orion's eyes lit up. Rendall's earlier question had finally been answered.

Of course, they had already suspected that Slagor was being countered by elemental attributes.

But the revelation that the Geckos' Alpha-level leader was a beast rather than a demi-human was unexpected.

"I want 80% of the spoils. Is that a problem?"

When it came to matters of profit, Orion was always serious.

"No problem. Consider it a gesture of goodwill," Slagor said, though the twitch in his lips betrayed his reluctance.

Orion laughed heartily, patting Slagor on the shoulder as he planted the seed for his next plan.

"If this collaboration goes well and we reap great rewards, I wouldn't mind a 60-40 split in future Myriad Races Invasions."

Slagor's eyes narrowed instantly.

"Orion, are you serious?"

Orion nodded, then hesitated, feigning uncertainty.

In truth, Slagor was even more cunning than Orion had anticipated.

He had already guessed most of Orion's intentions.

Even so, Slagor was eager to cooperate with Orion to face the enemies to the south.

The reason was simple: smart people fear death, and Slagor feared it more than most.

Compared to the potential profits, Slagor valued his life far more.

After learning that Orion had killed Reynard, Slagor had developed a deep respect for Orion's strength.

Moreover, Orion had two Alpha-level powerhouses by his side, which further solidified Slagor's decision.

Slagor knew that as long as he allied with Orion, their combined strength and troop numbers would allow them to thrive—so long as they didn't encounter a Legendary-level opponent.

And that was exactly what Slagor wanted.

Once his survival was assured, he could focus on gaining resources.

"I'll make this clear: I want all the crystal cores and magical plants from the spoils. Your 20% can come from the other materials."

Slagor nodded, having expected this.

"No problem!"

With the distribution of spoils settled, the rest was easy to discuss.

"Now, Slagor, you should sit down and tell us everything about the Geckos Tribe at Half-Moon Lake."

Slagor nodded again and led Orion and his group to a wooden hut he had prepared in advance.

Inside the hut was a simple wooden table, upon which lay a beast-hide map.

Seeing the map, Orion didn't hesitate to make another demand.

"Slagor, I have one more condition: I need a copy of this map."

Orion's tone left no room for negotiation.

Slagor shrugged and agreed.

For Slagor, copying the map was no big deal.

But for Orion and the Stoneheart Horde, it was of immense importance.

With Slagor's agreement, Orion, Prophet Onyx, and Rendall exchanged pleased glances before taking their seats, ready to listen to Slagor's briefing.

As for Delilah, she had not yet reached the Alpha level and thus wasn't qualified to sit at the table. She stood behind Orion, silently listening.

"Honorable Orion, the Geckos' settlement is located on Half-Moon Island," Slagor began.

"To reach the island, we'll need to cross Half-Moon Lake."

"Fortunately, Half-Moon Lake is a shallow lake, with its deepest point only about 7 feet."

"In such an environment, it's practically home turf for us poison dragons (lizardmen). My troops can take the lead and spearhead the assault."

Chapter 145 Isn't it exquisite?

Slagor was indeed full of sincerity. He began by detailing the terrain of Half-Moon Lake and then volunteered to take on the dangerous task of leading the charge.

Orion nodded silently, gesturing for Slagor to continue.

"The Geckos Tribe has a total population of around seventy to eighty thousand!"

The sheer number made Orion, Rendall, and Prophet Onyx's brows twitch uncontrollably.

Seeing their reaction, Slagor quickly added, fearing they might lose their resolve.

"Seventy to eighty thousand is their total population, but half of them are old, weak, or sick!"

"The actual bloodline warriors number less than fifty thousand!"

Hearing this, Orion's racing heart began to calm.

Slagor paused for a moment, licking his lips before voicing his own request.

"Chieftain Orion, after we break the Geckos Tribe, I don't want any of the spoils. But I do want all the women and children of the Geckos Tribe!"

Slagor's tone was serious, and he locked eyes with Orion as he spoke.

Slagor was a clever one.

He understood that in the long run, the most valuable resource wasn't magical plants or crystal cores—it was population.

Orion stared deeply at Slagor, recognizing the lizardman's far-sightedness and intelligence.

"As you wish," Orion said after a moment of thought, agreeing to Slagor's request.

However, Orion's tone shifted sharply, his words leaving no room for negotiation.

"But all the geckos who surrender must be integrated into my army. I need them to fight for me!"

"You don't need me to explain why. You know as well as I do that having prisoners reduces our own casualties."

Slagor nodded without hesitation. He had no objections to this.

As a chieftain, no one wanted their own people to be the ones sent to die as cannon fodder.

Seeing that Orion had no further objections, Slagor continued.

"When we engage, we'll need to face the enemy together."

Orion didn't argue. Slagor's suggestion was simply a way to ensure Orion's forces would also bear some of the burden, reducing Slagor's own losses.

This aligned perfectly with Orion's plans, so he had no reason to object.

"As for Raxt (the Geckos chieftain and Alpha-level beast)..."

Slagor hesitated, unsure how to divide the responsibility. After all, neither Orion, Prophet Onyx, nor Rendall were under his command.

"Raxt will be handled by me and Prophet Onyx," Orion said decisively.

"You and Rendall will assist our bloodline warriors in taking down the Geckos Tribe as quickly as possible."

"This way, we can minimize losses on both sides."

Slagor readily agreed to this arrangement.

The group then discussed the finer details of the attack plan.

Before long, everything was settled.

Orion raised his goblet, a pleased smile on his face.

"Slagor, let's drink to our upcoming victory!"

Slagor nodded, lifting his own goblet to toast with Orion.

It was only then that Slagor noticed the peculiar and unique design of Orion's goblet.

"This aura... could it be..."

Orion chuckled, raising the goblet higher and moving it closer to Slagor.

"This goblet was crafted from Reynard's skull. It's the work of the master artisan, Prophet Onyx."

"What do you think? Isn't it exquisite?"

Orion's tone was cheerful, even proud.

But to Slagor, those words were utterly chilling.

Slagor hadn't expected that not only had Orion killed Reynard, but he had also turned Reynard's skull into a goblet.

At that moment, Slagor felt a cold shiver run down his spine, as if the skull goblet in Orion's hand might one day be made from his own head.

Orion's laughter faded, and he fixed Slagor with a faint, knowing smile.

The purpose of the skull goblet was clear—it was a warning.

Orion wanted to remind Slagor not to play any tricks during their cooperation. Otherwise, Orion wouldn't hesitate to add another skull goblet to his collection.

"Ahem... it's indeed exquisite. Onyx's craftsmanship is truly remarkable!" Slagor forced a smile, suppressing the urge to flee as he awkwardly praised the goblet.

Inwardly, Slagor warned himself to tread carefully and never cross Orion.

After a night of rest, the invasion began at dawn.

The Geckos were a nocturnal species, most active at night and less alert during the day. Their combat effectiveness would also be slightly reduced during daylight hours.

Launching the attack at dawn was a decision made after careful deliberation.

It was a spectacular sight.

Countless swamp crocodiles, lizardmen, and swamp rats charged across the shallow waters of Half-Moon Lake, advancing toward Half-Moon Island from all directions.

This was Slagor's army, initiating the full-scale assault.

Orion raised his right hand and then brought it down.

The war horns of the Stoneheart Horde blared, their deep, resonant tones echoing across Half-Moon Lake.

Nearly fifty thousand cannon fodder troops followed closely behind the lizardmen, surging toward Half-Moon Island.

Orion activated his Berserk Aura, sending many of the cannon fodder troops into a frenzied state.

"Stay close to Rendall and be careful," Orion said, turning to Delilah.

Orion didn't want his seductive and skilled lover, who knew exactly how to please him, to die needlessly on the battlefield.

"I will, my dear Orion," Delilah replied, her voice filled with both joy and surprise at Orion's concern.

Normally, she addressed him as "chieftain" or "my dear chieftain."

But in this moment, she called him by his name—a subtle but meaningful shift that spoke volumes about their relationship.

Orion didn't linger on Delilah. Instead, he turned to Prophet Onyx.

"Prophet, it's time for us to make our move."

Prophet Onyx gripped his stone axe tightly and stepped forward, his voice steady.

"Chieftain, I'll clear the way!"

"Good!"

Orion didn't argue, retrieving his trident and following Prophet Onyx at a leisurely pace.

The Geckos on Half-Moon Island quickly reacted, launching a counterattack.

But wherever Prophet Onyx passed, the Geckos were smashed to death by his stone axe.

"The beast is in the center of the island, slightly to the east," Orion said, sensing the Alpha-level beast's aura.

"Understood!"

Prophet Onyx adjusted his path, heading straight for the Alpha-level beast.

Roar!

A deafening roar echoed across Half-Moon Island as the Alpha-level beast, Raxt, unleashed its presence.

The oppressive aura of an Alpha-level being swept across the battlefield, signaling the arrival of the Geckos Tribe chieftain.

"Gnolls, move! The war has begun!"

"Charge! Charge! Keep charging!"

"Kill the enemy, take their women, seize their supplies, and cut off their heads!"

"For the horde, for glory, for honor!"

Orion followed calmly behind Prophet Onyx, observing the battlefield with a composed demeanor.

The sounds that reached Orion's ears weren't just the clash of weapons or the cries of the dying. The loudest voice belonged to Dirtclaw, whose battle cries and motivational shouts echoed across the battlefield.

Being on such a massive battlefield, it was nearly impossible to remain detached.

The blood, the chaos, and the carnage had a way of stirring something primal in everyone, pushing them into a frenzy.

The battlefield was like a spell, awakening the innate bloodlust of all living beings.

Orion's gaze swept across the chaos, taking in every detail, every moment.

He saw the gnolls wielding war hammers and javelins, their fear evident, yet they fought through it, launching desperate counterattacks.

He saw the giant warriors, their immense strength leaving trails of severed limbs and rivers of blood wherever they went.

The Obsidian Golems fought with brute force, like unstoppable bulldozers, sending Geckos flying with every swing.

In the air, arrows zipped by, and faint chants could be heard—the succubi were launching their magical assaults.

The Buffalofolk, as always, were the odd ones out. A few of them, in a berserk state, had charged ahead of the cannon fodder troops, treating themselves as expendable pawns.

Orion found himself in a strange state of mind.

He felt as though he was both a part of the battlefield and yet removed from it, observing it from a higher perspective.

He saw many of the cannon fodder troops trampled to death, saw Rendall and Slagor wreaking havoc on the battlefield, and even caught glimpses of Delilah, moving like a ghost through the chaos, her dagger flashing as she struck down enemies.

Boom!

A deafening explosion snapped Orion out of his trance.

Prophet Onyx had clashed head-on with Raxt, the Alpha-level beast, and the two were evenly matched.

Raxt's body was now encased in a layer of ice armor, its defense incredibly high. Prophet Onyx's powerful strike had failed to break through.

Meanwhile, Raxt's razor-sharp claws, wreathed in flames, slashed through the air, leaving trails of sparks and embers.

Slagor hadn't been exaggerating—Raxt's dual affinity for water and fire made it a formidable opponent.

Orion decided it was time to join the fight.

Gripping his trident, he began his charge.

At the same time, he activated Titan's Rage and Shadowstep, his body swelling with power as his Titan bloodline surged to life. His form grew larger, his muscles bulging, and his presence became overwhelming, like a god of war descending onto the battlefield.

With a mighty leap, Orion soared into the air, both hands gripping the trident as he channeled his energy. He descended like a meteor, aiming straight for Raxt.

Prophet Onyx seized the opportunity, swinging his stone axe in a horizontal slash.

The battlefield was filled with killing intent.

"Damn you, Slagor!"

"You cowardly half-breed, calling outsiders to fight your battles!"

"Flames and frost, I'll take you all down with me!"

The pace of the battle between Alpha-level beings was blisteringly fast. Raxt had no time to dodge and was forced to meet the attacks head-on.

Raxt's ice armor began to crack, and within the fractures, fiery light flickered.

The next moment, the ice armor shattered into countless razor-sharp shards, flying outward in all directions.

Boom!

Within a hundred-meter radius, friend and foe alike were struck down by the deadly shards.

Orion's trident pierced deep into Raxt's back, but he himself emerged relatively unscathed.

However, the Ghostbone Armor on his arms had been severely damaged, with large chunks of it shaved away by the ice shards.

Prophet Onyx, on the other hand, was covered in shallow wounds.

Taking advantage of the moment when Raxt's ice armor shattered, Prophet Onyx's stone axe cleaved into Raxt's arm, severing one of its claws at the base.

Roar!

Despite its injuries, Raxt refused to die.

Its vitality was astonishing. For creatures like Raxt, regrowing severed limbs or tails was a basic survival skill.

With its remaining claw, Raxt launched a counterattack.

Bang!

Prophet Onyx was struck, forced to retreat several steps.

Only Orion remained on Raxt's back, twisting the trident deeper into its spine, causing the beast immense pain.

Raxt, now supporting itself on its front claws, swung its massive tail like a whip toward Orion.

The terrifying sound of the tail cutting through the air sent a chill down Orion's spine. Sensing the danger, he released the trident and leapt off Raxt's back, narrowly avoiding the attack.

Landing on the ground, Orion's eyes immediately locked onto the stone axe embedded in Raxt's right arm.

His eyes lit up, and he sprinted toward the weapon.

Raxt, realizing Orion's intent, swung its claw to intercept him.

Orion twisted his body, using Shadowstep to evade the attack, and reached the stone axe.

In Orion's hands, the massive stone axe felt as light as a feather.

With the weapon in hand, Orion's gaze turned razor-sharp.

"Die!"

Charging forward, Orion executed a sliding slash, the massive stone axe carving a devastating path.

From Raxt's neck to its tail, a deep, horrifying gash split its body open.

Blood and entrails spilled onto the ground as Raxt let out a final, defiant roar before collapsing.

Orion exhaled deeply. With Raxt dead, the battle was as good as won.

But just as that thought crossed his mind, a sense of danger gripped him.

Trusting his instincts, Orion swung the stone axe behind him.

Boom!

Orion stood his ground, but Raxt's lifeless body was sent flying backward.

"What terrifying strength. No wonder you were able to kill my pet, Raxt."

A deep, commanding voice filled with oppressive power echoed in Orion's ears, making his hair stand on end.

Around him, the warriors of all factions had fallen to their knees, trembling in fear, unable to move.

The only ones still standing were Orion and Prophet Onyx.

Orion turned his gaze toward Raxt's corpse, which now stood upright in a combat stance, its lifeless body moving unnaturally.

"No wonder Lord Gareth rushed to Thunderpeak Mountain to keep me occupied. I see now that among the invaders, there's someone as exceptional as you."

"Kneel and swear loyalty to me, and I'll spare your life."

"Refuse, and when I catch you, you'll die without a grave to call your own!"

Chapter 146 His bloodline is unique

"Lord Ariel!"

The exclamation didn't come from Orion, but from Prophet Onyx, his voice filled with shock.

Orion remained silent, his mind swirling with questions. He didn't immediately respond or make a choice.

Prophet Onyx, however, quickly followed up his outburst with a warning.

"Chieftain, that's not Lord Ariel himself—it's just a fragment of his will, a projection!"

Hearing this, Orion's eyes narrowed, his confusion deepening.

Meanwhile, the Beast Raxt, now driven by Lord Ariel's will, turned its lifeless body toward Prophet Onyx.

Though Raxt's body was devoid of life and its eyes remained closed, Prophet Onyx could feel an invisible, piercing gaze scrutinizing him.

"An Alpha-level Obsidian Golem," the voice of Lord Ariel's will mused, "you remind me of one I killed centuries ago."

"You know about will projections? Impressive. You must be well-informed."

Prophet Onyx didn't respond, his focus locked on Raxt's reanimated body, ready to fight with everything he had.

But then, Raxt turned away, ignoring Prophet Onyx entirely.

"Giant, kneel before me!"

"Whatever Lord Gareth has promised you, I'll double it!"

"You must understand—my domain lies further south, where there are more beasts, more magical plants, more races, and more resources."

"When I regain my full strength, I'll lead you on a campaign even deeper into the south!"

Whether it was genuine admiration or simply a desire to recruit a rare talent, Lord Ariel's will projection began to openly solicit Orion's allegiance.

Hearing this, Orion's heart unexpectedly settled.

The fact that Lord Ariel was trying to recruit him meant that, for now, he and his forces were safe.

Lord Ariel's will, however, noticed the faint smile on Orion's face, and its tone grew colder and more commanding.

"You're a clever giant. My offer is sincere."

Orion nodded, his voice loud and cheerful.

"It's a very generous offer, and I must admit, I'm tempted!"

Lord Ariel's will grew agitated at Orion's response but pressed further.

"So, you agree to submit to me?"

Orion shook his head, his tone calm but resolute.

"Sorry."

Since the appearance of Lord Ariel's will projection, the chaotic battle on Half-Moon Island had come to a halt.

All the bloodline warriors on both sides were now watching the exchange between Orion and Lord Ariel.

For Orion, submission was never an option. To kneel would mean the collapse of the authority and respect he had painstakingly built as a chieftain.

A submissive chieftain would not inspire awe but contempt among his subordinates.

Thus, not only could Orion not submit, but he also had to confront Lord Ariel's will head-on, just as he had done with Lord Gareth.

Orion raised his trident, pointing it directly at Lord Ariel's projection. His voice was bold and unyielding.

"This is my second time facing a Legendary-level being. Ariel, I humbly request your guidance!"

By addressing Ariel directly by name, rather than with the title "Lord," Orion made his ambitions and defiance clear.

"Giant, you'll regret this!"

Orion didn't respond. Instead, he activated Swift Charge, his body surging forward with unstoppable momentum.

Screech!

But to everyone's surprise, Orion wasn't truly charging.

Midway through his advance, he hurled his trident with all his might, then abruptly stopped in his tracks.

Roar!

At the same time, the Abyssal Dragon appeared, its massive form materializing behind Orion.

An Abyssal Flame Bomb began to coalesce in the dragon's maw, and in the blink of an eye, it was launched directly at Lord Ariel's will projection.

Boom!

The attack was completely unexpected. Even Lord Ariel's will projection failed to react in time.

While the trident was intercepted, the Abyssal Flame Bomb was not. The devastating blast struck Raxt's reanimated body and engulfed the will projection in its fiery explosion.

Without a physical body to anchor it, the will projection dissolved like a fleeting dream, vanishing into nothingness.

"Giant, I will personally see to your death!"

These were the final, defiant words of Lord Ariel's will projection, a bitter acknowledgment of its humiliation.

Orion stepped out from behind the Abyssal Dragon, his expression cold and unyielding.

He approached the broken, lifeless body of Beast Raxt, pulling out his Bloodthirsty Trident and severing Raxt's barely intact head.

Raising the severed head high, Orion's voice rang out across the battlefield.

"Lay down your weapons and surrender, and you will live!"

"Resist, and your entire race will be exterminated!"

Orion's tone was calm, but it carried a chilling indifference that struck fear into the hearts of all who heard it.

This giant chieftain had dared to challenge Lord Ariel's will projection—and had destroyed it.

Gradually, the geckos on Half-Moon Island began to lower their weapons.

The defeat of Lord Ariel's will projection had completely shattered their will to fight.

"King of Giants!"

Somewhere in the crowd, an unknown voice shouted the title.

Moments later, the chant spread like wildfire among the bloodline warriors.

"King of Giants!"

"King of Giants!"

"King of Giants!"

Orion smiled, his expression one of genuine satisfaction.

It wasn't the title of "King of Giants" that pleased him, but the sight of a golden light merging into the survivor's chest dropped by Beast Raxt.

Though Lord Ariel's will projection hadn't left behind its own chest, it had transformed into a golden light that fused with Raxt's chest.

This was a new discovery for Orion, one that filled him with anticipation.

He was eager to see what treasures the survivor's chest would yield.

The surprises didn't end there.

When Orion cracked open Raxt's skull, he found an S-rank crystal core nestled within.

With the battle over, Orion entered the central wooden hut on Half-Moon Island, his every move watched with reverence by Slagor, Prophet Onyx, and the others.

The task of tallying the casualties and dividing the spoils was left to his subordinates.

Thunderwood Forest, Thunderpeak Mountain

This was the homeland of the harpies and the heart of Lord Ariel's domain.

In a grand palace atop the mountain, Lord Ariel sat on his throne, gazing northeast.

"An Alpha-level giant... his strength is truly remarkable."

"I can sense it—his bloodline is unique. Could it be that he has awakened some ancient, high-tier lineage?"

"Without using my transcendent power or domain will, dealing with him would indeed be troublesome."

Lord Ariel was genuinely surprised by Orion's strength.

But that surprise didn't translate into fear.

To Lord Ariel, Orion was merely a particularly exceptional Alpha-level being.

After all, once one ascended to the Legendary level, they gained access to transcendent power and awakened their personal will of dominion.

Against such power, even the strongest Alpha-level bloodlines were insignificant.

In truth, the clash between Orion and Lord Gareth had been nothing more than a test.

Lord Gareth hadn't even used her transcendent power or dominion will during their encounter.

Chapter 147 A profound and wise idea

Half-Moon Lake, Central Wooden Hut

Orion sat at the head of the table, with Delilah standing gracefully behind him.

To his left and right sat Prophet Onyx, Rendall, and Slagor, all of whom still looked at Orion with a mixture of awe and respect.

Even though it had only been a fragment of Lord Ariel's will, the courage to challenge a Legendary-level being was not something just anyone could muster.

Orion glanced at the group, his demeanor calm and unpretentious.

"Prophet, tell us more about these will projections."

Prophet Onyx hesitated, his gaze shifting toward Slagor.

Orion noticed and smiled faintly, his tone relaxed.

"It's fine. Slagor has proven himself a reliable partner in this battle."

Prophet Onyx nodded, organizing his thoughts before speaking.

"Chieftain, this story begins in my grandfather's time."

"My grandfather was the previous Alpha of the Black Forest."

Orion nodded. He had already discussed this with Prophet Onyx before and knew that the previous Alpha of the Black Forest had come from the Obsidian Golem tribe.

"My grandfather was killed during a Myriad Races Invasion by a fragment of Lord Ariel's will."

"Before he died, he used a secret technique to record the events of that battle. That's how I was able to recognize Lord Ariel's will projection."

"Chieftain, that's all I know about will projections."

Prophet Onyx fell silent, his expression heavy. Whether it was grief or something else, he chose not to elaborate further.

Orion studied Prophet Onyx for a moment but didn't press him. Instead, he turned to Slagor.

"Slagor, we've won this invasion. It's been a pleasure working with you."

Orion raised his goblet, clinking it with Slagor's from across the table.

The fiery beast-blood wine burned its way down Orion's throat, spreading a volcanic heat through his chest. He felt invigorated.

"As per our agreement, the women and children of the Geckos Tribe are yours. The rest will be integrated into the cannon fodder troops."

To be honest, the cannon fodder troops, composed of gnolls and satyrs, had suffered significant losses during the assault.

The primary reason for this was their lack of combat strength.

The Geckos, fighting on their home turf, had easily overpowered the weaker gnolls and satyrs in one-on-one combat.

Fortunately, the invasion had been supported by Alpha-level powerhouses, and the combined forces of Orion and Slagor had been substantial.

Otherwise, the losses among the cannon fodder troops would have been catastrophic.

"Orion, I have no objections. I'm more than satisfied!"

Slagor's satisfaction was genuine. He could easily imagine how disastrous it would have been if he had attempted to take Half-Moon Island on his own.

He would have been utterly defeated.

Moreover, this invasion had even drawn in a fragment of Lord Ariel's will. Slagor was more than happy to let Orion take the brunt of the pressure.

Orion glanced at Slagor, easily guessing what was on his mind.

"Slagor, our next target is Stormrage City. We'll need you to guide us there."

Slagor froze for a moment. By this point in the invasion, he had already gained enough population resources to satisfy his needs.

He had been considering withdrawing, but now he found himself trapped.

Since joining forces with Orion, Slagor had lost any opportunity to leave.

If he tried to forcefully break away, he suspected he might be surrounded and killed by Orion, Prophet Onyx, and Rendall.

And then there was the Abyssal Dragon Orion had hidden away.

The thought of the Abyssal Dragon actually eased Slagor's concerns somewhat. Orion's side was simply too powerful.

"Chieftain Orion, I have no objections."

With Slagor's agreement secured, Orion turned to Delilah.

"You heard him. Slagor values population above all else. Make sure his share of the spoils is allocated accordingly."

Delilah smiled seductively, swaying her hips as she left the wooden hut to handle the distribution of the spoils.

Once Delilah was gone, Orion fell into deep thought.

The unique environment of Half-Moon Island made it a highly desirable location for Orion to claim.

Unfortunately, his horde lacked any water-adapted species, and the timing wasn't right to establish a permanent base here.

"Sigh..."

Orion's sigh caught Slagor's attention, who looked at him curiously.

"Honorable Chieftain Orion, why the sigh?"

Orion gazed out at the shallow waters of the lake, his tone calm.

"Slagor, you must know that Lord Gareth once promised me the right to claim a territory as my own."

"I'm wondering if I should claim this place."

Orion's words made Slagor visibly uncomfortable.

If Orion were to claim Half-Moon Lake as his territory, Slagor would have to pass through Orion's domain every time he wanted to invade further south.

The thought made Slagor feel as though he had swallowed a can of spoiled fish.

"Hahaha... just kidding. With Lord Ariel now watching me, I wouldn't dare claim this place as my territory!"

Hearing this, Slagor finally breathed a sigh of relief.

"This guy is just messing with me!" Slagor thought, realizing Orion had been teasing him.

"Orion, I'll go check on how many geckos are left."

Slagor stood and excused himself, leaving the wooden hut.

Orion nodded, making no move to stop him.

Slagor was an Alpha-level powerhouse, not one of Orion's subordinates. There was no reason to detain him.

In truth, Orion had been teasing Slagor to subtly encourage him to leave.

Slagor, having caught on to Orion's intentions, found an excuse to step out.

"Prophet, you can speak freely now."

Once Slagor was gone, Orion turned to Prophet Onyx.

"Chieftain, according to the information left by my grandfather, will projections are a unique ability of Legendary-level beings."

"It's a terrifying power born from their transcendent strength and their own mind."

"A single fragment of a Legendary-level being's will, if used properly, can hold off an ordinary Alpha-level powerhouse."

This revelation didn't seem to surprise Prophet Onyx or Rendall much.

But for Orion, it was like a beacon of light, illuminating the path to his own advancement.

Previously, Orion had learned that advancing to the Legendary level required a Lord's Stone and a territory.

Now, he had gained insight into the abilities of Legendary-level beings.

From this, Orion quickly deduced two key points:

1. The Lord's Stone wasn't just a requirement for advancing to the Legendary level—it likely held the secret to unlocking transcendent power.

2. Transcendent power was what allowed Legendary-level beings to manifest their will and manipulate extraordinary forces, such as mental energy or even faith.

Orion's mind raced with possibilities.

But for now, Legendary-level power remained an unattainable dream for Orion.

He glanced at the silent Prophet Onyx and Rendall, then reached into his pouch and pulled out the S-rank crystal core left behind by Beast Raxt.

"I want to give this crystal core to Delilah. I want her to try and see if she can advance to Alpha-level."

"While we're out here fighting, having one more Alpha-level powerhouse means greater safety for all of us."

Orion paused, ensuring he had their full attention before continuing.

"According to the rules I set before, this crystal core should go to Lilith."

"But this is a special situation, and special situations call for special measures."

"What do you think?"

Prophet Onyx and Rendall didn't respond immediately. Both closed their eyes, deep in thought.

After a long silence, Prophet Onyx finally spoke.

"Chieftain, your proposal is for the safety of the horde and the benefit of everyone. I support it."

"However, setting this precedent might lead to unnecessary disputes and conflicts within the horde in the future."

Orion nodded. Prophet Onyx's reminder was fair and insightful.

Distributing Alpha-level resources like this could indeed set a precedent for future cases.

This meant that the allocation of such resources needed to be justified, conditional, and carefully handled to set the right example.

Orion stroked his chin, momentarily unsure of how to proceed.

"Orion, I support your decision!" Rendall's voice broke the silence.

"The Stoneheart Horde must have rules, and we must follow them."

"But I also believe the horde needs someone who can break the rules when necessary."

"That someone is you, Orion."

Rendall's reasoning was simple: no matter what Orion decided, he would support it.

Yet, this simple thought sparked an epiphany for Orion.

The Stoneheart Horde needed order, but it also needed a supreme authority capable of creating and breaking that order when necessary.

It was a profound and wise idea.

Orion stared at Rendall, suddenly feeling that beneath his hulking, brutish exterior lay a surprising brilliance.

Even Prophet Onyx seemed taken aback by Rendall's suggestion.

"Alright, here's what we'll do," Orion said after a moment of thought.

"I'll publicly award the S-rank crystal core to Elder of Stewardship Delilah as a reward. The reason will be her contributions in recovering Clymene's head."

"Those who contribute will be rewarded."

"At the same time, I'll issue a special announcement to the entire horde: during wartime, any Alpha-level crystal cores obtained from kills will be made available to all elders, but they must be exchanged for merit points."

"This will also be an opportunity to establish a merit system for both the horde and the cannon fodder troops."

As Orion spoke, his excitement grew. What had initially seemed like a dilemma now felt like an opportunity to improve the Stoneheart Horde's internal structure.

Prophet Onyx and Rendall's eyes lit up.

To them, Orion was a natural leader, always able to make wise and timely decisions in critical moments.

"Dace, summon Delilah. Tell her it's an emergency council meeting."

The guard outside the hut responded promptly and ran off.

Moments later, Delilah entered the wooden hut. Seeing the serious expressions on Orion, Onyx, and Rendall's faces, she assumed something bad had happened.

"Chieftain, you called for me?"

Orion nodded, gesturing for her to take a seat.

Without wasting time, he retrieved a wooden box from his Bagbird Pouch and sent it floating into Delilah's hands.

"Inside is an S-rank crystal core, taken from Beast Raxt."

"You've made significant contributions by recovering Clymene's head."

"You also discovered the saintess of the Garland Tribe, which is another great achievement."

"After consulting with the elders, we've decided to award this crystal core to you. We hope it will help you advance your strength to the next level."

"Delilah, don't let us down."

The suddenness of it all left Delilah momentarily stunned.

She clutched the wooden box tightly, her beautiful eyes fixed on Orion.

Orion, feeling slightly uncomfortable under her intense gaze, rolled his eyes and spoke lazily.

"It's real."

"Special circumstances, special treatment."

"As the Stewardship Elder of the Stoneheart Horde, you're too weak."

Delilah blinked, then looked down at the box in her hands before raising her head to ask, "What about Lilith? If I'm not mistaken, this should have been her resource."

Delilah, despite her rivalry with Lilith, still cared about her twin sister when it came to important matters.

Hearing Lilith's name, Orion explained the merit system he had discussed with Rendall and Onyx.

"The merit system is still in its early stages and needs refinement. That's where you come in."

"When we return, all rewards will be distributed according to this system."

Delilah, understanding the reasoning behind the decision, sighed softly. "So that's how it is."

She was deeply moved.

"For the horde, I am willing—"

Delilah began to speak, but Orion cut her off.

"We know what you're going to say. But words mean nothing compared to action."

"Focus on refining the merit system. Gather experienced personnel and get it done quickly."

"We'll be resting on Half-Moon Island for half a month. Use this time to train and improve yourself."

"If you need additional resources, take them from the spoils and let me know."

Delilah nodded, her gratitude evident. Orion had not only entrusted her with an important task but also given her an opportunity to accumulate more merit.

The half-month rest period was clearly meant to give her time to grow stronger.

"It seems everything I've done for this man has been worth it. Giving my body to him was the perfect decision!"

The thought crossed Delilah's mind, and with it came a flood of lewd ideas.

"Next time, I'll take the initiative. I'll make sure Orion takes me from anus again!"

Thunderwood Forest, Stormrage City

Stormrage City was home to the Thunderstorm Bearmen, a large and powerful tribe.

With a population of over 100,000, all of whom were Thunderstorm Bearmen, it was a formidable force.

The tribe had produced three Alpha-level powerhouses: Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock, three brothers easily distinguished by the colors of their fur—green, black, and silver-gray, respectively.

At this moment, the three brothers were hosting a feast in their stone hall, entertaining an Alpha-level harpy named Thunderwing, who had been sent by Lord Ariel as reinforcements.

Chapter 148 If you join me, I can make you even stronger

"Our great Lord said that as long as we take down that Alpha-level giant this time, we'll be granted a piece of land when we invade the south next time!"

Thunderwing was lounging on the lap of a burly bear-man, his cock buried deep inside her, as she relayed Lord Ariel's orders while moaning with pleasure.

"Thunderwing, is this giant really that strong?"

"Even the three of us can't handle it?"

The one speaking was Greenstorm, his voice raspy and metallic, like a heavy metal vocalist.

"If our Lord is paying attention to them, you can bet that giant isn't weak!"

"And this time, the invasion force doesn't just include four Alpha-level powerhouses. There's also an Abyssal dragon!"

The mention of the dragon made Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock—the three bear-man brothers—gasp in shock.

"Thunderwing, the giant we're up against... it wouldn't happen to be Lord Gareth's lover, would it?"

Truthfully, Thunderwing had no idea. She didn't even know the name of the Alpha-level giant they were targeting.

"Who cares? As long as it's an Alpha-level giant, we kill them, drag their corpse back, and collect our reward from the Lord!"

Thunderwing glanced at the Thunderstorm Bearmen brothers, her hips grinding and twisting on the cock beneath her. She spoke in a teasing tone, her voice dripping with mockery.

"Lord Ariel sent me along to make sure you three don't get yourselves killed!"

"Greenstorm, Darkbolt, Silvershock—don't tell me you're scared?"

Silvershock, the youngest and most hot-headed of the three, couldn't stand being taunted.

"Scared? Unless Gareth herself shows up, we've never been afraid of anyone!"

Greenstorm and Darkbolt stayed silent, their brows furrowed in thought. The fact that Lord Ariel had sent an Alpha-level harpy to assist them meant their opponent was no joke.

"Relax. I'm not the only one coming. A whole squad of harpies is on their way and will arrive at Stormrage City soon."

Hearing this, Greenstorm and Darkbolt's eyes lit up. With the harpies' aerial support, Stormrage City would be nearly invincible.

On land, the three brothers were confident they could take on any creature from any race.

Thunderwood Forest, Half-moon Island

Three days had passed. Orion's proposed wartime reward system had taken shape under Delilah's tireless efforts. Delilah herself had entered a period of intense training.

Meanwhile, Orion and Slagor's forces were resting and integrating on Crescent Island, working to improve their coordination.

After sending Slagor away, Orion followed Elan up a small hill on the island. There, an Alpha-level flying beast descended from the sky.

Orion, wearing his usual faint smile, pulled out a bottle of Pet Pills and tossed it over.

"So, have you decided? Are you going to sign a contract with me?"

The thunderhawk didn't respond verbally. It swallowed the Pet Pills, its expression one of pure satisfaction.

"Don't worry about running out. I've got plenty more where that came from!"

"And who knows? You might even get to try something better than Pet Pills in the future!"

Orion's words caught the thunderhawk's attention.

"Better than Pet Pills? Are you serious?"

Orion smiled, his expression calm and confident. The thunderhawk hadn't outright rejected the idea of forming a contract, which meant it was already considering it. At this moment, the thunderhawk was like a potential employee negotiating their salary with a prospective boss.

"Let me put it this way: I've already raised a Twilight Viper from elite-level to hero-level. It's now guarding my territory."

"If you join me, I can make you even stronger!"

Orion's words might have sounded like empty promises, but he was genuinely laying out a vision for the future. If the thunderhawk joined his team, it would undoubtedly become one of his top priorities.

Seeing no immediate reaction from the thunderhawk, Orion stepped closer.

"Feel this."

He reached out and gently placed his hand on the thunderhawk's feathers.

In the next moment, bone-like armor began to form from Orion's hand, spreading across the thunderhawk's wings, talons, and head. This was the Ghostbone Armor.

"Do you feel it?"

"If you stick with me, this armor will cover your entire body. You'll be safer than ever!"

The thunderhawk tilted its head, spreading its wings as it examined the bone armor covering its vital areas. It didn't seem out of place at all.

"This feels... strange."

Orion said nothing, waiting patiently for the thunderhawk to get used to the Ghostbone Armor. Once it had its fill of curiosity, he retracted the armor.

"Do you have a name?" Orion asked, addressing the thunderhawk directly.

"Of course. I'm Rayden, the son of storms and lightning!"

Orion almost burst out laughing. He realized that Rayden was quite the flamboyant character.

"Alright then, Rayden. Let's form a contract!"

Orion's tone was serious. He couldn't afford to wait any longer. With Lord Ariel's forces preparing to invade again, he needed another trump card in his arsenal.

As he spoke, the bloodline power within Orion began to stir. A magical formation for a contract appeared in his hand.

This was a companion contract, a type of soul oath that established an equal partnership.

Rayden didn't resist or flee. He simply stared at Orion, his gaze steady.

Seeing this, Orion knew he was halfway there.

"In my name, Orion Stoneheart, I hereby form an equal contract with Rayden!"

The magical formation merged into Rayden's body. In the next moment, both Orion and Rayden could sense each other's presence on a deeper level.

"Rayden, take me for a flight. Let me see the world through your eyes!"

Rayden let out a sharp cry of approval and agreed without hesitation. But just as Orion climbed onto his back, ready to take off, Rayden turned his head and opened his beak, demanding more Pet Pills.

Orion didn't hesitate. He pulled out three bottles and handed them all over.

Satisfied, Rayden kicked off the ground, his powerful wings propelling them into the sky.

On the hill, Elan of the Skytalon Tribe had witnessed the entire process of Orion forming a contract with the thunderhawk.

"That's it? He just formed a contract like that?"

"They've only met three times!"

"If Reynard and Rowena see this, they're going to lose their minds."

"Those two begged and pleaded for a chance to contract with a thunderhawk, and they couldn't even get close!"

"Thunderhawks never let anyone near them!"

"This giant... he's just too... charismatic!"

Elan struggled to find the right word to describe Orion, eventually settling on one that still felt inadequate.

"Maybe I should get Lorne to hurry back from the Fireraven Tribe."

As she watched Orion and Rayden soar into the sky, new thoughts began to take shape in Elan's mind.

...

The thunderhawk was massive, and Orion sitting on its back didn't burden it in the slightest.

Flying high in the sky, Orion looked down at the scenery below—it was breathtaking!

Orion couldn't help but marvel at how beautiful this world was.

From above, Thunderwood Forest stretched endlessly to the horizon, a vast expanse of greenery that defied description. Rays of light poured down from the heavens, casting a golden veil over the towering trees and rolling hills. Hills, dense forests, shimmering lakes—it was a sight to behold.

A sharp cry pierced the air.

Chirp! Chirp!

The thunderhawk let out a high-pitched screech as it spiraled downward, drawing the attention of countless bloodline warriors below. Their shouts and cheers echoed through the forest.

"The Giant King!"

"It's the Giant King!"

Those with sharp eyes quickly recognized Orion and called out his name.

Prophet Onyx and Rendall stood together, their gazes fixed on Orion atop the thunderhawk. Both of their eyes gleamed with fervent admiration.

"Incredible!"

"Orion succeeded so easily!"

Prophet Onyx looked up at Orion, his face alight with excitement and reverence.

The thunderhawk's appearance had filled the Stoneheart Horde's greatest weakness.

Yes, the lack of a flying beast had always been a glaring vulnerability for the Stoneheart Horde. Whether it was facing beast hordes, dark beast tides, or invasions from the myriad races, the skies had always been their Achilles' heel.

And it wasn't just the Horde's weakness—it was Orion's as well.

But now, that weakness had quietly disappeared.

"I knew it. I knew Orion would pull it off!"

Rendall's face wasn't just filled with fervor—it also carried a sense of pride and relief.

However, just as everyone thought Orion would land and bask in the glory, the thunderhawk suddenly soared away from Crescent Island.

Prophet Onyx, Rendall, and Slagor hurried forward to question Orion.

"Orion, did you tame the thunderhawk?"

Slagor was the first to ask, his emotions a mix of nervousness, fear, and jealousy.

Orion shook his head and replied in a slightly regretful tone.

"Ah... no."

"I used several rare magical plants to strike a deal with the thunderhawk. It agreed to take me for a ride so I could see the size of Thunderwood Forest and get a glimpse of our world from above."

Slagor didn't care about the latter part of Orion's explanation.

The moment he heard that Orion hadn't tamed the thunderhawk, he let out a sigh of relief.

An Alpha-level thunderhawk was a prize even Legendary-level powerhouses would covet. For those without flying mounts or the ability to fly themselves, an Alpha-level thunderhawk was an invaluable asset.

That was the true value of a flying beast.

Orion shook his head, his mood seemingly dampened, and dismissed Slagor with a wave of his hand.

Back in the wooden hut, Prophet Onyx and Rendall couldn't hold back their curiosity.

"Chieftain..."

"Orion..."

Both spoke at the same time, eager to confirm whether Orion's earlier words were true.

Orion didn't say much. He simply nodded, a faint smile on his face, and said, "I sent the thunderhawk to scout the surrounding area."

"Prophet, make arrangements. When we return, select two tribesmen skilled in map-making. I'll need them."

Hearing this, Prophet Onyx and Rendall's eyes lit up with understanding.

Black Forest, Moonshadow Valley

While Orion was celebrating his success, Lilith was troubled, her face clouded with worry.

"Thundar, just in case, you and Earthshaker will take turns guarding this area from now on."

"Understood, Chieftainess!"

Lilith stood atop the stone wall of the eastern ridge, her gaze fixed on the underground fissure at the bottom of the canyon. Her brows were furrowed tightly.

"Little Lorelia, what's the situation down there?"

Spider Queen Lorelia's small face was scrunched up, her crimson eyes betraying a hint of fear.

"Mistress, the underground worms are multiplying rapidly!"

"Most of the offspring I've bred have been eaten by them!"

"Only a few managed to escape!"

Lilith's expression darkened at Lorelia's report.

For days now, sharp insect cries had been echoing from the underground fissure.

To investigate the situation, Lilith had ordered Spider Queen Lorelia to send her newly hatched spiders into the fissure.

The scouting missions had gone smoothly, minimizing the loss of their own people.

But the results of the investigation left Lilith, Lysinthia, Thundar, and Earthshaker deeply alarmed—even terrified.

Somehow, a nest of underground worms had appeared in the fissure.

At first, there were only a few. Then a dozen. Now, their numbers had swelled to over a hundred.

Although no Alpha-level worms—what Orion had described as the terrifying spiked worms—had been spotted yet, the sheer number of these creatures was cause for grave concern.

What would happen if the worms crawled out of the fissure and into the canyon?

The thought sent a shiver down Lilith's spine.

"Thundar, prepare for battle!"

"Deploy the Obsidian Golems and have them bring more boulders to build a defensive wall."

"If those worms start climbing out, we'll push the boulders down and crush them."

It wasn't a bad plan, all things considered.

Thundar nodded and accepted the task.

"Also, have Earthshaker's hunting team station guards along the Black Forest's borders."

"If there's any news from Orion, inform him of the situation immediately!"

Thundar's expression was equally grim. He was all too familiar with the fissure's dangers—he'd already lost several capable warriors there.

"Don't worry, Chieftainess. We've already placed scouts along the borders."

Hearing this, Lilith relaxed slightly.

After a long while, Lilith took Spider Queen Lorelia by the hand and descended from the eastern ridge.

"Little Lorelia, let's head back. I still have some dark source crystals left—I'll give them all to you."

"Wow... Mistress, really? I'm so close to advancing! You're the best!"

Spider Queen Lorelia's voice was childlike and brimming with excitement.

After consuming a large number of dark source crystals, she was finally on the verge of advancing to hero-level.

Over the past season, the Stoneheart Horde's stockpile of dark source crystals had been almost entirely depleted by her.

For most beasts or races, such a quantity would have been more than enough to achieve hero-level.

But Spider Queen Lorelia was unique. She'd been stuck at the elite level for ages, only recently showing signs of advancement.

"Don't get too excited. Once you advance, you'll need to hatch more spiders!"

"Mistress, that's no problem at all. For me, hatching spiders is as easy as sleeping!"

"Will they have combat abilities after you advance?"

"Uh... yes, but they'll need a lot of food!"

"As long as they can fight, food won't be an issue. I'll have the hunting team bring you plenty!"

Chapter 149 Flame of Will

Thunderwood Forest, Half-Moon Island

Seven days had passed in the blink of an eye.

Inside the wooden hut, Violet slid off Orion's cock, her thighs trembling and her body drenched in sweat. Her slick, wet folds dripped with thick semen, which trickled down her legs.

Exhausted from her climax, Violet collapsed onto the animal hide beneath her, too drained to even wipe herself clean, and quickly fell asleep.

Meanwhile, Orion turned his attention to the survivor's chest dropped by Beast Raxt. His eyes gleamed with anticipation as he opened it.

[Flame of Will]

- Type: Weapon (Trident)

- Quality: Legendary

- Attack: 588–1699

- Special Effect 1: Ignite – Enemies struck by this weapon have a 50% chance of being set ablaze.

- Special Effect 2: Shatter Ice – Grants the wielder an ice armor layer that can be shattered at will, unleashing an omnidirectional attack with the fragments.

- Weapon Description: A weapon ignited by sheer willpower. It is truly unique.

This was Orion's first time encountering a Legendary-level weapon. Even on the Survivor's Platform, such items were exceedingly rare. It was an incredible find.

"The enemies I face are getting stronger. It's time to upgrade my weapons. The Bloodthirsty Trident and Bone War Trident just can't keep up anymore."

Orion carefully stored the [Flame of Will], his mind deep in thought.

It was clear that Beast Raxt wouldn't have dropped a Legendary-level weapon on its own. The only explanation was that the golden light from the will projection had played a role.

The mystery of Legendary-level power filled Orion with longing once again.

"Legendary-level... I'll reach it one day!"

The next morning, Orion stepped out of the wooden hut and found Delilah waiting for him outside. She had been there for quite some time.

Delilah's aura had grown significantly stronger, comparable to Prophet Onyx before he advanced to Alpha-level.

In other words, Delilah had failed her advancement attempt.

Even so, the failed attempt had brought her some benefits. Her strength had risen to a unique level, though her face was marked with obvious disappointment, her mood heavy with dejection.

Orion walked over, scooped Delilah into his arms, and carried her back into the hut.

Usually, it was Delilah who seduced Orion. But this time, to comfort her, Orion took the initiative. He stripped off her panties and thrust his thick cock into her wet vagina without hesitation.

Three hours later, Orion held Delilah close and whispered, "Trust me. If it didn't work this time, there will be a next time."

For once, Delilah didn't try to seduce him. Instead, she buried her face in his chest and let out a soft, gentle hum of acknowledgment.

The failure to advance despite using precious Alpha-level resources had left her not just disappointed but questioning her own talent.

However, Orion's promise to provide her with more Alpha-level resources in the future gave her some comfort, easing her anxiety.

Beneath the animal hide, Garland Tribe's saintess Violet pretended to sleep, having witnessed the entire act between Orion and Delilah. Her heart ached.

"I knew it! They're definitely having an affair!"

"That bitch from the succubus tribe dared to seduce my man!"

Though Violet was technically a slave, she had already come to see Orion as her personal property.

Half a day later, everyone gathered in the temporary command center—a wooden hut.

"Slagor, I'm almost ready. I plan to head south tomorrow. Is everything on your end in order?"

Slagor nodded. His captured slaves had been dealt with days ago.

"Then it's settled."

"Alright. I'll issue the orders now. We march south tomorrow."

Moments later, the orders were passed down. Both Orion's and Slagor's forces began packing their belongings and preparing for the journey.

"Slagor, now's the time to tell us about Stormrage City," Rendall said eagerly. From the rumors he'd gathered, Stormrage City was a fortress of unparalleled strength.

Slagor fell silent for a moment before speaking slowly.

"In all the myriad races invasion battles I've experienced, Stormrage City is the most savage and powerful stronghold I've ever seen."

"The city is home to the Thunderstorm Bearmen tribe, with a population of at least 100,000."

Slagor's eyes grew distant, as if lost in memory.

"Stormrage City's strength comes from two key factors."

"First, every Thunderstorm Bearman, except for the children, is a bloodline warrior. When war breaks out, they all take up arms."

"Second, the tribe has produced three Alpha-level powerhouses: Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock."

"These three are triplet brothers. Their coordination is flawless, and they excel at group combat and ambush tactics."

As he spoke, a flicker of fear and unease crossed Slagor's face.

Orion, Onyx, and Rendall exchanged glances, each seeing the same doubt and apprehension in the others' eyes.

"I've seen Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock in battle. They're not just strong and durable—they're terrifyingly resilient."

"They... they can even transform into massive Thundering Violent Bears, wreaking havoc across the battlefield."

Slagor let out a long breath, as if recounting these details had drained him.

"Slagor, are you afraid?" Rendall asked, his tone sharp. "We have four Alpha-level powerhouses and an Abyssal dragon. With a lineup like that, what's there to fear?"

Rendall despised cowardice, and his disdain was evident.

Prophet Onyx remained silent. He had seen Thundering Violent Bears before—towering creatures standing 25 feet tall, brimming with raw power and violence.

Orion studied Slagor, surprised to see the usually cunning chieftain showing such fear.

"Stormrage City's Thundering Violent Bears, huh?" Orion said coldly. "Let's see just how violent they are."

"Are they more violent than us?"

His tone was icy, his gaze sharp, and his words carried a chilling edge.

Slagor glanced at Orion, then thought of the Abyssal dragon under his command. Slowly, the fear in his heart began to fade.

Feeling embarrassed, Slagor realized how shameful it was for a chieftain to show fear before a battle.

The next day, Orion and Slagor led their cannon fodder troops southward.

Thunderwood Forest, Thunderpeak Mountain

The plain stretched out beneath the mountain, empty of soldiers. Both armies were still far apart, separated by a vast distance.

Boom!

A terrifying shockwave rippled through the air, spreading far and wide.

Lord Gareth and Lord Ariel clashed in a single, devastating blow, neither gaining the upper hand.

"Gareth, turn back. I won't let you pass!"

Ariel hovered in midair, her wings slowly flapping as she stared at Gareth, who stood atop the Abyssal dragon's back. Her tone was firm, her intent clear—she wanted Gareth to retreat.

Lord Gareth, however, was determined to push southward to seize resources. The shortest route required passing through Ariel's territory.

But Ariel, as a fellow lord, had designated the southern part of her territory as her personal hunting grounds.

There was no way she would allow Gareth to encroach on it.

"Ariel, clear a path south, and we'll leave each other alone," Gareth said, her voice deep and commanding, almost masculine in tone.

"Gareth, give it up. That's never going to happen!"

Ariel chuckled softly, once again rejecting Gareth's demand.

Gareth raised her head, her gaze cold and indifferent as she stared at Ariel. Her voice was calm but carried a sharp edge.

"In that case, let's settle this with a fight."

In the next moment, Gareth's aura surged, her entire body enveloped in a shroud of black Abyssal energy. The same energy also engulfed the Abyssal dragon beneath her feet.

In the blink of an eye, the Abyssal energy dissipated, and the Abyssal dragon vanished. In its place, a pair of fleshy wings unfurled from Gareth's back.

"Did you really think I had no way to deal with you?"

With a powerful flap of her wings, Gareth took to the skies.

Ariel watched as Gareth approached, her brows furrowing slightly, as though deep in thought. Yet, her expression betrayed little concern.

Boom!

Ariel transformed into a streak of lightning, cutting across the sky as she charged toward Gareth with devastating force.

Meanwhile, Gareth's body radiated Abyssal energy, and behind her, the faint silhouette of a massive dragon loomed, blotting out the sun.

In an instant, the sky was filled with crackling thunder and oppressive Abyssal energy. The clouds roared with deafening booms, and faint runes flickered within the mist. A dragon's roar echoed amidst the lightning.

It was a prolonged battle, with no clear victor.

Three days later, the thunder dissipated, the Abyssal energy receded, and Thunderpeak Mountain remained unchanged.

Lord Gareth had retreated.

Once again, the Myriad Races Invasion ended with Lord Gareth's defeat.

Meanwhile, Orion and Slagor had driven their cannon fodder troops to completely surround Stormrage City.

"Thunderwing, did you withhold information about the enemy?"

Greenstorm, the chieftain of the Thunderstorm Bearmen, glared at the tens of thousands of bloodline warriors encircling Stormrage City. His expression was as dark as a storm cloud.

"This... this... Greenstorm, I didn't know they had so many bloodline warriors!"

Thunderwing's face was also grim, but as a harpy, she could fly. No matter how many ground troops there were, they couldn't touch her.

However, the way Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock—the three Thunderstorm Bearmen brothers—were looking at her made her feel deeply uncomfortable.

To be fair, Orion's decision to bring Slagor along to attack Stormrage City was a brilliant move.

Orion's cannon fodder troops had started with just over 10,000 gnolls. After conquering Thunderhawk City, their numbers swelled to 30,000, bolstered by satyrs and minotaurs from the city.

Later, after assisting Slagor in taking Half-Moon Island, nearly 40,000 geckos were added to the ranks.

In total, Orion's cannon fodder troops had grown to nearly 100,000. Combined with Slagor's forces, they now had close to 150,000 bloodline warriors surrounding Stormrage City.

This was one of the reasons for Greenstorm's foul mood.

Of course, Orion's cannon fodder troops weren't as terrifying as they seemed.

The army included the old, the weak, and the sick, as well as many poorly equipped bloodline warriors.

Such troops couldn't afford to lose morale or suffer a defeat—if they did, the entire army would collapse like a house of cards.

"They have four Alpha-level powerhouses!"

Standing before the battle lines, Orion gazed at Stormrage City, sensing the presence of four Alpha-level auras.

"One of them is a harpy, also an Alpha-level powerhouse!"

As Slagor, Prophet Onyx, Rendall, and the others exchanged confused looks, wondering where this additional Alpha-level fighter had come from, Orion explained.

"Don't look at me like that. This harpy's aura feels similar to Ariel's will projection."

Hearing this, the group finally understood.

"What do we do now?"

It was Slagor who asked, his tone betraying a hint of hesitation. He was clearly considering retreat.

The original plan had been to focus on Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock. But with the addition of a flying harpy, the situation had become far more complicated.

In this group, no one but Orion was willing to face the harpy.

Orion scanned the silent crowd, then spoke up, laying out a new plan.

"I'll handle the harpy. I'll keep her occupied."

"If she dares to join the battle, I'll kill her."

Orion's declaration visibly eased the tension in Slagor's posture.

Just moments ago, Slagor had been convinced that Orion would send him to face the harpy—a move that would have been a death sentence.

Slagor had thought Orion might be using him as a pawn, letting the harpy kill him while eliminating a potential rival.

But Orion's willingness to take on the harpy himself showed genuine trust and camaraderie.

"Slagor, this is a battlefield. We're allies," Orion said, his gaze cold and sharp.

"If I catch even a hint of cowardice from you, I'll abandon the harpy and kill you myself."

Slagor said nothing, nor did he argue.

Orion's decision not to use him as a sacrificial pawn was already a sign of goodwill.

"You three will face Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock. It won't be easy, so I'll send the Abyssal dragon to support you."

"Rendall, Slagor, your job is to hold off the other two Thunderstorm Bears."

"Hold them long enough for Prophet Onyx and the Abyssal dragon to take one of them down."

"If we can do that, we'll have won half the battle."

The group nodded, agreeing with Orion's plan.

With five Alpha-level powerhouses against four, they were confident in their chances.

"Then we attack at nightfall."

"When the time comes, the three of you will lead the charge, drawing Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock off the walls. That will give the cannon fodder troops a chance to storm the city."

Onyx, Rendall, and Slagor all nodded, accepting their roles.

Orion said nothing more, his gaze fixed on Stormrage City.

Once the others had left to prepare, Orion turned to Delilah.

"Stormrage City has produced three Alpha-level powerhouses. There must be something special about it."

"If we take the city, you know what to do, right?"

Delilah gave a seductive smile, her voice dripping with allure as she looked toward Stormrage City.

"Don't worry, my dear chieftain. I'll turn Stormrage City inside out and take every last valuable they have."

Orion nodded. With the battle looming, he wouldn't have the time or energy to search for special resources himself.

"Your strength has improved, but be cautious," he added, his tone softening as he reminded her to prioritize her safety.

Chapter 150 Attacking Stormrage City

Night had fallen, and the war horns blared!

Wooooooo...

The deep, primal sound of the horns echoed across the battlefield, carrying a savage energy that stirred the blood of all who heard it.

Onyx, Rendall, and Slagor led the charge, their forces surging forward. Stormrage City, illuminated by torches and enchanted artifacts, flickered like a trembling candle in the darkness.

Gnolls, satyrs, lizardmen, swamp rats, swamp crocodiles, geckos, buffalofolk, giants, succubi, obsidian golems—all roared as they charged forward, their battle cries shaking the night.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Orion summoned his Abyssal dragon, which unleashed three consecutive Abyssal Flame Bombs, blasting a gaping hole in the city's front wall.

The dragon's devastating attack sent the cannon fodder troops into a frenzy. Bloodline warriors surged toward the breach, their morale soaring.

At the forefront of the charge, Onyx, Rendall, and Slagor immediately drew the attention of Thunderwing, Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock.

"The enemy has three Alpha-level powerhouses leading the charge! We must stop them!"

"If we don't, Stormrage City will fall!"

Greenstorm, his scarred face twisted into a ferocious snarl, radiated a murderous aura.

"Thunderwing, the other Alpha-level giant hasn't shown up yet. He's yours to deal with. We'll handle the three leading the charge."

"Understood!"

Without hesitation, Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock leapt from the city walls, charging straight at Rendall.

In their eyes, Rendall was no match for them.

Onyx and Slagor quickly noticed the brothers' movements and adjusted their positions to support Rendall.

Standing atop the Abyssal dragon's back, Orion observed the battlefield with sharp focus.

"Go," he commanded the dragon, which immediately charged toward Onyx's position to provide support.

But just as the dragon moved, a shadow streaked through the sky, crackling with lightning, and dove toward Orion.

It was Thunderwing.

Orion pulled out a spear, a faint smirk of disdain crossing his face.

Zzzzzzz!

The spear tore through the air, forcing Thunderwing to veer off course in alarm. She quickly adjusted, pulling into a steep climb to gain altitude.

Orion locked his gaze on her retreating figure, his eyes cold and calculating.

He leapt off the Abyssal dragon, letting it continue toward the battle to assist Rendall and the others.

"If you dare fly low again, I'll kill you on the spot," Orion muttered, pulling out several more spears.

With precise throws, he struck down two harpies who had been hovering nearby, raining arrows and bolts down on his forces.

The remaining harpies, terrified by Orion's deadly accuracy, abandoned their attacks and climbed higher into the sky.

It was a blatant threat—a warning from Orion that he would not tolerate their interference.

"You must be the giant Lord Ariel put a bounty on," Thunderwing said, hovering in midair as she studied Orion's towering figure.

Orion didn't respond. Instead, he raised his spear and pointed it at her, making a provocative gesture.

Meanwhile, Onyx, Rendall, and Slagor had engaged Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock in fierce combat.

Onyx faced Greenstorm and held a slight advantage.

Rendall battled Darkbolt, their fight evenly matched.

Slagor clashed with Silvershock, neither able to gain the upper hand.

But the balance shifted the moment the Abyssal dragon joined the fray.

Roar!

Greenstorm, sensing the danger, broke away from Onyx and narrowly avoided the dragon's massive jaws.

Even so, the dragon's claws raked across his back, leaving a deep, bone-revealing wound.

"Big brother!"

"Big brother!"

Darkbolt and Silvershock, seeing their brother injured, abandoned their fights with Rendall and Slagor to rush to his aid.

But Rendall and Slagor's mission was to keep the brothers separated.

"Where do you think you're going?" Rendall roared, his body crackling with lightning. His eyes glowed with electric energy as he charged at Darkbolt, spiked club swinging.

Slagor wasn't far behind. Waves of water surged beneath his feet, and the mysterious runes on his body shimmered as he summoned a massive wall of water to block Silvershock's path.

Roar! Roar! Roar!

Faced with a life-or-death situation, the three brothers unleashed their full power, transforming into massive Thunderstorm Bears.

The three colossal bears, their bodies radiating raw power, shattered Onyx and Slagor's attempts to hold them back.

Reunited, the brothers stood back-to-back in a triangular formation, snarling and roaring at Onyx, Rendall, Slagor, and the Abyssal dragon.

The dragon responded with a deep, guttural roar that shook the battlefield, driving nearby bloodline warriors away from the area.

The battle reached a stalemate.

From a distance, Orion kept one eye on Thunderwing while using his peripheral vision to monitor the fight between Onyx's group and the Thunderstorm Bear brothers.

"Thunderwing, you cowardly bitch!" Greenstorm roared, his voice filled with fury. "Why won't you fight?"

"You're a harpy, just like Lord Ariel. But why are you so spineless? Are you too afraid to face the enemies on the ground?"

Greenstorm's anger was unfiltered, his words cutting deep.

His outburst was so reckless that it bordered on insulting Lord Ariel herself. If Ariel had been present, she might have killed Greenstorm on the spot.

In the sky, Thunderwing's face flushed with anger and embarrassment.

Orion's earlier spear throws had shaken her confidence, making her hesitant to dive down and attack.

"Damn giant. Stupid bear-man," Thunderwing muttered under her breath.

But Greenstorm's taunts stung. Gritting her teeth, she finally made up her mind and dove toward Orion.

Orion narrowed his eyes, hurling three spears in quick succession. Thunderwing used her secret techniques to create illusions, dodging all three with ease.

As she closed the distance, a triumphant smile spread across her face.

"Damn giant," she sneered. "You've lost your advantage. Without your spears, you can't stop me now."

"Let's see how you fare in close combat!"

As Thunderwing approached, Orion calmly reached for his new weapon—a trident wreathed in flames.

"Die!"

With a glint of excitement and bloodlust in his eyes, Orion activated Swift Charge and Titan's Rage.

Like a blazing inferno, he launched himself upward, his fiery trident aimed directly at the descending harpy.

...

Boom!

Orion landed heavily, his gaze fixed on the harpy, Thunderwing.

"This one's got some skill," he muttered.

Thunderwing, who had just clashed with Orion, hadn't been obliterated by his overwhelming strength. Instead, she vanished like a phantom, reappearing high in the sky moments later.

Hovering above, Thunderwing stared down at Orion, her heart pounding wildly. If she hadn't reacted quickly, she would have been dead by now.

"Is this the giant Lord Ariel put a bounty on?"

"How can anyone be this strong?"

The encounter left Thunderwing shaken. No matter what Greenstorm, Darkbolt, or Silvershock said, she had no intention of engaging Orion again.

But just as this thought crossed her mind, the Abyssal dragon on the ground unleashed another Abyssal Flame Bomb, this time aimed directly at the three Thunderstorm Bears.

Boom!

The explosion sent flames roaring across the battlefield. Greenstorm, who had taken the brunt of the attack, was left with charred, bleeding wounds.

Even so, Greenstorm refused to fall. His bloodshot eyes locked onto the Abyssal dragon with unrelenting fury.

As the dragon began to charge another Flame Bomb, Greenstorm could no longer hold back.

"If we keep this up, we'll die here. Let's take the fight to them!"

Roar! Roar! Roar!

The three Thunderstorm Bears roared in unison, leaping in different directions to attack Onyx, Rendall, and Slagor.

"Now's our chance! Hold them off!"

Prophet Onyx's deep voice rang out as he charged forward to intercept.

From a distance, the roars of Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock reached Orion's ears.

Orion glanced up at Thunderwing, a sly grin spreading across his face. Without hesitation, he turned and sprinted toward the Abyssal dragon's position—where Greenstorm was.

Boom!

Orion moved with blinding speed.

Greenstorm didn't even have time to react. Neither did Thunderwing, who watched from above.

Greenstorm's luck had run out. Orion's strike not only landed cleanly but also triggered the Ignite effect of his flaming trident. Flames engulfed Greenstorm's massive body, turning him into a giant, flaming bear.

Seeing this, Onyx, the Abyssal dragon, and Orion all instinctively backed away to avoid the raging fire.

"Big brother!"

"Big brother!"

Darkbolt and Silvershock roared in anguish, desperate to rush to Greenstorm's aid. But Rendall and Slagor held them back with everything they had.

Trapped in the flames, Greenstorm let out agonized howls.

Just as everyone thought he was finished, Greenstorm suddenly stood up, his body still ablaze.

"Zarok, Ancient King of the Thunderstorm Bears, I offer my soul and body in sacrifice for one final light!"

Roar!

The flames consuming Greenstorm's body extinguished abruptly. His form began to grow, swelling to an enormous size.

When he finally stopped growing, he stood over 100 feet tall.

"Run!"

It was Orion who shouted the warning. As he summoned the Abyssal dragon back to his side, he called out to Prophet Onyx and the others.

"I can feel it—an enormous energy is building up. This place is about to explode!"

Hearing Orion's warning, Onyx, Rendall, and Slagor immediately turned and fled.

"Damn giant! Damn Thunderwing! I'll tear you both apart!"

Greenstorm, now a towering monstrosity, was losing his sanity. But his hatred for Orion and Thunderwing burned brighter than ever.

"Die, all of you!"

In his final moments, the monstrous Greenstorm unleashed two massive energy blasts—one aimed at Orion, the other at Thunderwing in the sky.

In Greenstorm's fading consciousness, he blamed these two for the disaster that had befallen Stormrage City. He wanted them dead.

Boom!

Boom!

The twin explosions rocked the battlefield.

Orion's Ghostbone Armor shattered under the impact, but his body's strong defense allowed him to survive. Even so, he coughed up blood, his internal injuries severe.

As for Thunderwing, she wasn't as fortunate. The energy blast struck her directly, reducing her to a mist of blood that scattered into the night sky.

At the same time, Greenstorm's massive body began to glow, beams of light shooting out from within. His entire form transformed into a radiant burst of energy before fading into nothingness.

Orion climbed onto the Abyssal dragon's back and retreated.

"Sound the horns. We're pulling back!"

Soon, his guards—Dace, Otho, Beyn, and Torba—appeared and relayed his orders.

Wooooooo...

The deep, mournful sound of the horns echoed across the battlefield, signaling a retreat.

Inside Stormrage City, Delilah emerged from the city's treasury, her arms laden with loot. Hearing the retreat signal, her brows furrowed in concern.

"Let's go. Fall back!"

"Why the retreat signal? Did something happen outside the city?"

"Could it be... Orion?"

A terrible thought crossed Delilah's mind, making her heart race. She quickened her pace, leading her group out of the city.

The battle for Stormrage City dragged on into the night.

Many of the cannon fodder troops failed to retreat in time and were trapped inside the city. Fueled by rage, Darkbolt and Silvershock slaughtered them mercilessly.

By dawn, Orion and his forces had retreated to a dense forest dozens of miles away from Stormrage City.

Inside a temporary tent, Delilah finally relaxed when she saw Orion, alive and unharmed.

"Have we tallied the losses?" Orion asked.

Delilah nodded and began listing the casualties.

"My dear chieftain, the cannon fodder troops suffered heavy losses. We have fewer than 20,000 gnolls left who can fight."

"The satyrs and minotaurs were all trapped in Stormrage City. They've likely been wiped out."

"Of the 40,000 geckos, half were lost."

In total, more than half of Orion's cannon fodder troops had been wiped out during the assault.

"Chieftain, our losses wouldn't have been so severe if we hadn't retreated so hastily. Most of the casualties occurred when the troops were trapped in the city..."

Orion raised a hand, cutting her off.

"Greenstorm, Darkbolt, and Silvershock knew a sacrificial ritual that boosted their power to terrifying levels. They could kill Alpha-level powerhouses in an instant. We had no choice but to retreat."

Delilah's eyes widened in realization.

Compared to the threat of Alpha-level powerhouses, the loss of cannon fodder troops was insignificant.

She glanced at Onyx, Rendall, and Slagor, noting the lingering fear in their eyes. It was no wonder none of them had objected to Orion's retreat order.

"My dear chieftain, what do we do now?"