

Titan King 501

Chapter 501: You'll see your father before long

Lumi lifted her head and looked toward the cross-realm teleportation array. If Lilith hadn't explained its origins, Lumi would never have believed that there was such a colossal device hidden beneath Blackstone City.

"Is the other end of the teleportation array connected to an entirely different world?"

Curiosity shone in Lumi's eyes—curiosity about another world. However, she had already received a mission from Orion: stand guard here, protect the teleportation array from being destroyed, and also watch out for the lord on the other end of the array, lest their true form arrive in Blackstone City.

Beyond that, Lumi had no interest. It simply wasn't her concern.

Blackstone City, atop the city walls.

Lilith stood there, surveying the battle unfolding outside the walls. Rendall led his Hunting Party in and out of the dark creatures' ranks, appearing impressive and unstoppable. From time to time, piercing cries echoed from thunderhawks circling in the sky. Everything moved along in an orderly fashion.

Now that the crisis in the underworld had been resolved, Lilith, Rendall, and Lorelia felt a heavy weight lift from their shoulders. Confronting the dark creatures gathered outside the city almost brought them a sense of relief.

"Winter will be over soon!

"You'll see your father before long!"

Lilith unconsciously rested a hand on her abdomen, which was beginning to show a slight swell. "With the underworld problems settled, I'm sure Orion can focus on what he needs to do," she added.

Causing Orion fewer troubles had been the first lesson she learned after becoming his wife. (To clarify earlier statements: Lilith holds the title of wife, while other women who have had relations with Orion do not currently hold the title of wife.)

Valkorath Realm, Soraya City.

At this moment, Orion found himself in big trouble.

A quarter of an hour ago, he had hurled a spear from high above to save a fellow giant who was in danger. Just when Orion felt relieved that his comrade was safe, three thorn-covered vines shot out from the slime molds layer outside the city, attacking from three different angles.

"They're here!"

Orion had already expected Vine Splitters after running into them during a previous retreat, so his guard was up. With a crackling roar, Orion transformed into lightning, deftly avoiding the Vine Splitters' assault.

Simultaneously, his Eightfold Spear Barrage took shape and rained down on the part of the slime molds layer where the tendrils emerged.

Thud! Thud! Thud!

Muffled groans came from within the slime molds layer, yet the Vine Splitters did not halt their attack. In fact, Orion's spears seemed to enrage them further, and more thorny vines shot out of the slime molds layer, directly targeting him.

Because Orion was airborne, he could dodge more easily in the open sky. He evaded the vines with little effort. However, the vines did not retreat back into the slime molds layer after their attacks missed. Instead, they climbed higher and higher, heading straight upward.

At first, Orion paid them little mind. But when he saw multiple vines rising beyond him, clearly ignoring his presence, he realized a trap had been set. By then, it was too late.

Once they reached a certain height, the vines began weaving together, forming a web-like mesh that blocked any path Orion had to escape upwards.

Then, countless offshoots sprouted from the vine net, overlapping into a cage in a matter of seconds. It contracted around Orion and dragged him toward the slime molds layer.

Inside Soraya City, Lich Vexis immediately noticed Orion's predicament. But in the next instant, her expression changed dramatically.

Within that vine-woven cage, four distinct presences suddenly emerged, each one at the peak of Legendary level. Clearly, Vine Splitters and those four peak Legendary fungal creatures were coming for Orion.

Vexis closed her eyes and used a special method to communicate Soraya City's status to Arthas.

"Don't panic. He's not in as much danger as you imagine."

"I've already directed Bone White and the others to head for Soraya City. Just keep the situation under control."

"..."

Receiving Arthas's reply helped calm Vexis's nerves. She cast one more worried look at the vine cage pulling Orion into the slime molds layer, silently praying for his safety.

Inside the cage, Orion felt a rising fury.

He had personally killed one Vine Splitter before, so he knew this type of slime molds lifeform specialized in trapping its enemies. At first, Orion had no fear of being caged because he was confident he could handle a single Vine Splitter.

But then, four peak Legendary giant sharks emerged from the slime molds layer, surrounding Orion. Only then did he understand that this was a trap laid specifically to kill him.

The Vine Splitter was just the bait; those four hideous shark-like monsters hiding in the slime molds layer were the real threat.

The fight went from one-on-one to one-on-five in an instant.

Crack! Crack!

Orion controlled his Eightfold Spear Barrage, aiming to annihilate each target in a wide-range attack. But when the spears collided with the shark parasitic creatures, they vanished without inflicting serious harm.

Though the sharks took slight damage, they ignored it entirely and continued charging at Orion. Within the slime molds layer and inside the vine cage, they moved as if they were swimming in open water, unimpeded.

Boom!

Orion transformed into Titan form, activating his Battle Will Surge. Gripping his trident, he swept it in a powerful arc. Yet all four parasitic shark creatures slammed into the turbulent shockwave almost simultaneously. The resulting pressure and vibration caused Orion to spit blood.

Realizing the danger, Orion moved to invoke his Triple Mirror Image technique. But at that very moment, four presences, each no weaker than the shark parasitic creatures, appeared outside the cage.

Orion smiled, guessing that Arthas had dispatched reinforcements via the teleportation array. Letting loose a roar, he unleashed sonic attacks to weaken the sharks and the Vine Splitters, hoping to coordinate with the allies waiting beyond the cage.

Outside the cage, in the slime molds layer.

Four bone swords plunged into the slime molds layer. A hoarse, low, and chilling voice rang out all around, filled with oppressive force:

"Only the undead do not resist!"

"A horde of corpses—time for you to weep!"

"Your schemes will fail!"

"Swear loyalty to the King of Bones!"

As soon as the four bone swords penetrated the slime molds layer, it reacted like ice water splashed onto red-hot iron, roiling and seething. The hidden vine cage quickly became visible, revealing Orion and the four parasitic shark creatures inside.

"So that's how it is—sea-based parasitic creatures!"

"No matter. Sharks or slime molds parasites, they all must die."

"Is everyone ready?"

"Lord Orion, we'll keep these big beasts busy for you!"

Chapter 502: Rebirth of bones

On top of the four bone swords, four formidable skeletal swordsmen took shape. One of them looked directly at Orion and laid out their plan.

Once he was done speaking, the four bone swords emitted a dazzling black glow, then drove themselves into the vine cage like four nails. In the span of just two breaths, the vine cage withered, each thick tendril slicing into countless fragments before disintegrating into ash.

With the cage gone, each of the four skeletal swordsmen immediately engaged a respective shark-like parasitic creature, fighting to keep them occupied.

In that instant, Orion spotted the perfect chance to strike Vine Splitters. Without any hesitation, he unleashed Instant Impact and dove headlong into the slime molds layer.

Wielding his trident, Orion crashed through the slime molds layer, the shockwaves from Instant Impact splitting the dense mass of slime molds again and again. Countless mutated slime molds hidden within were destroyed in his wake.

In one hidden spot, the Vine Splitters revealed itself. Its body was formed of countless twisting, living vines, coiling together into different shapes for weapons. These shot out from the slime molds layer, attacking Orion from both the front and the flank.

Realizing he hadn't located the true core of the Vine Splitters yet, Orion flickered aside, triggering Instant Impact again to barrel toward the slime molds layer in another direction. His trident cleaved through the air, slicing deeper into the mass of slime molds. The vine attacks grew fiercer with every inch he advanced.

A hint of satisfaction crossed Orion's face: the stronger the onslaught, the closer he must be to Vine Splitters itself.

After a thunderous roar, Orion upped his momentum even more, churning the slime molds layer like a field being plowed. All at once, he sensed a presence trying to flee into the distance.

"Found you! Now die!"

He activated Swift Charge and Instant Impact simultaneously to boost his speed.

Thud!

The trident punctured something solid. Orion drove his weapon upward, then planted his foot firmly, bursting out of the slime molds layer. High in the air, impaled at the tip of his trident, hung a strange, globular mass. It seemed to be part vine and part flesh, an odd hybrid. Orion had seen this type of thing once before, though in the midst of battle he'd never gotten a close look.

"Break!"

Lightning and a reddish glow surged along the trident, cleaving Vine Splitters' body in two. The creature's form went from rigid to limp.

A cluster of life essence emerged in Orion's hand, and he stowed it away before turning his gaze on the shark-like parasitic creatures still locked in combat with the skeletal swordsmen.

"Since you're all here, none of you are leaving alive!"

Truth be told, if not for these skeletal swordsmen arriving in time, Orion probably would have used Triple Mirror Image. But his duplicates weren't as durable as he was, and in a fight like this, they'd likely be seriously injured or even destroyed.

Orion was determined not to risk losing them lightly. Until he ascended to demigod or god, and could outfit his mirror images with top-grade gear, he preferred to keep them in reserve. (since once lost, those mirror images were gone forever)

Having searched countless Survivor's Chests and combed the Survivor's Platform, Orion had never found any skill quite like Triple Mirror Image, making him all the more careful with its use.

Wasting no more time, Orion surveyed the battlefield and honed in on one of the shark-like parasitic creatures already at a disadvantage. He charged it, roaring, "Get over here and die!"

Whirling the trident in a savage arc, Orion speared the creature's skull. Although death loomed, the shark-like beast thrashed wildly, desperate to throw him off. A hum of supernatural power flared around Orion, igniting his Battle Will Surge. A heavy force pressed down on the parasitic monstrosity.

"Death is never the end!"

The skeletal swordsman Orion had aided earlier chanted softly. Runes glowed upon the black sword in his hand, pulsing with a brilliant darkness.

"Rebirth of Bones!"

The black blade drove into the creature's body, its runic symbols—like tiny tadpoles—crawling all over the shark-like parasitic creature. Slowly, the beast's struggling ceased.

Orion yanked his trident free, dragging out the life essence from its head. Then he sprang off the carcass, reluctant to come in contact with those eerie runes, which were now inching up toward the creature's skull.

"Lord Orion," the skeletal swordsman said, "I must continue the Rebirth of Bones ritual. Please assist the others."

Orion nodded without protest or questions. Trident in hand, he pivoted and dashed toward the remaining three shark-like parasites. Using nearly the same technique each time, Orion successively killed all three. Behind him, the other three skeletal swordsmen began their own Rebirth of Bones rituals as well.

"Lord Orion, may we keep the carcasses of those shark-like creatures? We'll give you all the life essence."

"Sure, no problem."

Orion turned and responded to the first skeletal swordsman he'd helped. It seemed the swordsman had finished the final step of his ritual. He came over to Orion, the two of them now watching over the other three skeletons still locked in their own necromantic rites.

"I am Bone Blue," he said. "And my three older brothers are Bone White, Bone Red, and Bone Green."

Orion caught a spark of curiosity in his gaze. He turned to examine Bone Blue more carefully. Beneath the tattered cloak, Bone Blue wore not bone armor but, unusually, a type of leathery armor—the likes of which was rare among the undead. Embedded in the center of his forehead lay a mysterious blue gemstone.

Something clicked in Orion's mind. He glanced over at the other skeletal swordsmen. Sure enough, each had a gemstone on his forehead, matching the color of his name. Bone White, Bone Red, Bone Green, and Bone Blue were all hidden behind their cloaks; one wouldn't have noticed unless looking closely.

"You're planning to summon them?" Orion asked, pointing at the four fallen sharks.

"Summoning? No—it's rebirth," Bone Blue said with a faint sneer. "As luck would have it, the four of us came here still missing our proper bone mounts. These powerful shark parasites suit us perfectly.

"Once they're converted, their strength drops by a tier, but powerful bone mounts at the upper Legendary level are almost impossible to find!"

Orion's eyes widened in astonishment at what he'd just heard.

Chapter 503: Bone beast

"Is this some kind of resurrection array?"

"Heh heh!"

Orion's inquiry did not receive a straightforward response from Bone Blue. The mysterious gem on Bone Blue's forehead flickered twice, followed by a low chuckle. Within that laughter lay a hint of smugness and secrecy.

The skeletal swordsman Bone Blue showed no intention of explaining further, and Orion, understanding the situation, decided not to press him. Instead, Orion continued guarding the other three skeletal swordsmen.

Bone White, Bone Red, Bone Green, and Bone Blue were able to teleport over and provide Orion with much-needed support, which was a great help. After all, if it weren't for them, Orion would likely still be stuck in the slime molds layer.

Because Orion and Bone Blue were not very familiar with each other, they both kept their conversations to a minimum.

It wasn't until Bone White, Bone Red, and Bone Green finished their rebirth rites that the atmosphere eased slightly.

"Thanks to Lord Orion's help, we were able to score a great bargain!"

"No need to be polite. If you all hadn't come to assist me, I'd still be trapped in the slime molds layer."

Orion raised his hand and offered the giant's salute to the skeletal swordsman Bone White, who returned the gesture. Compared to Bone Blue, Bone White's demeanor was much more open and forthright; he seemed to be the leader among them.

"Apologies, but now that the crisis is resolved, we have to leave immediately."

"The other fronts need our support at once!"

This was wartime, so Bone White didn't overexplain. Given the four brothers' strength, they clearly had important duties elsewhere. Especially now that they also had four large shark mounts, their threat to the slime molds mutants would grow exponentially.

Orion did not try to make them stay. He simply gestured for them to go, and they took the teleportation array to another city.

Once the skeletal swordsmen left, Orion ascended into the sky again, surveying the battlefield from above while boosting the morale and confidence of the Stoneheart Horde bloodline warriors stationed on the walls.

"Lady Vexis, is there a difference between monsters that have been reborn and those that have been summoned?"

Before long, Orion could no longer contain his curiosity and used telepathy to ask lich Vexis.

"Summoned creatures have a time limit. Reborn creatures are permanent."

Vexis's answer was succinct, going straight to the point.

"For instance, these undead that I summon—if I don't control them or feed them, they'll die off naturally in a matter of months."

"What Bone White and the others just performed was a rebirth ritual, permanently converting those parasitic sharks into undead beings."

A trace of envy colored Vexis's tone as her voice echoed again.

"Summoning and rebirth are two different things. Rebirth has a higher cost and greater consumption."

"In most cases, reborn creatures come with restrictions: sometimes there's a limit on how many can exist, other times there are limits to their rank or strength."

"For example, after Bone White and the others performed the rebirth for those bone beasts, their power dropped by a minor rank."

"At the same time, they burned through a substantial amount of their own intrinsic rune power to make it happen."

"In general, the summoned undead can't compare to reborn creatures in terms of quality. But when it comes to numbers, summoning far surpasses rebirth."

Vexis's explanation gave Orion a clear understanding of the difference between summoning and rebirth. He was particularly intrigued because when Clymene had transformed into Shade Valkyrie, that too was a form of rebirth.

"Lord Orion, there's no way we can replicate what Bone White and his brothers did, turning a powerful parasitic creature into a bone-type lifeform."

Vexis sensed Orion's interest in that rebirth ritual since it clearly offered a shortcut to rapidly bolster one's strength.

"Bone White and his kind are the same race as my master. Signing a rebirth contract with beasts is their innate talent, a unique ability no other race can replicate."

All right, upon hearing this, Orion gave up on the idea of asking Arthas for a resurrection array. It followed, then, that Arthas's mount—an ice-bone dragon roughly equivalent to an arch lord—must have been one of Arthas's own reborn bone beasts.

There was no denying that, as his power grew and he encountered more individuals, Orion's understanding of the world also expanded, fueling his curiosity about it.

With a swing of his trident, Orion blasted away the approaching slime molds mutants and slime molds layer from the city walls. Meanwhile, he kept a close watch on the battlefield and pondered the horde's future development.

At that moment, a colossal boom echoed from above, shaking the entire Valkorath Realm.

Orion looked up, gazing at the heavens. Above the realm formation, there were suddenly two vortexes that resembled black holes, hanging in the sky and tearing the firmament in half. The resounding crash had come from the collision of these two swirling black holes.

From Orion's vantage point, one vortex contained various magical elements like earth, water, fire, wind, and lightning. Even from a distance, the terrifying magical aura was palpable. The other vortex glowed gold, with web-like strands of mysterious power woven through it, shimmering brilliantly now and then.

"So this is the might of a demigod..."

Orion murmured as he looked skyward. In that instant, he witnessed two demigod-level powerhouses exchanging blows in midair, unleashing clashing storms and lightning. In the midst of thunder and lightning, the realm formation continuously surged upward, while clusters of meteors fell incessantly from the skies.

Suddenly, countless runes flared across the realm formation, sending a barrage of magical energy that obliterated any nearby meteorites, reducing them to dust.

"WAAAGH!"

This spectacular scene sparked the latent thirst for battle inside Orion. It was as if it had been awakened all at once. Roaring toward the sky, Orion suddenly shifted into his Titan Form, plunging into the slime molds layer like a falling star.

"Lord Orion, you—"

Before lich Vexis could finish speaking, Orion was already deep within the slime molds layer.

Beneath Soraya City, Soraya was tirelessly hatching small scorpions while monitoring the battlefield in real time. She noticed Orion's abrupt move.

"What on earth is going on with Orion?"

He had vanished into the slime molds layer without a word or any explanation. Under any other circumstances, Soraya would have left the Nest at once to pursue him—were it not for the fact that Soraya City needed both her and Vexis to remain on guard.

Yes, Soraya was worried about Orion. In the Valkorath Realm right now, aside from Orion, she had no other confidant.

Chapter 504: Let them foot the bill for our safety

Titanion Realm, the human kingdom, Soaring Bird City.

Torin was filled with unease. Part of Soaring Bird City's walls had collapsed under last night's onslaught by dark creatures.

Just when Torin thought his city was doomed, two Alpha-level powerhouses charged out from the city's tents and turned the tide. These two were Henrik and Mateo.

Torin remembered clearly—both men had arrived in Soaring Bird City with two separate merchant caravans. They were supposedly the guards and bodyguards of two other influential figures.

"Master, I've found out everything!"

Mike hurried into the makeshift tent, panting heavily, clearly having rushed all the way here.

"Speak quickly!"

Torin stepped forward, grabbed Mike by the collar, and fixed him with a piercing stare.

"Master, those two Alpha-level fighters serve Grand Duke Richard and Grand Duke William respectively. They're basically the two Grand Dukes' sworn retainers. This time, they came to Soaring Bird City to escort representatives of the Golden Apple Chamber of Commerce and the Holy Sword Mercenary Corps to giant territory."

"Master, behind them stand the two Grand Dukes of the kingdom, supporting them."

Torin let go. The news from Mike made him realize something in an instant.

"Two Grand Dukes, is it?"

"So that's why they're here—to divide up the spoils."

From the start of the defense until the wall collapsed, the two Alpha-levels sent by the Grand Dukes had not lifted a finger. It was only last night that Henrik and Mateo joined the fight.

This was both a signal and a show of intimidation. Although the Grand Dukes' representatives had yet to come forward, Torin knew full well that their delay simply meant the timing wasn't right.

"Do you know the names of those two representatives?"

"Sebastian and Oliver. They say they're heading to giant territory to do direct business with the Stoneheart Horde."

Mike related all he knew. Noticing Torin's frown, Mike hesitated, then added his own thoughts.

"Master, in my experience, it was a bit too easy to gather this information."

"What are you implying?"

Torin suddenly looked up, his pensive eyes showing a raw intensity.

Mike took a step back and shrank slightly.

"I suspect they wanted us to get this information. Normally, whether they're merchant caravan members or from a mercenary corps, their guard is always up when traveling."

"But this time, I just bought them a few pots of wine, and they gave me everything. Master, they're wolves, and they have bad intentions."

Torin didn't respond right away. Instead, he began pacing around the tent. A delayed understanding dawned on him: he'd thought that Princess Ava's support would guarantee his safety and let him reap all the benefits. But Torin had been too optimistic.

At most, Princess Ava's presence could keep him alive, ensuring the kingdom's high nobles couldn't simply kill him off with underhanded tricks. As for Soaring Bird City's profits, there was no way those nobles would just give them up.

Even if Prince Theodore himself were stationed here, the nobles would still carve out a hefty portion for themselves. Although Prince Theodore had already secured some gains for the two Grand Dukes, who

would ever turn down more benefits? Especially these nobles, who were long accustomed to exploiting those beneath them.

Once Torin finally pieced it all together, Wyatt from the slaver team hurried into the tent as well.

"Master!"

Wyatt stopped before Torin, looking grim.

"Speak. What happened?"

Torin watched Wyatt, bracing himself for the worst.

"Master, those two powerhouses—Henrik and Mateo—took advantage of last night's chaos after the wall collapsed and seized control of the city walls' defenses. Just now, they reorganized the slaves on the walls, putting all the slaves under their command. Anyone who wants to survive has to follow their orders now."

It was over. That was the first thought in Torin's mind.

Soaring Bird City, still in the process of being rebuilt, had now lost control of its guard forces to the kingdom's nobles. Without a city guard under his command, managing and operating Soaring Bird City in the future would be like chasing an impossible dream.

"Damn it!"

Clang!

With a roar of anger, Torin shoved the nearby table and all the cups and kettles on it to the floor. The clattering chaos mirrored his own frustration and fury.

"Fuck them...damn pigs...a bunch of bastards...I'll kill you all..."

For the next half hour, the tent echoed with Torin's curses. Only when he finally ran out of steam did he calm down a bit.

He lifted the tent curtain and looked out at the slaves patrolling under the mercenaries' direction, his gaze growing more resolute by the moment.

"We anticipated this outcome right from the start, didn't we? Compared to ending up dead, at least we're still alive."

Torin's voice came out at a measured volume, tinged with a bit of rationality.

"Wyatt, from this moment onward, we'll completely abandon any attempt to control Soaring Bird City's defenses. If they want it, they can have it. Let them foot the bill for our safety. It's a perfect plan!"

His rational thoughts now drifted toward something more extreme. Torin's demeanor shifted from momentary calm to something darker.

"If they manage to hold Soaring Bird City, so be it—at least that means they haven't taken their benefits for nothing. If they fail to hold it, then let's all go down with the ship together."

At that, Torin's expression flashed cold with a hint of lethal intent.

"Wyatt, go pull our slaves off the walls right now. Anyone who won't cooperate—deal with them as you see fit."

...

A moment later, as he watched Wyatt and Mike leaving, Torin felt a wave of revulsion, as though he'd been brutally humiliated. Yet he forced himself to swallow this bitter taste.

"At the end of the day, I'm too weak. If I were Alpha-level or even Legendary, this never would've happened."

"Power. From now on, I'm going to devote my entire focus to getting stronger."

He had already paid dearly for his failures—so only now did Torin grasp that his own power was the single most reliable foundation he had in the human kingdom.

In the past, he'd tried relying on gold coins, women, and noble titles, but in the end, it led him nowhere.

After considering it all, Torin decided to temporarily abandon the right to manage Soaring Bird City. As long as he remained alive, he would still be a Baron of the kingdom, and Soaring Bird City would still be his territory. If he could hang on to that, once he grew stronger, all that had been lost could be recovered, piece by piece.

Chapter 505: Battle Craving

Valkorath Realm was shrouded in tension.

Leonidas stood atop a lofty peak, his eyes reflecting both doubt and contemplation. Just to be safe, he spoke up on the Champions Alliance public channel to alert everyone.

Leonidas: "I'm not sure what's going on. The broodmother counterpart around my location keeps flickering in and out of perception."

Leonidas: "Stay vigilant. This might be a trap!"

Alexander: "Same here. There's a presence that comes and goes. Are they preparing for a full-scale assault?"

Arthas: "We're all experiencing the same signs. Keep your eyes open and your guard up."

Arthas: "If you spot anything suspicious or find weaknesses in defenses, share it here. Everyone should pay attention to the Alliance channel for updates."

Kraken: "Listen up, big shots. The monsters in the sea have thinned out dramatically—almost like they all vanished. I suspect they've been called to the land. Be careful."

...

Orion was missing all this chatter on the Champions Alliance public channel because he had already gone berserk.

At that moment, Orion felt himself entering a strange, raging state. His physical strength felt markedly greater.

He could sense his muscles becoming more powerful and unburdened with every move.

What's more, Orion's mind was incredibly sharp—one could say it was a sublime mix of frenzy and bloodlust.

In the slime molds layer, guided by some uncanny perception, Orion tracked down a living-flesh undead. This particular mutated slime molds creature only possessed mid-level Legendary power.

Facing the living-flesh undead, Orion's lips curled up, revealing a row of even, gleaming teeth. He let out a sinister laugh, then growled in a low voice that would chill anyone to the bone.

Immediately following came an [Instant Impact].

Szzak!

His trident ran through the living-flesh undead's body, accompanied by the crackle of electric current. The fungal creatures infesting it were paralyzed and wiped out in large numbers.

Next came a shockwave attack that tore the living-flesh undead limb from limb, spilling out a cluster of life essence.

Orion stowed the life essence away and dashed swiftly toward a farther area.

In that unusual frenzied state, he became utterly cold, ruthless, and unmistakably brutal in his methods.

Crucially, Orion's mind remained clear—he could still perceive his surroundings, make judgments, and tell friend from foe.

What he had lost was any shred of mercy or compassion for his enemies.

Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!

Yet Orion carried within him a blazing desire for slaughter, needing release. So he charged forward, specifically targeting Legendary-level fungal creatures.

No one knew how much time passed before Orion finally found another Legendary-level mutated slime molds. This one wielded a massive two-handed sword, its entire skeletal structure packed with fungal creatures, and its muscles were knotted and thick. It was an Undead Tyrants.

Orion's assault was simple and efficient. He used Instant Impact to appear behind the Undead Tyrants and struck it down with a single lethal blow.

After killing the Undead Tyrants, Orion tore through the slime molds layer again, moving on to another region.

To the north, within the slime molds main nest.

Slime molds broodmother Gloob contacted the southern broodmother Blobby.

"South...broodmother counterpart...teleport...north...kill the transcendent foe...open a path..."

"Got it!"

The voice of slime molds broodmother Gloob was ethereal, echoing intermittently until it reached Blobby.

Receiving the message, slime molds broodmother Blobby fully understood Gloob's intent and subsequently concealed her own broodmother counterpart's presence.

Leonidas failed to detect any of Blobby's subtle maneuvers.

From his perspective, the slime molds broodmother and its broodmother counterpart were undoubtedly plotting something, but he believed simply keeping watch was enough.

Meanwhile, on the front lines of the battlefield.

When Orion finally emerged from that peculiar berserk state, he had already slain five Legendary-level slime molds mutants.

By then, he was a long way from Soraya City.

Orion burst out from the slime molds layer and assessed his physical condition before glancing at his data panel.

Upon seeing that the Titan Form skill had gained a branch, Orion realized what had happened.

He understood that his previous outburst of frenzy was caused by awakening a bloodline skill.

Battle Craving: A thirst for blood that fuels incessant battle fury. Heightens combat awareness. Allows for the detection of enemies within a certain range through battle instincts.

Perhaps witnessing the showdown between those two demigod beings had sparked indescribable yearning in Orion—he wanted to grow stronger, which triggered the unconscious awakening of that skill.

"I can't believe I ended up this far out. I need to hurry back to Soraya City."

Estimating his location, Orion figured that even if he walked, it would take half a day to get back.

After choosing his direction, Orion transformed into lightning and raced toward Soraya City.

Fifteen minutes later, while gliding through the air, Orion suddenly halted and looked down at the slime molds layer below.

Because of his newly awakened Battle Craving, Orion's sense of danger and fighting spirit had increased substantially.

He felt a looming threat, a hint of lethal intent.

Yet he couldn't pinpoint where the enemy was hiding.

The moment he shifted his gaze, searching farther ahead, disaster struck.

Directly below, an enormous spiraling horn shot upward like a rocket.

Instantly, a shroud of death fell over Orion.

In that life-or-death instant, Orion activated Instant Impact and repeatedly blinked in the direction straight ahead, desperate to get away.

All he could think was to flee the spot, because staying meant certain doom.

Far off, in Bone City.

Standing on the wall, Arthas suddenly went wide-eyed, turning sharply toward where Soraya City lay.

"I sense the aura of an arch lord. That's impossible!"

Drawing his sword, Arthas leapt into the air and flew toward Orion's location to provide backup.

But just then, the slime molds layer churned mightily before Bone City, surging into a wave about 500 ft high.

Amid the crest of the slime molds wave appeared a glaringly colorful metallic main nest, ring-shaped in form, though vastly oversized. It was easily over 500 ft tall.

With the metallic main nest looming, two monstrous figures emerged from within, blocking Arthas's path.

They were the slime molds broodmother and its broodmother counterpart from the northern region.

"Now I see."

"You came for me, then!"

Arthas returned to Bone City, leveling a steely gaze at the broodmother and its counterpart.

"That's correct!"

No sooner had the broodmother spoken than two more monstrous figures rose from the slime molds layer—these were broodmother counterparts from the western and eastern regions.

"Why only three broodmother counterparts? Where's the other one?"

Arthas's voice was calm, laced with a tinge of mockery.

"If that giant is slain, the other one will join us."

"Today will be your demise!"

"You will die!"

Chapter 506 506: Death domain

"Die?"

"I hail from the realm of death. I am the King of Death!"

"In the world of death, there is no light, and there is no darkness."

"Death is merely one's final destination."

Arthas slowly drew his longsword. A white flame with no heat ignited along its blade.

This was soul-scorching fire, a weapon that burns souls—one of Arthas's most prized abilities.

"Welcome to my death domain. Here is where the sleepers come to rest!"

The surrounding world changed, reduced to a vast emptiness.

Within this domain, countless shadows and illusions flickered.

The only tangible realities were Arthas himself, a slime molds broodmother, and three broodmother counterparts.

A layer of bone armor materialized around Arthas. There were no elaborate ornaments—just stark, exposed white bone.

Then, from the shadows behind him, a massive body of faith stepped forth.

"Fuzz-Bubble World!"

Meanwhile, behind the slime molds broodmother, a ring-shaped slime molds Nest appeared, continuously spraying spores in all directions.

Wherever the spores drifted, layers of fuzz and bubbles sprang up, rapidly expanding and encroaching on Arthas's death domain.

"This world needs a downpour of deathly rain."

Arthas raised his longsword, and under the effect of the death domain, a black rain began to fall.

Wherever the rain fell, the fuzz and bubbles shrank swiftly.

Two distinct worlds collided head-on with friction and confrontation.

Beside the slime molds broodmother, the three broodmother counterparts revealed their true forms, charging forward at once.

The first looked like a tadpole with a zipper-like mouth—its split was huge, lined with countless sharp teeth. Its head bristled with myriad tiny eyes.

The second, while in flight, merged itself into one pulsing mass of flesh—constantly dividing and multiplying, growing ever larger.

The third was a humanoid monster, sporting not just horns but spikes as well. Its long, thin hair draped behind it like a mane.

Additionally, it had fleshy wings, a tapering tail, bony spurs jutting from its forearms, and backward-facing spikes along its spine—an ideal combat weapon, reminiscent of an abyssal demon at first glance.

Arthas stood impassively. His figure blurred momentarily, and three indistinct phantoms emerged from his body. These were skeletal apparitions, which at once lunged at the three broodmother counterparts.

As for Arthas himself, he hefted his sword and advanced toward the slime molds broodmother, step by measured step.

"I've been waiting for so long, and you finally dared to show yourself!"

...

Soraya City, in the region more than 100 miles north of the city wall, Orion narrowly evaded the fatal attack from underground.

"An arch lord being?"

Orion glanced back, shocked at what he saw.

Bursting from the ground's slime molds layer was an ancient giant-horned whale. Massive in bulk, it resembled an aircraft carrier.

The most terrifying feature was the whale's upper jaw, sporting a wickedly pointed horn nearly as long as its own body.

Once the ancient giant-horned whale righted itself, it aimed that monstrous horn straight at Orion once again.

"You pitiful existence, I will devour you and erase you from this world forever."

This telepathic pronouncement, courtesy of the broodmother counterpart, emanated from the giant-horned whale.

Orion did not respond. Instead, he transformed into Titan Form, his body steadily enlarging until he nearly matched the whale's size.

"WAAAGH!"

He bellowed, driving out fear and any lingering reluctance to fight.

Then Orion activated Battle Craving and Berserk Aura, allowing himself to enter a frenzied state.

Facing a true arch lord being, Orion did not hold back. He gripped his trident and launched Instant Impact.

To the ancient giant-horned whale, Orion's defiance was pure provocation.

The whale rose into midair as though the atmosphere itself were an ocean. Its body quivered, the massive horn aimed forward, initiating a horn charge.

But that was not all. Its enormous tail swished mightily, churning the air. A surge of wind elements gathered behind it, granting additional propulsion.

Pop! Pop! Pop!

In that instant, propelled by external force, the ancient giant-horned whale executed its horn charge with the added force of a massive impact.

The air resonated with an echo similar to sonic explosions—more precisely, the sound of space being struck.

The speed and sound were so intense that they outmatched even Orion's Instant Impact.

Witnessing this, Orion instantly dismissed the notion of clashing head-on.

Initially, he had planned on locking horns with the whale to gauge the difference in strength and physical durability between his Titan Form and that of an arch lord being.

However, the whale's impending collision made him abandon the idea.

Hence, Orion dodged the whale's horn charge, yet he continued his assault, aiming for the giant-horned whale's massive, bloodshot eye.

The whale's gaze, shot through with blood-red streaks, watched Orion's approach with blatant contempt.

Then came a surge of rampant killing intent.

The ancient giant-horned whale opened its maw, emitting a noise somewhere between crying, laughter, and the toll of a bell. The entire space around Orion quaked.

This was a sonic attack of formidable power.

Upon reaching the whale, Orion succumbed to confusion—an unsettling sensation caused by the rattle of space itself that robbed him of physical control.

Derision, disdain, and cool arrogance...

That was the gaze of a predator overlooking its prey!

Orion saw it clearly—those sentiments glinted in the whale's colossal eyes.

Then helplessly, he watched as the horn swung toward him, striking him squarely.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

It was the sound of bones fracturing and splintering. Under the force of the sonic onslaught, Orion was hurled into the air.

Pain.

Excruciating pain.

Even with Berserk Aura muffling his sense of injury, the agony ravaged his mind and spirit.

Despite Orion's Titan Form, the gap between a Legendary fighter and an Arch Lord was overwhelming.

Honestly, once Orion hit the peak of the legendary level, he had thought his abilities, coupled with various gear, would enable him to stand against an arch lord.

But confronting a broodmother counterpart, Orion realized how naive that assumption was.

Such an immense suppression by a higher class could not be bridged with common means.

Fortunately, Titan Form granted formidable regenerative power. Though severely wounded, Orion was by no means out of the fight.

Chapter 507 507: Giant-horned whale

"Looks like I have no choice but to use my trump card!"

Boom!

Lightning thundered overhead, electricity crackling with a sharp hiss as Orion rocketed skyward.

Meanwhile, he clutched a magic scroll in his hand—the one Deputy Commander Edward had given him as a welcome gift when he joined the Champions Alliance.

The scroll had already been torn open, releasing an ominous magical disturbance. Orion had no idea what would happen next.

Ever since obtaining this scroll, he had treated it as a lifesaving hidden ace.

"Gahaha!"

A tremor-like sound burst forth from the ancient giant-horned whale, its jaws clacking excitedly, blending with its deep screech to form a dirge of death.

Resembling a grim funeral lament, that deadly sound was abruptly cut short in the next instant.

Crack... Sizzle...

This was the sound of compressing space grinding and scraping against itself.

Right in front of the ancient giant-horned whale, a spatial fissure nearly 2,000 ft long suddenly ripped open.

It tore violently across, severing the whale's horn while unleashing a staggering force that tried to drag it into the unknown void.

But behind the ancient giant-horned whale, a potent golden radiance flared into view—a colossal golden net that swiftly enveloped the fissure, gradually sealing it back up.

In roughly three seconds, the spatial rupture vanished, the golden net faded, and space stabilized once more.

Orion looked crestfallen. He hadn't expected the demigod-level trump card left by Deputy Commander Edward to be neutralized so easily.

He was also a little terrified.

The mere thought of how he'd faced down the ancient giant-horned whale, which had demigod-tier moves at its disposal, sent chills through his body.

"On the bright side, the demigod trick the ancient giant-horned whale had is now gone!"

Even as dread lingered, Orion knew this was good news. Next, he'd be battling an arch lord being without demigod support—although he wasn't entirely sure if the whale had more secrets up its sleeve.

"Damn giant, you have enraged me!"

The ancient giant-horned whale let out a furious cry. Being forced to use a demigod-level countermeasure against an opponent who hadn't even attained arch lord status was not only a setback but also a traumatic blow to its pride.

Its voice was complicated—seething anger laced with a long, mournful tone.

Yet after that clash of trump cards, Orion felt less of the fear he'd had earlier.

In fact, thanks to Battle Craving and Titan Form, his thirst for blood was growing, his fighting spirit unquenchable, and his combat senses more acute.

"You've made me angry, too!"

Orion's words were emotionless, but facing a foe one tier above him only made him calmer.

"This sensation... feels so familiar!"

He felt simultaneous fear and excitement, dread and eagerness.

He'd only had this feeling once before—back when he was Alpha-level, preparing to challenge Lord Ariel.

And now, that same feeling had returned.

"Arch lord or not, I'm going to kill you!"

Raising his trident, Orion aimed it at the ancient giant-horned whale.

But as an arch lord, the whale was faster.

Ooooo...

A cry, like the lamentation of the ages, resonated from the ancient giant-horned whale—deep, solitary, and indescribably forlorn.

Yet the moment Orion heard it, he realized he could no longer move.

This was different from the earlier sonic pulse. It was a sonar binding technique.

Orion's body was now shackled by an unfathomable force.

In the next second, his eyes went wide at the sight unfolding before him.

Bursts of slime molds layer from every direction converged upon the ancient giant-horned whale like waters surging into the sea, pouring furiously into its body.

Unbeknownst to Orion, this was the whale's skill, Gigantic Form.

Upon activating it, the ancient giant-horned whale absorbed massive amounts of surrounding slime molds, inflating its body a hundredfold.

Once transformed, its power and abilities soared dramatically—similar to Orion's Titan Form, but under completely different conditions.

The problem was, the whale was already at Arch Lord level, and its Gigantic Form was far more devastating.

Helpless under the sonar binding, Orion could only watch as the whale's body ballooned into an enormous monstrosity.

Nothing could stop it. In one swift motion, the colossal creature opened its maw—a swirling vortex of a mouth—and swallowed Orion whole.

...

Champions Alliance, public channel.

Fungal creatures had launched a surprise attack, teleporting four broodmother counterparts to the northern region.

Their goal was to eliminate Arthas and Orion.

Fungal creatures targeted Arthas because, compared to Leonidas, Alexander, or Storm Avatar (the Deputy Commander), Arthas was the most formidable.

By tying up Leonidas, Alexander, and Stormavatar in three separate directions, the other slime molds broodmothers could operate more freely and safely.

If their objective had been anyone else, there was a high chance the northern Arthas, with Orion's help, would have taken down the slime molds broodmother and its counterparts.

Therefore, the northern front became the crucial breach point for the slime molds.

At that moment, everyone realized something was off, not just Leonidas.

Leonidas: "Something's wrong. The broodmother counterpart's aura near me vanished, it's left its main nest."

Leonidas: "Alexander, here's our chance!"

Alexander: "This isn't an opportunity; it's a trap!"

Alexander: "The slime molds broodmother has come for me. If I leave my post, the western front I'm guarding falls instantly."

Alexander was also entangled with the broodmother in his area. The moment Leonidas spoke, he understood the fungal creatures were up to no good.

Seeing that he couldn't count on Alexander's backup, Leonidas focused on Arthas.

Leonidas: "Arthas, where are you? Say something!"

Edward: "He hasn't spoken on the Alliance channel for fifteen minutes."

Edward: "All broodmother counterparts in your areas have teleported north. Their target is Arthas."

The one answering Leonidas was Deputy Commander Edward, and his voice sounded grave, tinged with worry.

Leonidas: "Damn it, they're ganging up on Arthas? Deputy Commander, please get over there and help him!"

Leonidas had a strong bond with Arthas, so his first thought was to send reinforcements.

Edward: "I'm currently holding off a demigod-level slime mold, and my storm avatar is also locked down by a slime molds broodmother."

Edward: "This time, Arthas is on his own!"

Chapter 508 508: Titan's power

Deputy Commander Edward explained the situation, after which the public channel fell silent for a while.

The mood was low, and tension was evident.

After some time, Deputy Commander Edward spoke again, attempting to spark hope.

Edward: "In at most half a day, the realm formation will fully rise. I only hope Arthas can hold out until then."

However, those words did nothing to calm Leonidas.

Leonidas: "What about Hulk? Is he safe right now?"

Leonidas: "Show yourself. Arthas said you possess the strength to stand against an arch lord. Head to Bone City and aid him in battle!"

But the channel remained quiet. Even after waiting a while, Leonidas received no answer from Orion.

Edward: "Not long ago, I sensed a powerful wave of spatial magic."

Edward: "If I'm not mistaken, that aura belonged to the magic scroll I gave Hulk."

Edward: "I suspect Hulk is currently fighting alongside Arthas."

In truth, Orion was not fighting side by side with Arthas but had been singled out by an especially terrifying broodmother counterpart set on killing him—something even Edward, Leonidas, and Alexander had never guessed.

Bone City. In the death domain.

Boom!

Arthas's body of faith was blasted into pieces.

Yet it swiftly re-formed, revealing the imposing figure of the Skeleton King within.

Compared to when he first unleashed it, the body of faith had shrunk to less than half its original size. Meanwhile, the enemy had also changed.

Within the death domain stood only three figures: the slime molds broodmother and two broodmother counterparts. Clearly, the third broodmother counterpart had been lost forever in the death domain during that recent clash.

"As a mere wandering ghost, you no longer have any power to resist."

Splat!

With a forceful crushing motion of his left hand, Arthas snuffed out a mass of soul fire—that mass was the third broodmother counterpart.

Arthas himself was drastically altered as well. The layer of white bone armor covering him was mostly shattered, exposing the skeletal form clad in bone armor beneath.

"None of you...will escape!"

Fixing his gaze upon the slime molds broodmother, Arthas allowed the remaining white-bone armor to disperse, dissolving into ash.

In the next instant, the death territory morphed into a furnace-like space that enclosed everyone inside.

"Burn!"

Raising his longsword, Arthas ignited the bone flames clinging to its blade, and in that moment, skeletal apparitions all around burst into flame one after another.

Slime molds broodmother and the two broodmother counterparts were likewise scorched by these self-sacrificial fires, causing them to retreat hastily into their main nest for refuge.

Arthas stared down that golden-glowing main nest. An incredibly bright sword flare streaked from his pupils.

Boom!

A deafening crash followed. The main nest shattered, and the slime molds broodmother plus the two broodmother counterparts were sent flying, looks of sheer disbelief on their faces.

A main nest—once bolstered by the power of their slime molds mother deity—had been demolished so easily by a single sword beam.

"This is the Bone Furnace. I'm the only one who can leave alive."

With those words, Arthas again lifted his sword and strode toward the slime molds broodmother.

From his flanks, the two broodmother counterparts roared and lunged at him with renewed fury.

—

Near Soraya City, the fighting was not yet finished.

Orion, immobilized by the ancient giant-horned whale's sonar binding, had then been swallowed whole when it activated its Gigantic Form.

"Praise be to the Titan God. I offer up half my life energy in tribute—grant me the Titan's power!"

Roaar!

A bestial roar echoed within the whale's belly—the wrathful cry of the Titan God.

Inside that gargantuan stomach, Orion sacrificed half his life energy through Blood Sacrifice. Under the terrifying force of that sacrificial power, he broke free from the sonar binding.

With a thunderous roar, he drove his trident deep into the whale's inner walls, struggling against the powerful suction in its belly. In that moment, Orion's body began to expand, his height surging rapidly.

One by one, mysterious black-and-gold runes spread across his entire body, infusing him with blisteringly pure divine power.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

A cacophony of rapid bone growth sounded from within.

Then came two sharp tearing noises as Orion's body grew bigger yet again, muscles bulging, lightning and abyssal energy swirling around him. His hair lengthened, lashing wildly behind him.

Those rune-filled eyes showed only coldness and intent to kill.

Compared to the last time he used Blood Sacrifice, Orion had gained even more power. It gave him such a sense of supremacy that he regarded everything before him with absolute indifference.

Jerking the trident from the whale's flesh, he paid no heed to the suction trying to pull him deeper. Holding his hand aloft, he summoned the Eightfold Spear Barrage.

Yet now the Eightfold Spear Barrage appeared different than before—spider spears were bristling with black-and-gold markings, their aura as savage as a wild beast.

It almost felt like Orion had called forth a swarm of ancient, starved spider creatures rather than simply summoning the Eightfold Spear Barrage.

Szzk! Szzk! Szzk!

The projectiles bored into the ancient giant-horned whale's body, acting like vampiric arachnids that drained the very flesh and blood they pierced.

A shrill, wailing cry sounded from the whale—bearing an eerie resemblance to a sobbing girl.

But this sorrowful lament preceded an even more fearsome strike.

With a series of popping sounds—pup, pup, pup—the whale's bones seemed to come terrifyingly alive inside its body.

They wriggled free of the tissue, clustering into a prison of bone swords that closed in around Orion.

Faced with this bone-sword cage compressing from every side, Orion had few options. Despite the whale's Gigantic Form, the internal space felt noticeably cramped for Orion, whose body had also enlarged under his sacrificial power.

He triggered Battle Will Surge, summoning a spherical energy field that forcibly held back the bone-sword cage.

Just when he sighed in relief, a foul, highly corrosive rush of fluid surged upward from below, enveloping him in less than a second.

"Even if you've reached arch lord level, you will still be eroded bit by bit within my 'Spatial Water Prison' and 'Acidic Corrosion.'"

The ancient giant-horned whale's telepathic message echoed in Orion's mind, carrying a feminine tone.

Sensing Orion's current aura at arch lord intensity, the whale presumed he had broken through during their battle.

"Nobody has ever survived my 'Devouring' ... not a single one..."

Orion gave no reply. By now, he was certain fungal creatures were far from mere low-level beasts.

Chapter 509 509: Arch lord's aura

From the recent assault launched by the slime molds, it's clear that entities like the slime molds broodmother and broodmother counterpart are all highly intelligent beings.

Perhaps the broodmother counterpart's words just now were meant to undermine Orion's confidence.

In this mysterious domain, they are employing hypnosis and various forms of manipulation to target Orion's subconscious desire for victory and self-assurance.

Because at this moment, Orion's power is locked in a grueling contest with the giant-horned whale's devouring force.

In a time like this, any wavering can lead to defeat.

...

Soraya City remains under ongoing invasion by the fungal creatures.

Guarded by undead, small scorpions, and cannon fodder troops, Soraya City repelling wave after wave of slime molds mutants.

With the aid of arrow towers and low-level magic towers, those slime molds monsters are dealt heavy blows.

However, powered by the slime molds layer as their supply source, the mutants do not relent; instead, their assault grows even fiercer and more frenzied.

Soraya and Vexis are witnessing all of this.

They now stand atop the city walls, gazing into the distance.

They're well aware that the source of the battle's tremors is precisely the direction where Orion vanished.

"There's no mistaking it—it's an Arch Lord's aura!"

"This kind of aftermath could only be unleashed by an Arch Lord."

"Could it be that Orion joined up with my master, and they were ambushed?"

Vexis's speculation finds no validation, as she can no longer reach Arthas.

That, in turn, also means Orion and Arthas are both in hot water.

The good news is that Vexis has a contract with Arthas and can sense that he's still alive.

"Can you sense Orion's condition at all?"

Vexis turns to Soraya, who is dressed in vivid red, her arms and legs exposed to the air. She looks all the more graceful.

Especially in that setting—sandstorms swirling around them, the grand city walls beneath—Soraya possesses a certain carefree poise, a vision of striking beauty at first glance.

"I can't sense him!"

Soraya shakes her head, her tone laden with worry.

"But I know Orion is still alive!"

Like Vexis, Soraya also shares a contract with Orion.

He left suddenly, stayed gone for a long time, and then this conflict among Arch Lord-level beings erupted right outside Soraya City.

Leaving only Vexis and Soraya to defend the city doesn't exactly bode well for the situation.

"Let's go back!"

"Soraya City's survival in the midst of this slime molds tide depends on you continuously hatching small scorpions."

Vexis offers Soraya some advice, speaking from an overarching strategic perspective.

For Soraya City to hold out against this next wave, Soraya herself is absolutely essential.

"It won't be delayed. The hatching process is already ongoing!"

Without another word to Vexis, Soraya casts one last look at where Orion disappeared, then turns and heads back toward her Nest.

"I will protect Soraya City!"

"I'll be here waiting for you. You must come back!"

Deep inside, Soraya quietly prays for Orion's safety; she has already fallen deeply in love with that giant.

...

Survivor's Platform, Champions Alliance public channel.

Leonidas: "Damn it, I still can't reach Arthas or Hulk. What on earth should we do now?"

Leonidas: "Alexander, Edward, say something!"

Leonidas is anxious, extremely worried about Arthas and Hulk's predicament.

But the public channel is silent; nobody speaks, not even Kraken.

In truth, with so many fungal creatures from the sea shifting to the mainland, Kraken is hardly idle.

At this moment, Kraken is on a rampage, hunting Legendary-level slime molds parasitic creatures beneath his rank.

Kraken is painfully aware that right now, he's the weakest in the Champions Alliance.

He's also vying with Orion to see who can become an Arch Lord first and earn Deputy Commander Edward's reward.

"I hope Arthas and Hulk both come out of this unscathed!"

As he hunts, Kraken can only pray in silence for these two allies.

Alexander: "Come on, can you shut up for a moment? You're driving me fucking insane!"

Alexander: "I've already sent reliable subordinates through the teleportation arrays to Bone City and Soraya City."

Alexander: "We'll get an update on the situation soon enough."

Alexander's words carry a hint of emotion.

For Alexander, this is rare.

As an assassin, he's supposed to discard any unnecessary emotions, since they slow the speed of drawing a blade and weaken resolve.

Yet any sentient being can't possibly cast aside all emotions.

And Alexander invests what little he has in the Champions Alliance, in these comrades.

After all, they, like him, come from Earth.

In a sense, they know and understand each other—and treasure one another all the more for it.

Leonidas: "Right, Arthas and Hulk both built cities with teleportation arrays. I can't believe I forgot something so crucial!"

He stops speaking, presumably rushing to order his subordinates to gather news.

In the western, southern, and eastern regions, there's only one slime molds broodmother apiece, so Leonidas, Alexander, and Edward's storm avatar can handle them with relative ease.

But since both sides are currently pinning each other down, no one can break away to help.

Alexander: "Bone City is completely safe, all is well."

Alexander: "Arthas has pulled all the enemies into his death domain. We don't know the details yet, so we'll have to wait and see."

A moment later, Alexander speaks again, his tone now cool and emotionless.

This calm, collected demeanor is the Alexander everyone usually knows.

Leonidas: "And what about Hulk?"

Alexander bringing no mention of Arthas being killed is already good news to Leonidas.

For powerhouses at Leonidas's level, as long as they aren't taken out in an instant, they can reveal their trump cards and stall the enemy.

With no news about Orion, though, Leonidas can't help worrying.

Alexander: "Hulk isn't with Arthas, and he's not in his Soraya City, either."

Alexander: "Based on reports from the lich stationed in Soraya City, I deduce that Hulk was ambushed by a broodmother counterpart while out hunting fungal creatures."

Alexander: "That's the situation, and we'll have to wait for further information to confirm the details."

Leonidas falls silent, as though waiting—and also preoccupied with battling a slime molds broodmother.

Deputy Commander Edward remains quiet too; his true form is busy tying down a demigod, while his avatar engages a slime molds broodmother. It's no small burden on him.

Chapter 510 510: Go all in

What does it feel like to be trapped and killed?

It's an immense pressure, a perpetual surge of pain and terror that only continues to grow. That's exactly where Orion finds himself now—completely at a loss.

When Orion first activated his Titan Form and triggered the Blood Sacrifice, he easily slew Ariel, who was one level higher than he was at the time.

Back then, Ariel was merely at the lower Legendary level, making the victory seem effortless. That success gave Orion tremendous confidence—faith in his Titan bloodline.

But things are different this time.

Orion's enemy is a mighty broodmother counterpart accompanied by an ancient giant-horned whale—one that's colossal in size and powerful in its abilities. What's more, this ancient giant-horned whale isn't a mere newcomer at the Arch Lord level but rather an upper Arch Lord, second only to the slime molds broodmother.

In this fight, Orion is struggling hard.

Right now, trapped by the ancient giant-horned whale's devouring power, Orion stands immobilized within a cage made of bone swords, which confines his movements. Meanwhile, his ears are assaulted constantly by the whale's shrill cries—sonic reverberations and sonar imprisonment.

If the bone sword cage restricts Orion's body, then the sonar imprisonment and sonic vibration attacks bear down on his spirit.

In this state, Orion can only concentrate on resisting the invasive sounds echoing in his mind. Worse yet, beyond the bone sword cage lies an additional Spatial Water Prison.

Inside that Spatial Water Prison, waves of Acidic Corrosion sweep over Orion like a spring, constantly eroding his body. His situation looks grim—he cannot move, and escape seems impossible.

So, the two sides remain locked in a stalemate, gradually wearing each other down.

...

Bone City, death domain.

Crackling noises fill the air—flames burning.

More precisely, the sound of oil igniting.

A gigantic tadpole-shaped slime molds monster lies at Arthas's feet.

"One fewer enemy."

"If you came here, don't even think about leaving my domain alive."

Standing atop this defeated tadpole-like slime molds monster, Arthas allows the white flames licking his own body to go completely ignored. The blaze seems to carry no heat for him, raging across his form without causing him the slightest harm.

But in the blink of an eye, the body beneath Arthas's feet is consumed to nothing.

"Your body of faith has been shattered. You've lost your strongest trump card."

"The next to die will be you!"

With its foot planted on the layer, the slime molds broodmother gathers limitless power within. Its mouth swells, and it spits out three mucus-coated eggs.

Upon landing in the slime molds layer, these three eggs hungrily absorb the layer's nutrition and energy. A minute later, three slime molds mutants emerge, shaped vaguely like massive dragons. Unlike dragons, however, they are covered in a dense array of sharp spikes rather than scales, and they bear an extra set of menacing claws on their abdomens.

Strangest of all, each of these fearsome slime molds mutants radiates an aura of light magic. This bizarre combination quickly draws Arthas's attention.

"It seems you came prepared."

Indeed, to take Arthas down, the slime molds broodmother had secretly nurtured three Arch Lord-level, light-affinity slime molds mutants—waiting for this very day.

"Evil undead must be cleansed!"

The broodmother's voice resonates with an almost magnetic quality. At this moment, it resembles some radiant goddess awakened in mortal form.

"Hahaha..."

Arthas lets out a peal of laughter. A monster like the slime molds broodmother actually labeling him an evil undead is absurd to him.

"Fungal creatures using light magic? What a joke."

He raises his sword slowly, pointing it directly at one particular slime molds mutant.

"Fatal Strike!"

Intense sword energy erupts, fused with both deathly aura and flames. The two forces combined reach their pinnacle, radiating like a black sun.

At that instant, an unusual light illuminates the death domain. Beneath that glow, all things melt and disintegrate.

...

Soraya City, surrounding area.

While Arthas grows ever more formidable in combat, Orion refuses to let himself be worn away by corrosion, fighting back fiercely.

Under the restraint of sonar imprisonment and sonic vibrations, Orion feels every muscle in his body tighten as if being compressed bit by bit. The intense pressure on his eardrums and pupils is agonizingly clear—worse than suffocation, as though his whole body and spirit might be squeezed into a flat disc.

Crack!

During this relentless compression, the Curse of Sorrow at Orion's waist, already under strain, finally shatters. The moment it breaks, the long-suppressed Curse of a Hundred Blossoms emerges like a beast unleashed, and its curse markings instantly appear upon Orion's chest.

A flurry of flower buds, crystalline and divine, begins to bloom, leaving Orion with an aura that's both fierce and strangely sacred.

But this is hardly a blessing. In such a critical moment, the Curse of a Hundred Blossoms is like salt poured into a wound—a poisonous threat to Orion's very life.

With an Arch Lord-level enemy before him, and no reinforcements in sight, Orion grows more anxious by the minute. The sudden flare of the Curse of a Hundred Blossoms makes him realize that he can rely only on himself.

"Looks like I have no choice but to go all in!"

Whether it's a grim acceptance of his fate or simply refusing to surrender, Orion suddenly feels like the ancient giant-horned whale's crushing pressure has eased a bit.

"All right then, let's hurt each other!"

WAAAGH!

Orion keeps roaring, echoing from the depths of his soul.

As Titan's Roar erupts, the sonar imprisonment and sonic vibrations are momentarily forced back, freeing Orion's body for a split second.

In the next moment, Eightfold Spear Barrage manifests—but not as a wide-area attack this time. Instead, Orion fuses all his spider spears into one, forging a crimson trident enveloped in potent energy that crackles with electricity.

"Break!"

He hurls the trident straight toward the ancient giant-horned whale, aiming for its depths.

But that isn't the end. The Battle Will Surge array before Orion shrinks rapidly, allowing him to use Instant Impact and charge straight ahead.

By doing so, Orion's body is once again subjected to the brunt of sonar imprisonment and sonic vibrations—to say nothing of the Spatial Water Prison and Acidic Corrosion that follow, then finally the physical damage inflicted by the bone sword cage.

The instant Orion bursts free, the Battle Will Surge array absorbs the Spatial Water Prison and Acidic Corrosion before shattering in turn.