

Titan King 661

Chapter 661: Intelligence exchange

The interests of nobles who reached Alpha-level strength would be protected by the kingdom.

King, nobles, territory, subjects, faith—the human kingdom possessed its own advancement system. Within this, various factors intersected and influenced each other, but the most important was still individual strength.

"My friend, Torin has now become a true noble; he is different from those nobles who only possess a title."

"In Soaring Bird City, as its lord, he should be respected."

"That damned guard must have been drunk to dare demand an entrance fee from our city lord. He truly deserved to die!"

Henrik frowned, his face grim as he looked at Mateo.

They had known each other for a long time and had cooperated for a long time.

Mateo understood Henrik; similarly, Henrik also understood Mateo.

"You mean..."

Henrik realized something and spoke to confirm the answer in his heart with Mateo.

"If he's dead, he's dead. Giving him enough compensation will settle the matter."

"What we need to do is cooperate, cooperate with Lord Torin, stabilize the current situation. This trade route has already created many benefits for us."

"What we need to do now is to maintain everything as it is."

"This is also what those who support us from behind want to see."

Mateo made a toasting gesture and, without waiting for Henrik's response, began to drink by himself.

"Henrik, I must remind you, our city lord is a clever man, and clever men hold grudges."

"Have those subordinates of yours restrain themselves a bit, and show him some more respect."

Mateo let out a drunken hiccup, somewhat unsatisfied; his lovemaking with those two women had been interrupted earlier, and he hadn't had enough.

"The city lord only took away the leading guard, cut off his tongue, and publicly punished and convicted him outside the palace."

"Do you know what this means?"

"The Baron is telling us he needs dignity, he needs benefits."

"He's showing everyone his muscle; he's a noble with strength."

Mateo came forward and refilled his and Henrik's goblets.

"Friend, let's just pretend we know nothing about this matter."

"Since the city lord didn't involve us, then this matter ends here."

"Tomorrow, I will host a banquet. Add City Lord Torin to our VIP list..."

Sometimes, power needed to be fought for through a process of struggle.

Evidently, Torin also understood this, and he played the game very smoothly.

On this day, the residents and travelers of Soaring Bird City heard their city lord's voice.

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Time flew; in the blink of an eye, half a month had passed.

Looking down at the trees on the ground, Orion directed the thunderhawk to land near the outskirts of the City of Blessings.

This was out of respect for the blood elf race, just as the blood elf race also respected the Stoneheart Horde's rules.

In fact, Orion's group's tracks had been monitored since they entered blood elf territory.

The blood elf race had even dispatched guides for this, preventing Orion's powerful entourage from causing panic.

At the city gate, Elf King Rommath was at the front, with Elders Lireesa and Lycanor following behind.

"Giant King Orion, welcome to the City of Blessings!"

Elf King Rommath and Orion exchanged salutes; this was king to king, the highest level of guest-welcoming etiquette.

Then, under the curious gazes of countless blood elves, Orion boarded a large carriage prepared for him by the blood elf race, passed through the blood elves' main street, and entered the royal palace.

Following that was a grand welcoming banquet, with Elf King Rommath and Orion as the main figures.

Midway through the banquet, Elf King Rommath excused himself to prepare for the upcoming formal meeting, leaving Lycanor, who was familiar with Orion, to keep him company.

"Apologies, Giant King Orion, Tarn did not join the elven race's invasion team."

"He entered the human kingdom half a month ago."

The brothers Fergus and Tarn had once represented Orion as envoys to the blood elf race. Coming to the City of Blessings, it was inevitable that Orion and Lycanor would mention them in conversation.

"I have to say, Fergus and Tarn are both brave giant warriors!"

Orion nodded, noncommittal on this point.

When it came to battle, giant warriors never feared.

"Lord Lycanor, did you gain anything from the blood elf invasion of the otherworld this time?"

"Perhaps we can exchange some intelligence."

"If we are still the ones actively invading next year, perhaps the intelligence we exchange will be useful."

Lycanor shook his head and pushed a platter of exquisite roasted meat in front of Orion.

"Giant King Orion, regarding this matter, you can discuss it in detail with His Majesty later."

Orion nodded. Exchanging intelligence about the otherworld was a small matter; discussing the purpose of the dragon race's upcoming Five-Race Conference was the main point.

Thus, another hour passed.

The banquet continued, only the main figures had disappeared from it.

In a conference room in the royal palace, Giant King Orion, Elf King Rommath, and Grand Elder Lireesa sat facing each other.

Even now, looking at Orion up close, Elf King Rommath was still full of curiosity about the Giant King before him.

In the south, after the North-South War, apart from the white dragon Frostsire, the name of the Giant King was the most renowned.

In the North-South War, Orion had led his race to the position of the fifth major race.

His deeds had long since spread among the other four races.

Elf King Rommath was ambitious; he too wanted to revitalize the blood elf race.

"Giant King Orion, this is the otherworld intelligence you wanted."

The one who broke the silence was not Elf King Rommath, but Elder Lireesa.

Elder Lireesa took out a piece of parchment, placed it on the conference table, and pushed it towards Orion.

Orion picked up the parchment, scanned it, then took out a piece of parchment of his own and pushed it forward.

This was an intelligence exchange; some things were duplicated.

Orion believed the blood elf race was surely hiding something.

Of course, Orion was doing the same.

"Elf King Rommath, are you preparing to go to the dragon race territory personally?"

Orion put away the parchment and got straight to the point.

"Apologies, this time the Arch Elder will represent me."

Elf King Rommath shook his head. When he spoke, he appeared very composed and confident.

However, when his eyes met Orion's, his lack of inner confidence was exposed.

Through the blood elf race's secret technique, Elf King Rommath's strength had improved, but compared to Orion and Lireesa, he was still lacking.

Insufficient strength and mental acuity limited Elf King Rommath.

"The coastline of our Stoneheart Horde's western territory has not recently experienced any large-scale invasion incidents, nor have any strange occurrences taken place."

Starting with the coastline and the Sea Race, Orion was laying his cards on the table for the two opposite him.

"Nothing unusual has occurred in our blood elf race's territory either."

The speaker was Elf King Rommath. He felt that whatever Orion said, responding accordingly was the best way to handle it.

Unfortunately, such confident behavior, in Lireesa's eyes from the side, still seemed a bit too hasty.

Chapter 662: Territorial disputes

However, Lireesa didn't offer any pointers, because the Elf King also needed opportunities to grow.

And the Giant King sitting opposite him was the best object of study and comparison.

"However, based on the intelligence we obtained from the human kingdom and the blood elf race's historical records regarding the Sea Race, we have made a prediction."

Grand Elder Lireesa took over from the Elf King, leading to the information she wanted to tell Orion.

"What prediction?"

This was Grand Elder Lireesa's astuteness; some things, when said proactively by oneself versus having the other party ask, achieved different effects and established different relative statuses.

In response to Orion's inquiry, Lireesa feigned deep thought, as if considering or organizing her words.

But the atmosphere, within these few seconds of her contemplation, became much more grave and serious.

"War is about to break out!"

"A war between us and the Sea Race!"

Orion was silent. He certainly understood that "us" here referred to their Five-Race Alliance, meaning all races on the continent whose territories bordered the sea.

"What will cause the war?"

Orion pressed further. Regarding the blood elf race's prediction, the Stoneheart Horde also had similar speculations.

However, the Stoneheart Horde wasn't as certain as the blood elf race.

The main reason was that the Stoneheart Horde had been in the south for too short a time and clearly lacked historical depth.

Many records and secrets about major events in the southern region were completely blank to them.

"Because of territorial disputes. Over ten thousand years ago, this entire continent was the dragon race's territory."

"Later, the human race came across the sea and sealed that arch lord-level white dragon."

"To fight against the other foreign tribes on the continent, the humans allied with the dwarves and blood elves, drove the foreign tribes to the north, and occupied the most fertile south."

"This is also why the human kingdom has always been the dominant power on the continent; they are much stronger than we imagine."

It seemed this history had no connection to the Sea Race, but Orion listened very attentively.

"Now that powerful white dragon has returned, the dragon race definitely wants to reclaim their former territory."

"However, with us other four races united, the dragon race will have a very difficult time."

From this point, Grand Elder Lireesa's voice became slightly lower, because the blood elf race was severely battered during this period.

Their previous Elf King was killed by the white dragon Frostsire.

"Under these circumstances, the dragon race can only set its sights on the sea regions."

"Unlike us land-based races, the dragon race has no such limitations as sea, land, or air."

"The dragon race and the Sea Race will definitely go to war."

"And the dragon race will surely want to drag us into this war."

Grand Elder Lireesa looked up, directly at Orion, and said word by word.

"Giant King Orion, for peace, for our people to have a stable life, we must reach a consensus, we must have a unified opinion."

"The blood elves do not need war!"

Orion nodded, met the gaze of this wise elf, and gave the same response.

"The Stoneheart Horde does not need war either!"

Grand Elder Lireesa nodded, a gratified smile appearing on her face. Elf King Rommath beside her, seeing they had reached an agreement, also breathed a sigh of relief.

The blood elves' territory on land bordered the giant territory to the north, the human kingdom to the east, the dragon race territory to the south, and the sea region to the west. Such surrounding environs made it extremely easy to be dragged into war.

Now that the giants and blood elves were in agreement, the two races signing a peace treaty afterwards would be a logical consequence.

In this way, the blood elves would have some relief in the north.

"Giant King Orion, the blood elf race is willing to further deepen its trade relations with the Stoneheart Horde. This is our needs list for the last three years; I believe you will be interested."

After discussing the important matters, Grand Elder Lireesa shifted the topic to trade, attempting to ease the atmosphere a bit.

Orion took the list Lireesa pushed over and also sent over the Stoneheart Horde's purchase list.

This kind of thing, Delilah had already prepared it before he came.

Orion's visit this time wasn't just to discuss matters concerning the dragon race; more importantly, it was to handle the trade relations and past diplomatic frictions between the Stoneheart Horde and the Blood Elves.

The Stoneheart Horde's and the blood elf race's territories were adjacent. Along the border, various unauthorized crossings and racial migrations occurred from time to time.

Orion came this time to resolve all these matters outright and lighten Delilah's burden.

For these minor matters, Orion stayed in the City of Blessings for another three days before traveling together with Grand Elder Lireesa towards the dragon race territory.

Emerald Dream Realm, Red Moon Valley, Lorelia City.

After the cross-realm invasion ended, Lumi walked out of the cavern where the cross-realm teleportation array was located.

At this moment, the Red Moon Valley area was still a vast expanse frozen for thousands of miles, with snow drifting for tens of thousands.

Lumi, dressed in white, stood on a section of Red Moon Valley's city wall, bathed in the wind and snow, gazing into the distance.

"Lumi, why do you think Master hasn't descended here yet?"

Lorelia, enduring the cold, climbed the city wall, came to Lumi's side, and imitated her by looking into the distance.

Unfortunately, Lorelia's quick-darting red eyes, no matter how she imitated, couldn't replicate Lumi's unique temperament.

"Either the timing isn't right, or he's been delayed by something."

Lumi turned, glanced at Lorelia, and could feel that Orion really liked this little girl.

Orion's gaze towards Lorelia was like looking at a dotingly regarded junior.

It was just that, in Lumi's eyes, this little girl was a spider queen with a particularly active and agile mind.

"Those newly born subjects of mine are all crying out in hunger. I don't know how long we have to wait."

Lorelia was lying. For this invasion, Orion had specially transferred her over and stuffed her with a huge amount of supplies.

Rather than her subjects being hungry, it was more that Lorelia had grown impatient staying in Red Moon Valley and couldn't wait to go out and see this brand new world.

"You should be thinking about how to advance to Legendary level now."

Lumi gazed into the distance, not knowing what she herself was looking at.

It was just that every time Lorelia mentioned Orion, an inexplicable anticipation and joy would arise in Lumi's heart.

"Hehe... Lumi, did you also notice I've advanced to Alpha peak?"

To be honest, Lorelia was a little smug. She had endured the cold to come here because, deep down, she just wanted someone to praise her and satisfy her little bit of vanity.

"If Master were here, he would definitely praise Lorelia as the most talented Spider Queen."

Lorelia squinted her eyes, her heart filled with joy.

Although she didn't get Orion's praise, Lumi mentioning this also made her very happy.

Ever since descending into the Emerald Dream Realm, Lorelia had found that her strength was increasing much faster than before.

She felt that the air was permeated with a power that was constantly making her stronger.

"Lumi, Lorelia will watch the distant drifting snow with you, and the clouds that Master also likes..."

Chapter 663: It seems like there have been huge changes here

Red Moon Valley, another exit.

Unlike Lumi gazing into the distance, Onyx and Dirtclaw were patrolling the city walls as a team.

"When Lord Orion descends, you'd best have him check your body."

Onyx turned his head, very concerned about Dirtclaw beside him.

In just a few months, Dirtclaw's strength had surged to Alpha peak, and his aura was becoming increasingly deep and powerful.

This abnormal growth made Onyx very worried.

"Hmm... Although I don't feel anything abnormal, I'll listen to you."

"If even you feel it's not normal, then there must be something wrong, it's just that I can't feel it."

Dirtclaw grunted in acknowledgment. He had recently been immersed in the joy of his strength increasing, somewhat unable to extricate himself.

Advancing from late Alpha-level to peak, although only a small step, was a level that stumped many.

"Those abnormal little spiders are also increasing in number. I hope Orion can descend soon."

Onyx looked up, gazing at the arrow towers built on the mountain peaks. Such an imposing fortress—he really didn't know what great cost it would take to breach it from the outside.

"Prophet, recently, more and more dark creatures have been braving the wind and snow to enter this territory. Should we be more proactive?"

Ice and snow continuously covering the Red Moon Valley area was, in itself, not normal.

As long as the surrounding lords weren't fools, they would surely realize something was happening here.

Lumi's proactive appearance, her aura, served as a deterrent to the surrounding neighbors.

Despite this, dark creatures still came to Red Moon Valley to gather intelligence.

"Lord Orion just told us to wait, so we wait."

"Those dark creatures that barge in—just kill them and use them as extra food for the little spiders."

Onyx stood on the city wall, gazing into the distance. Faint dark shapes could be seen crawling in the snow far away.

"Anyway, with the heavy snow blocking the roads, ordinary dark creature colonies are unlikely to attack."

"Even if some do barge in, we'll kill as many as come."

Dirtclaw's tone was slightly deep and cold; his teeth and eyes emitted a ferocious gleam at this moment.

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Titanion Realm, Dragon Race territory.

After half a month of traveling day and night, Orion and Grand Elder Lireesa of the blood elf race arrived as a group at Whitecliff City.

The one who came out of the city to welcome Orion was Zephyros, a Legendary level powerhouse.

Orion had met him before. When the Sea Race attacked, Zephyros and a dragon beast had emerged from the Dragon Nest to assist Glacial Dragon Jorik in repelling the invasion.

Orion's face was expressionless, but his heart sank.

Among the dragon race, the one Orion was most familiar with was Glacial Dragon Jorik.

But this time, it wasn't him who came to welcome them.

Furthermore, within Orion's range of perception, Jorik's aura was absent.

"Mr. Orion, Lady Lireesa, welcome to Whitecliff!"

"Compared to last year, Whitecliff's scenery is even more pleasant, and it is also more hospitable."

Orion and Lireesa both saluted; they were acquaintances, without the restraint found between strangers.

"Long time no see, Mr. Zephyros!"

"I thought Jorik would be the one to welcome me out of the city."

After responding to Zephyros, Orion stealthily inquired about Jorik.

"Lord Orion, I'm afraid you'll be disappointed. Jorik has gone to the dragon race's ancestral land for further training."

Orion nodded, not minding, treating it as a very normal occurrence.

"This way, please. The Dragon Emperor is waiting for you both!"

As he spoke, Zephyros led Orion and Lireesa towards the inner city.

Compared to when Orion last came, Whitecliff City had greatly changed in appearance.

It was as if it had been repainted; the buildings in the city looked brand new, and there were more pavilions and houses along the roads.

Moreover, Whitecliff City no longer had that heavily guarded atmosphere of the past.

Various foreign races walking on the streets gave the city a touch more vitality.

"It seems like there have been huge changes here!"

Orion laughed, alluding to something.

However, Zephyros made no response, leading the way with a smile on his face.

Lireesa and Orion exchanged a glance; both could see the peculiarity in each other's eyes.

Just now, Zephyros had said the Dragon Emperor was waiting for them; the meaning of this sentence was somewhat different.

The three had no communication. Under the gazes of Whitecliff's numerous residents, the group slowly advanced and arrived before an ancient castle.

"Grand Elder Lireesa, last time we came to Whitecliff, it seems this ancient castle wasn't here, was it?"

Orion feigned surprise at the ancient castle before him.

"Indeed, it wasn't!"

Lireesa shook her head; her memory was very good.

"My lords, this is His Majesty the Dragon Emperor's residence, summoned back from underground not long ago."

Orion nodded, a look of amazement on his face.

That explained it!

Whitecliff was Arch Lord Frostsire's territory; having some miraculous buildings was perfectly normal.

"My lords, please!"

Maidservants came forward to lead the way. Zephyros stepped aside, yielding the path to Orion and Lireesa.

Neither Orion nor Lireesa spoke; they exchanged a glance and entered the ancient castle one after the other.

Orion could understand why the white dragon Frostsire didn't personally come out to greet them.

After all, Frostsire was an arch lord, a whole major level above them; putting on airs was inevitable.

Soon, the two arrived at the ancient castle's great hall, where merfolk were currently dancing.

However, just as Orion and Lireesa were about to step into the great hall, the dancing girls slowly retreated, and a deep, sonorous, and familiar voice sounded.

"Hahaha... Welcome, King of Giants and Grand Elder of the blood elf race, to my Ancient Castle!"

It was the white dragon Frostsire. His voice was very deep, carrying a sense of great age.

Orion had heard this voice in the Black Forest; it had left an extremely deep impression on him.

Simultaneously, a pressure belonging to an arch lord swept over, rushing directly towards Orion and Lireesa.

This pressure wasn't deliberately aimed at Orion and Lireesa, but its appearance was also a display of the arch lord's majesty.

In just that brief moment, Grand Elder Lireesa of the blood elf race suddenly became much more stooped; she was completely suppressed by the pressure.

Only at this moment was Orion certain that what resided in the Ancient Castle was not some will projection at all, but an avatar of the white dragon Frostsire.

And this avatar's strength was very formidable, likely at the peak Legendary level.

Orion sighed. He actually wanted to be low-key; Deputy Commander Edward's earlier reminder was still vivid in his mind.

However, sometimes, one couldn't choose to be low-key or to yield.

Orion straightened his chest, his own pressure emanating outwards, resisting that arch lord's pressure, and then walked into the ancient castle's great hall with a calm expression.

Behind him, Grand Elder Lireesa had a look of shock, staring at Orion's back in disbelief.

Chapter 664: Banquet

"He... he easily withstood the arch lord's majesty?"

In Lireesa's view, this was simply an impossible thing.

However, the fact was right before her eyes, and Lireesa had no choice but to believe.

Just then, that arch lord's pressure vanished, and Orion's pressure also disappeared with it.

Lireesa breathed a sigh of relief and also walked into the ancient castle's great hall.

"Hahaha... Back when I first escaped, I had a bellyful of anger that was difficult to vent, so I swept along the northern foreign tribes and headed south to stir up war."

"Orion, I didn't expect that after our hurried meeting back then—I originally didn't hold much hope for you—you would actually create the current fifth major race of the south."

The white dragon Frostsire stood up to welcome Orion and Lireesa.

What was somewhat special was that Frostsire guided Orion to a position directly opposite him.

That position signified equal and honored status with Frostsire.

From the confrontation of pressures just now, Frostsire had already discovered the extraordinariness of Orion's strength.

Therefore, he treated Orion as a powerhouse of the same level as himself.

Frostsire had to do this because the one receiving Orion was his avatar, not his true self.

If his true self were here, he would definitely consider himself a notch above Orion.

"Since His Majesty the Dragon Emperor invited me, how could I dare not come?"

Orion adopted a very humble posture, was very polite to Frostsire, and proactively returned the salute.

Although what was before him was only Frostsire's avatar, his true self's strength was on the same level as Leonidas and Alexander; Orion had to give the due respect.

This was veneration for the strong!

"Hahaha... I heard from Jorik that our two races have been allies since the north."

"We were before, we are now, and we will be in the future!"

After inviting Orion to be seated, the white dragon Frostsire then addressed Grand Elder Lireesa.

Orion glanced at the representatives of the human and dwarf races who had long been seated and whose expressions weren't looking too good.

They were Prophet Dain of the dwarves and Grand Duke Richard of the humans.

Orion nodded to these two acquaintances, and they also responded with smiles; however, the smiles on both their faces were wry ones.

Although these two were also Legendary level powerhouses, in front of the white dragon Frostsire, they could only be considered supporting roles; their conversation had been suppressed from beginning to end.

The arrival of Orion and Lireesa allowed them to breathe a slight sigh of relief, as if the pressure had been shared.

"Everyone, today we will not discuss official business; this is merely a banquet."

The white dragon Frostsire gave a call, and dancing girls entered in single file; the melodious sound of conch shells filled the great hall.

Music filled the ears, wine and meat were served aplenty. Orion also enjoyed this moment, freely partaking of the delicacies brought forth.

"Giant King Orion, our human kingdom needs a batch of fire stones, coal, timber, iron ore, copper ore, mithril..."

The singing, dancing, and music continued, but at the banquet, everyone had different thoughts.

Indeed, Orion had just filled his stomach when Grand Duke Richard sent a voice transmission.

"Mr. Richard, the Stoneheart Horde needs equipment, weapons, grain, magical plants, and large siege weapons."

Orion stated what he needed.

"Giant King Orion, we can trade grain and weapons, but large siege weapons are somewhat difficult."

Grand Duke Richard's expression was calm as he reluctantly agreed to Orion's trade request.

"Next year, the year after... who can guarantee we won't continue invading other worlds?"

"Mr. Richard, we need large siege weapons."

Hearing this, Grand Duke Richard's expression relaxed considerably. His biggest worry was that the Stoneheart Horde, after purchasing siege weapons, would target the human kingdom.

Knowing that Orion's intended targets were dark creatures, he felt there was room for discussion on this matter.

Just like that, Orion and Richard completed a trade.

And the true purpose of both parties, each knew clearly in their own hearts.

Grand Duke Richard, through the means of trade, reached a unified opinion with Orion.

Meaning, no matter what program the white dragon Frostsire arranged next, or what suggestions he proposed, the human kingdom, dwarves, blood elves, and Stoneheart Horde would have a unified opinion.

The four races united, thereby counterbalancing the dragon race led by the white dragon Frostsire's avatar.

A moment later, Prophet Dain the dwarf and Lireesa the blood elf both looked cryptically at Orion. Orion nodded and smiled, which counted as them having acknowledged each other.

And the white dragon Frostsire on the main seat, as if he hadn't seen anything, was appreciating the graceful dance of the mermaids.

Until late at night, when the banquet dispersed, no one proactively brought up the main purpose of this Five-Race Conference.

In the latter half of the night, in the palace where Orion was staying, the churning water in the bath gradually calmed.

Orion stepped out of the bath, put on his clothes, and donned his cloak.

"News of the succubus branch—she might have it on her. Interrogate her!"

From a dark corner, two figures emerged and took away a succubus from the palace.

This succubus had been sent by the white dragon Frostsire.

He must have heard that Orion's wife was also a succubus, which was why he sent a succubus slave girl.

Being able to see a succubus slave girl in the dragon race territory's Whitecliff City was a good thing for Orion.

Because it meant there was new progress regarding the succubus branch Delilah had been searching for.

Last time, among the slaves sent by the human kingdom to Stoneheart City, a succubus slave girl had appeared. After Delilah bought that succubus, she hadn't obtained the whereabouts of the succubus branch from her.

Now, encountering another succubus in the dragon race territory, hopefully, those succubus warriors of the Sentinel Corps could obtain valuable intelligence from her.

Orion came to the balcony, gazing at Whitecliff illuminated by a shimmering glow, and formed a new impression of this city.

The last time Orion came here, it was like a dead city.

This time, with the arch lord white dragon Frostsire appearing in Whitecliff, this main city of the dragon race had undergone a magnificent transformation, exuding a dream-like charm.

It was clear that the Sea Race hadn't invaded the dragon race's cities for some time at least.

"Perhaps it's not that they haven't invaded, but that they can't invade."

Orion gazed at the Ancient Castle not far away, recalling the day's experiences, continuously speculating on the white dragon Frostsire's intentions.

Chapter 665: Marina

A soft rustling broke the silence behind Orion.

The mermaid, previously unconscious, had awakened. She'd slipped into a sheer veil and now stood behind him, submissive as a slave awaiting orders. Sent by the white dragon Frostsire, her purpose was to bathe Orion.

As she began washing him, Orion's gaze lingered on her breathtaking curves and otherworldly beauty. Her delicate hands moved over his body, and when she gently cleaned his cock and balls, his arousal was immediate and undeniable.

His erection pressed against her, lifting her slightly as if she were caught on a lever. The mermaid's eyes widened in shock, but she didn't resist. She'd known, from the moment she agreed to bathe him, where this would lead.

Their encounter escalated quickly. Orion and the mermaid had sex, her compliance unwavering.

To his surprise, her lack of legs posed no obstacle. When she climaxed, her fish-like tail transformed into human legs—a strange and thrilling spectacle that heightened the experience.

"You may leave now!"

It wasn't that Orion was heartless, but if this mermaid continued to stay here, there would be no good outcome.

Besides, after their lovemaking just now, Orion's sexual desire had been released, so her mission should be considered complete.

However, the mermaid standing behind Orion made no move after hearing his words.

After a long while, Orion turned, just about to tell her to leave, when the mermaid, head lowered, spoke in a timid and delicate voice.

"Marina can never return to the sea!"

"A Merfolk who has lost her purity will also lose her home."

"Master, if Marina is driven out, she will become food for the dragon race."

Orion was somewhat surprised, his face showing a look of shocked uncertainty. He couldn't tell if the mermaid's words were true or false, and for a moment, he didn't know how to deal with this woman.

This mermaid slave girl had been sent by the white dragon Frostsire; her identity couldn't withstand scrutiny.

Although Orion was somewhat lecherous, he wasn't an idiot and wouldn't easily believe the mermaid's words.

"Is that so?"

"If you want to stay, then stay!"

Orion felt that, since he would be staying in Whitecliff City for some time anyway, having this mermaid named Marina serve as his sex slave wasn't a bad thing.

If it was truly as the mermaid herself said, then letting her stay to avoid becoming food would also be a good deed.

Besides, Orion had actually quite enjoyed the sex just now; he had no need to make things difficult for the mermaid before him.

Orion returned to the bedchamber and fell into a deep sleep.

Early the next morning, the Five-Race Conference officially began. Orion arrived at the Ancient Castle, exchanged smiles with Lireesa, Dain, and Richard, and each took their respective seats.

"Haha... Everyone, I am greatly honored that the Five-Race Alliance has gathered here. Your arrival makes Whitecliff's sky bluer and Whitecliff's beaches more beautiful."

Orion and the others nodded and smiled in response to the white dragon Frostsire.

"Tomorrow, Dragon Nest will open again. I am willing to gift five slots to each of the races present, to thereby deepen the friendship of our Five-Race Alliance."

Orion looked at Grand Duke Richard and the other two; they were also exchanging glances.

No one had expected that the white dragon Frostsire wouldn't get straight to the point, but would instead open the Dragon Race's Dragon Nest to everyone again.

One must know, the Dragon Nest was a special structure that could enhance potential and strength, just like the Stoneheart Horde's Heroic Altar, requiring a great cost.

"Excuse me, Your Majesty the Dragon Emperor, will the Dragon Nest be opening normally?"

Grand Duke Richard of the human race asked. He knew very well that such a bargain couldn't possibly fall into everyone's lap so easily.

"Upon my return this time, I placed a large amount of rare resources into the Dragon Nest."

"I guarantee that the important personnel from each race who enter will at least be able to advance by one minor level."

The white dragon Frostsire spoke with a smile, but his words were indisputable.

Grand Duke Richard's questioning was considered an offense to him.

However, Grand Duke Richard currently represented the human race, so he couldn't easily put pressure on him.

"Then many thanks to Your Majesty the Dragon Emperor!"

Grand Duke Richard gave an embarrassed smile; he also knew his actions were somewhat inappropriate, somewhat presumptuous.

This time, among the personnel he brought, one was his illegitimate son. Grand Duke Richard hoped the opening of the Dragon Nest could benefit that illegitimate son, so he had asked an extra question.

"Everyone, you must decide on the candidates to enter the Dragon Nest soon."

"At the latest, by this afternoon, the Dragon Nest will enter its preparation phase."

Orion frowned; his intuition told him something bad was definitely going to happen next.

Moreover, the opening of the Dragon Nest was too rushed, so rushed that it required everyone to quickly select their candidates.

However, recalling the last time the Dragon Nest opened, Brakthul had gained benefits inside the Dragon Nest and advanced to Alpha-level in one go.

Thinking of the subordinates he had brought, thinking of their state of being stuck at a bottleneck unable to break through, Orion, despite his doubts, ultimately said nothing.

"Go, have Dace, Otho, Beyn, Torba, and Ursa prepare. Tomorrow, they will enter the Dragon Nest to receive the baptism."

Orion sent a voice transmission to the Sentinel Corps personnel not far away, relaying the order.

Beside him, Lireesa, Dain, and Richard were all using voice transmission, arranging their personnel.

Only the white dragon Frostsire turned a blind eye to everyone's actions.

"Lady Lireesa, could there be a trick in this?"

Orion sent a voice transmission to Grand Elder Lireesa of the blood elf race. She was the oldest, had lived the longest, and understood the history of the entire continent.

Lireesa's knowledge should be the deepest and broadest among the representatives.

"Most likely not!"

"If there is a trick, our four races can take the opportunity to openly unite and demand an explanation from the dragon race."

"We can even raise a joint army to pressure the dragon race."

"If there really is a trick, that too is an opportunity."

"However, the Dragon Emperor has lived for tens of thousands of years and is deeply scheming and far-sighted. I don't think he would give us such an opportunity."

Orion quite agreed with Lireesa's words.

It wasn't so much that Orion believed Lireesa, but rather that Orion knew the white dragon Frostsire had demigod powerhouses above him, so he too had his concerns.

Therefore, he definitely wouldn't choose to completely fall out with and oppose the humans, blood elves, dwarves, and Stoneheart Horde.

If he really did that, the consequences would be severe; the dragon race would face a pincer attack from the four-race alliance and the Sea Race.

"Then what is the Dragon Emperor's objective?"

This was a voice transmission interjected by Prophet Dain the dwarf, but no one answered this question.

Orion, Lireesa, and Richard successively shook their heads; none could guess the white dragon Frostsire's thoughts.

"Everyone, I am a bit tired. Other matters, we shall continue to discuss tomorrow."

"Now, please adjourn to the Colosseum. I have prepared quite a few duel performances for everyone."

After speaking, Dragon Emperor Frostsire paid no heed to the others, directly stood up, and walked towards the Colosseum.

"This means he's forcibly adjourning the meeting!"

Orion watched the white dragon Frostsire's departing figure, silently pondering.

"It seems this will be a protracted Five-Race Conference!"

Grand Duke Richard stood up, performed a noble's courtesy, and invited Orion, Lireesa, and Dain to go to the Colosseum together.

"I don't know what the Dragon Emperor is thinking, but I feel that if there's something, bringing it out into the open for everyone to discuss together might be better."

Prophet Dain the dwarf was very aggrieved, but facing a powerhouse, even when he complained, he appeared very tactful.

He couldn't be like those forgemasters of his, who would start cursing loudly after eating and drinking their fill.

"Let's go. Since His Majesty the Dragon Emperor has such an inclination, we might as well play along with him."

Unable to guess the white dragon Frostsire's intentions, Orion simply stopped racking his brains to think about it.

Now, the best way to face it was to wait for things to develop naturally.

Chapter 666: The price of greed

Emerald Dream Realm, Red Moon Valley.

Since the ground was already blanketed by a thick layer of ice and snow, Lumi only needed to maintain its thickness in this area to fend off most invading enemies.

For this reason as well, the snowfall in the Red Moon Valley area wasn't particularly heavy.

Despite this, Red Moon Valley still drew a group of prying enemies.

A whirlwind swept in, carrying snowflakes, and halted in mid-air. Gustalon's form emerged from within.

"Hey, how have you been, Lumi!"

"Enemies?"

Gustalon nodded. He gazed at Lumi, who allowed the ice and snow to settle upon her and merge into her body, his curiosity piqued by this elemental life form.

Gustalon wondered how Lumi had broken through her bottleneck to ascend to the Legendary level.

Logically, as a fellow elemental being, Gustalon should have advanced quickly as well after obtaining Legendary-level resources and territory.

However, that wasn't the case. Gustalon was stuck, and had been for a long time.

"Your heart is in turmoil!"

Seeing Gustalon didn't answer, Lumi withdrew her gaze from the distant horizon, observed him for a moment, and then uttered those words.

"I may enjoy exploring various landscapes, but that doesn't mean my mind is scattered."

Lumi raised her hand. A whirlwind surged forth, sweeping towards the horizon and whipping up a flurry of snow.

Gustalon could sense countless wind elements coalescing around Lumi—elements he knew intimately, his friends.

Gustalon had the distinct impression that Lumi was even closer to the wind elements than he was.

"You still haven't said why you're here."

Lumi retracted her gaze, her expression calm and cool.

"Enemies have appeared in the distance—a flock of monsters with human heads and avian bodies. They're flying towards Red Moon Valley."

Getting down to business, Gustalon gathered his thoughts and relayed the intelligence he had gathered.

With Orion absent, the Legendary-level Lumi was their pillar of strength, the one to make the decisions.

"Harpies? Or flying dark creatures?"

No matter how thick the ice and snow, it could only hinder land-based dark creatures.

As for enemies from the sky, they would have to be met in battle.

"Keep an eye on them. We'll have everyone prepare for battle."

Gustalon nodded, transformed back into a gust of wind, and swept off into the distance.

Lumi gazed for a moment in the direction Gustalon had vanished, then turned and walked deeper into Red Moon Valley.

Moments later, a horn sounded. The Skeletal Knights, cave spiders, and cannon fodder troops garrisoned in Red Moon Valley responded, and everyone sprang into action.

...

Titanion Realm, Whitecliff.

"The combat prowess of the Dragonblood Warriors is truly extraordinary."

Orion caught a storage pouch tossed over by the white dragon Frostsire, something similar to Bagbird pouches.

Inside were rare items Orion had never seen before, all part of the white dragon Frostsire's collection.

"Giant King, your judgment is sharp. I concede defeat."

Orion could tell that although the white dragon Frostsire had lost the bet, he was actually in high spirits.

This was because, in the arena, it was the Dragonblood Warriors of the dragon race who had triumphed over the Merfolk.

"Giant King, would you be willing to play another round?"

"We each put forward one subordinate. The winner takes triple the supplies."

Orion remained silent, not immediately accepting the white dragon Frostsire's invitation.

The atmosphere shifted from relaxed to tense. Even Dain, Richard, and Lireesa, seated nearby, said nothing.

"Thundar is willing to fight!"

Orion glanced at Thundar, who had stepped forward with eagerness, and waved him back.

"These supplies are more than enough for me. Thank you for the invitation."

Orion declined the white dragon Frostsire's offer, not because he feared battle, nor because he was afraid Thundar would fall in defeat.

Disrupting the white dragon Frostsire's rhythm was precisely what Orion intended to do.

"Hahaha... No matter, it's just a show anyway!"

"My recent invitation extends to you all as well. I'll take on anyone who steps up."

The white dragon Frostsire turned to look at Dain, Richard, and Lireesa. Triple the rare resources—many of which were ores and equipment—was a very tempting offer for Dain the Dwarf and Richard the Human.

"Your Majesty, are there any restrictions on the contestants?"

It was Grand Duke Richard who spoke. As a human, greed was in his nature, and Richard couldn't resist the temptation.

"None. As long as they are of the same level. No restrictions on equipment or mounts."

As an Arch lord at his peak, the white dragon Frostsire understood clearly that any means one could bring to bear was a manifestation of strength.

Therefore, the arena performances he presided over had few restrictions.

The consequence of this was that the battles were exceedingly violent, filled with blood-pumping excitement, and prone to sudden reversals.

In the end, Dain the Dwarf Prophet, Richard the Human Grand Duke, and the white dragon Frostsire each engaged in a wagered duel.

Orion and Lireesa watched quietly from the sidelines, having no intention of participating in the wagers.

Half a day later, the results of the wagers were in: the white dragon Frostsire had one win and one loss, breaking even.

The human participant, leveraging various items, secured victory.

The more straightforward Dwarves, however, lost their duel and sacrificed a clansman.

The rules of the arena were relentless: to the death. It was brutal.

"Everyone, we shall continue our discussions tomorrow."

With the arena's performances concluded, the white dragon Frostsire bid them farewell and returned directly to his Ancient Castle.

This surprised Orion and Lireesa, who had been anticipating a turn of events.

Both Orion and Lireesa had assumed that after the exhibition matches in the Colosseum, the white dragon Frostsire would surely use the wagers as a pretext to discuss the agenda for the Five-Race Conference, perhaps even bringing up the Sea Race directly.

As it turned out, Orion had miscalculated, and so had Lireesa.

"Interesting!"

Orion picked up his goblet and drained the remaining wine.

The white dragon Frostsire's actions and thoughts were unpredictable, unfathomable.

Such a domineering style, an inscrutable way of operating—this Archlord being redefined Orion's understanding.

"Everyone, I shall retire for the night. We can continue our discussions tomorrow if anything arises."

"Giant King Orion, we're headed the same way. Let's go together!"

Grand Duke Richard's face was alight with joy; he had just won his bet, making a handsome profit, and was in excellent spirits.

Orion nodded and led the way out of the Colosseum.

"You were blinded by greed. What the Dwarves should be doing is staying grounded."

Lireesa glanced at Dain, the Dwarf Prophet. He had lost the wager, forfeited materials, and sacrificed a strong clansman.

That is the price of greed!

It wasn't that Lireesa was complaining, but rather that the Dwarves and Blood Elves simply couldn't outmaneuver the formidable Dragons or the cunning Humans.

Chapter 667: A great war is inevitable

"Orion is smarter than you; he knew when to stop and didn't fall into the abyss of greed."

"Dain, this is a lesson!"

Strictly speaking, Dain was Lireesa's junior. Lireesa had known Dain's deceased father, and they had been friends.

This was why Lireesa could leverage her seniority to lecture Dain, the representative of the Dwarven race.

"Lady Lireesa, it's no use saying anything now. My friend was sacrificed, and I've lost many of my prized possessions."

Dain looked like he wanted to cry but had no tears left; before Grand Elder Lireesa, he was like a child.

"Go back. Our two races just need to quietly await the final outcome."

"We can only go with the flow."

Meanwhile, Grand Duke Richard had followed Orion all the way to the palace where Orion was lodging, showing no intention of leaving.

"Giant King Orion, it seems the Dragon Emperor holds you in high regard!"

On the balcony, Orion frowned. He turned his head, looking down at Grand Duke Richard, at this partner of the Stoneheart Horde.

"Mr. Richard, if you have something to say, please say it directly."

Orion could tell Richard's words held a hidden meaning.

"Giant King Orion, do you know how mermaids are classified?"

Orion shook his head, a curious look on his face. He wondered what strange tales Richard was about to reveal.

"To tell you the truth, His Majesty the Dragon Emperor also sent several mermaids to the palace where I am staying."

"However, the mermaids I have, their tails are all aquamarine."

Orion glanced back at the mermaid hidden behind the curtain in the pool, then quickly averted his gaze.

Then, Orion made a gesture indicating he was all ears.

Grand Duke Richard chuckled softly, gazed at the distant deep sea, and began to speak faintly.

"Giant King Orion, the waters near the Dragon race's territory are inhabited by the Slark Merfolk."

"Among the Slark Merfolk, there are many clans. The ones who attacked us last time were the Reverse Whale clan, the most skilled in combat."

"Your mermaid belongs to the Tidefang Clan; they are nobles among the Merfolk."

Grand Duke Richard glanced back at the mermaid in the pool but didn't stare; he was well aware of certain unwritten rules among men.

"Among mermaids, they are further divided into five branches based on their tail colors: silver, sea-blue, moonlight, aquamarine, and dark-ink."

"Giant King Orion, the Dragon Emperor gave you the only mermaid with a sea-blue tail. You clearly hold significant weight in his eyes!"

Orion remained silent. To learn more secrets of the Sea Race from Richard was something he hadn't expected.

Besides, there were many questions lingering.

How did Grand Duke Richard know all this?

Even if the Human race had deep reserves of knowledge, how did Grand Duke Richard know that the white dragon Frostsire possessed only one blue-tailed mermaid?

And what was Richard trying to lead to by telling Orion all this?

Orion slowly exhaled, raised his goblet, and gestured to Richard for a toast.

After they had drained their wine, Orion looked at Richard with an expectant expression.

"Mr. Richard, you intend to tell me more than just this, don't you?"

Orion's smile was peculiar—anticipation mixed with curiosity, and within that curiosity, a hint of condescension.

This smile made Grand Duke Richard, who was deliberately being mysterious, feel a bit uncomfortable.

"Giant King Orion, you are as perceptive and formidable as they say."

Orion ignored Richard's flattery, looking directly into Grand Duke Richard's eyes, willing him to speak the truth.

Grand Duke Richard downed his wine in one gulp, then leaned over the balcony railing, gazing at the endless azure expanse of the distant sea.

"Three months ago, the Reverse Whale race was suddenly attacked by the Dragons. An upper-Legendary level Merfolk lord was captured, their fate unknown."

"Considering the current situation, it seems the white dragon Frostsire convened this Five-Race Alliance conference to keep us tied down in Whitecliff City, to face the Sea Race's retaliation together."

"To put it bluntly, that powerful Dragon Emperor wants us all to join this war against the Sea Race."

These words were conveyed by Grand Duke Richard to Orion via voice transmission, audible only to the two of them.

On the balcony, one of them leaned over, gazing into the distance, while the other stood with his hands clasped behind his back, looking straight ahead.

At a glance, there seemed to be no secrets between them, presenting a rare, candid scene.

Orion didn't speak, nor did he press for more.

But Grand Duke Richard knew very well that Orion was listening intently.

Orion's slightly raised eyebrow was the best proof.

Grand Duke Richard withdrew his sidelong glance at Orion and continued his voice transmission.

"Reliable sources say the Sea Race's grand army is massing. A great war is inevitable."

"It's highly probable this war will spread to all coastlines, affecting each of our territories."

"Giant King Orion, what do you say? Should our four races get involved in this war?"

Only then did Orion withdraw his gaze from the distance and scrutinize Grand Duke Richard seriously.

Grand Duke Richard spread his hands, allowing Orion to appraise him.

"Mr. Richard, you are the most erudite human I have ever met."

"And, of course, your sources of information are truly eye-opening."

This wasn't mere flattery; Orion genuinely admired and respected Richard.

No wonder humans could surpass the Blood Elves and Dwarves to become the dominant power in the southern regions.

With individuals like Grand Duke Richard, the human race wouldn't decline in the grand scheme of things.

What was more disconcerting was that Orion still didn't know Grand Duke Richard's stance—his attitude towards the Dragons, and towards the Sea Race.

Orion also didn't know what purpose Grand Duke Richard hoped to achieve by telling him all this.

Or, to put it another way, Orion didn't know what he could do for Grand Duke Richard.

Unable to clarify these matters, Orion dared not make any rash decisions or choices.

"Hahaha... Giant King Orion, we pursue mutual interests. Only profit is our common goal, isn't it?"

Orion nodded; he admitted this point.

"Since we pursue profit, we side with whoever offers more of it. Wouldn't you agree?"

Orion nodded again, deeply concurring.

"Giant King Orion, our interests align. We are cut from the same cloth; we should make a common choice."

Grand Duke Richard performed a nobleman's bow, flashed an enigmatic smile, and then strode out of Orion's palace.

Watching Grand Duke Richard's departing figure, Orion's expression gradually returned to neutrality, then grew increasingly profound.

He had to admit, Orion had underestimated the Human Kingdom, underestimated King Harold, and the two Grand Dukes of the Human Kingdom.

To be able to lead the Human Kingdom and suppress the Dwarves and Blood Elves—the formidable strength of the Human Kingdom was beyond doubt.

"Interesting. Everything on this continent seems even more complicated than I imagined!"

Chapter 668: Sacrificial Grand Ceremony

The night was deep.

Runes, drawn in fresh blood, shimmered with a bewitching light in the darkness.

The light flickered, falling upon a Reverse Whale that was on its last breath. Boundless fear and anger coalesced in its eyes.

More than that, there was hatred.

This was the depths of the Dragon Nest, the place where the christening would be held tomorrow.

"Great Dragon Emperor, Your Majesty, the sacrificial ritual runes are complete. The formation can be activated at any time."

The white dragon Frostsire stood beside the blood pool, looking down at the enormous Reverse Whale within. In his eyes, it was mere flesh on the block, a sacrificial offering.

"Excellent. The other four great races have arrived. We just wait for tomorrow."

"You will guard this place well for me. I don't want any slip-ups."

"From now on, entry into the Dragon Nest is permitted, but no one leaves."

The white dragon Frostsire swept his gaze over the seven figures standing silently by the blood pool, filled with confidence in them.

"Rest assured, we shall not fail the trust you've placed in us!"

The white dragon Frostsire nodded, his form gradually fading, disappearing into the depths of the Dragon Nest.

The next morning, in the Ancient Castle, everyone gathered once more.

The Five-Race Conference resumed, but the host, the white dragon Frostsire, still showed no intention of broaching the main agenda.

The atmosphere at the conference was exceedingly strange. The white dragon Frostsire remained silent, and the others did not speak either.

However, the clandestine exchanges among them hadn't stopped for a moment.

"Grand Duke, what's the situation now?" Orion sent a voice transmission to Richard, hoping to glean some useful information from him.

The vague words Richard had spoken in his palace yesterday had left Orion pondering for a long time.

Grand Duke Richard follows profit. Could those words be trusted? Orion wasn't sure; he could only believe half of it.

"I don't know either. No one can guess what this Dragon Emperor is thinking."

"Giant King Orion, why don't you ask him?"

Orion frowned; he felt extremely agitated.

This agitation stemmed from a premonition of danger and misfortune.

After the Abyssal Dragon Xalathar had ascended to the Legendary level, Orion's perceptive abilities had been enhanced.

And now, this ability was manifesting as emotional agitation.

Orion looked up at the white dragon Frostsire. The latter's eyes were closed, clearly having no intention of paying anyone any mind.

Across from him, Dain the Dwarf and Grand Elder Lireesa also seemed indifferent, having chosen to go with the flow since yesterday, questioning nothing.

Orion suddenly realized that the Stoneheart Horde seemed to have no true allies left.

The Human Kingdom was hypocritical.

The Blood Elf race spoke fine words but clammed up at critical moments.

As for the Dwarves, the Stoneheart Horde had no deep ties with them. Because their territories weren't adjacent, their cooperation was only superficial.

"A weak nation has no diplomacy; true strength lies in being strong oneself!"

At such a moment, Orion gained a new understanding of this saying.

Eee... Gaa...

Just then, from the direction of the Dragon Nest within the city, came the agonized scream of a whale.

At first, the sound was one of struggle and fury.

Later, it became hoarse, low, and then chillingly sinister.

To Orion's experienced ear, it was unmistakably a cry of torment.

"What was that?"

Dain, the Dwarf Prophet, couldn't hold back and asked the white dragon Frostsire, but he received no response.

Dragon Nest, 15 minutes earlier.

Dragon Emperor Frostsire had granted each race five slots to enter the Dragon Nest. Orion had given the Stoneheart Horde's slots to Dace, Otho, Beyn, Torba, and Ursa.

The five of them formed a small group and entered the Dragon Nest under the guidance of Dragon race guards.

"Last time, Brakthul advanced to Alpha-level because he entered here," Dace said, somewhat excited. After their expedition to the Valkorath Realm, the four guards had all found their strength stuck at the mid or late Alpha-level.

"Hopefully, the Dragon Nest can help us advance further!" Otho remarked. He was calmer, not because he didn't care, but because he had lost confidence in himself.

Among the four guards, Otho was the weakest and least talented; he had almost given up hope for himself.

"Since Orion let us enter the Dragon Nest, this christening here must be beneficial for us," Beyn said, reaching out and patting Otho's shoulder. He, like Otho, was stuck at mid-Alpha level. Indeed, their predicaments were similar, and Otho, for his part, had already lost faith in his own prospects.

However, at times like these, offering mutual encouragement had become a habit.

"Have you noticed? The space inside the Dragon Nest is quite large," Ursa observed, walking behind the others. She was sensitive to her surroundings and had a keen memory for paths she had traversed.

Back when Orion was campaigning against the succubi and the Buffalofolk tribe, it was she who had raced all the way to the succubus territory to deliver the message.

"This is a special structure, a place where miracles can be nurtured. It's normal for the internal space to be different from its external appearance," Dace replied. The Dragon Nest was vast, he had noticed that too, but he wasn't particularly concerned.

Soon, under the guards' lead, the five of them arrived at the square where the christening was to take place.

"Honored guests, please wait here. A miracle will soon descend. I hope you will all seize the opportunity."

The guard left them with these words and then exited the Dragon Nest.

"Everyone's here. Let's begin!"

In the depths of the Dragon Nest, seven figures stood around the Reverse Whale, transcendent power surging.

One by one, seemingly sacred runes peeled off from the walls, like butterflies, like tadpoles, and burrowed into the body of the Reverse Whale in the blood pool.

As the runes entered its body, the Reverse Whale grew increasingly tormented, its struggles more violent, its howls more wretched.

Meanwhile, in the Ancient Castle.

After the Reverse Whale's agonized screams completely died out, the white dragon Frostsire suddenly opened his eyes. A divine light burst forth from his pupils, and the pressure of an Archlord emanated outwards, sweeping through the hall and across all of Whitecliff.

"Everyone, I propose we rename this Five-Race Conference of ours to the Sacrificial Grand Ceremony."

The white dragon Frostsire's ancient, resonant voice echoed in everyone's ears—sinister yet excited, bold yet grand. Then came a laugh, a contradictory sound, full of tension.

"A Sacrificial Grand Ceremony?" This question arose in the minds of Orion, Grand Duke Richard, Dain the Dwarf, and Grand Elder Lireesa.

Eeee!

Roar!

"Everyone, I have a great gift for you all—for the five talents from each of your races!"

The white dragon Frostsire's voice rang out again, and simultaneously, another whale's cry and a dragon's roar were heard.

Immediately after, the Dragon Nest, the special structure standing in Whitecliff, emitted a dazzling, multi-colored light. An immense magical formation unfurled, enveloping the entire city.

The magical formation activated, drawing mighty power from the unknown void, channeling it into the Dragon Nest, and into the bodies of the bloodline warriors undergoing the christening within.

In the Ancient Castle, Orion could feel a strange power attempting to coalesce into a mark within his body.

Chapter 669: Curse mark

Orion's eyebrow twitched, his gaze sharpening.

He surged his internal transcendent power, directly expelling that thin, strange energy from his body.

Sizzle! Crackle!

Streaks of electric current flashed from Orion's body, crawling over his physique, repelling the strange energy.

Only then did Orion have a moment to observe the others.

The white dragon Frostsire sat enthroned in the main seat, basking in that strange energy with a look of utter enjoyment.

Grand Duke Richard, Dain the Dwarf, and Grand Elder Lireesa were all using their transcendent power to force back the energy.

"Frostsire, aren't you going to explain yourself?" Orion's tone was extremely blunt and unfriendly.

If the white dragon Frostsire didn't give a reason, he truly felt he might erupt in violence.

"It's a curse mark! A Sea Race curse mark!" It wasn't the white dragon Frostsire who cried out, but Lireesa the Blood Elf, her face flashing with shock and anger.

"Hahaha... A mere curse mark, nothing more!" The white dragon Frostsire let out a wild laugh, and the Sea Race curse mark that had invaded his body disintegrated into nothingness.

"Everyone, a curse mark of this level poses no threat to you whatsoever."

This was the truth, as they had all managed to dispel the strange energy on their own.

"What about the warriors we brought?"

"And our kinsmen who entered the Dragon Nest?"

The voices of Grand Duke Richard and Dain the Dwarf Prophet rang out simultaneously, both filled with accusatory questions.

"Everyone, I guarantee that the opening of the Dragon Nest this time will allow your kinsmen to advance by a small level, and it will also enhance their potential to varying degrees."

"However, as you all should know, for everything gained, something must be lost."

"This time, we Dragons prepared a very substantial sacrificial offering." As the white dragon Frostsire spoke, there was a hint of madness in his voice, and a smile that suggested a successfully executed scheme.

"For this sacrifice, the Dragon race ventured deep into the sea, expended great effort, and captured an upper-Legendary level Merfolk lord."

"I can tell you all, that Merfolk lord is this offering."

"With an upper-Legendary level Merfolk as the sacrifice, all your kinsmen will reap benefits."

Under the astonished gazes of Orion, Richard, and the others, the white dragon Frostsire finally revealed the truth.

For these past few days, he had delayed the conference, waiting for this very moment.

"Of course, this Sacrificial Grand Ceremony has one minor flaw: your subordinates, those below Legendary level, will all be marked by the Sea Race curse, becoming mortal enemies of the Sea Race."

"But I believe these are trivial matters. As long as they don't appear before the Sea Race, such a mark is of no consequence."

Fuck you! Orion cursed inwardly. Only at this moment did everyone understand: the white dragon Frostsire intended to drag all five races into this mess.

He wanted to force the Humans, Dwarves, Blood Elves, and Giants into the same camp as the Dragons. The white dragon Frostsire wanted to secure a safe rear for the Dragon race.

Furthermore, the white dragon Frostsire's method of winning allies was forceful and rife with conspiracy.

With the Sea Race curse upon them, the kinsmen Orion had brought from the Stoneheart Horde would all become enemies of the Sea Race.

This was just a small part of it. More importantly, the previously moderate attitude of the Sea Race towards the Stoneheart Horde would change instantly. It was highly probable that their coastlines would face a Sea Race invasion.

It was even possible that their coastal territory would suffer the impact and devastation of tsunamis.

"Frostsire, you truly are cunning and tyrannical!" Orion exclaimed, not mincing words with the white dragon Frostsire in the slightest.

Under normal circumstances, for the Dragon race to win over the other four races, they would need to pay a considerable price and likely sign some unequal treaties to create a stable rear for themselves.

Now, after the Sacrificial Grand Ceremony orchestrated by the white dragon Frostsire, they had all been forcibly made enemies of the Sea Race.

The most crucial part was that the Dragon race had paid no price at all.

Even the sacrificial offering belonged to the Sea Race.

As for whether the Dragons would incur the hatred of the Humans, Dwarves, Blood Elves, and Giants, the white dragon Frostsire couldn't care less.

Once the divine war ended and the white dragon Frostsire arrived in his true form, he would fear no enemy aside from demigods.

"Respected Dragon Emperor, Your Majesty, there are some matters we can discuss properly. There's no need to make things so... difficult." Grand Elder Lireesa hadn't finished speaking when the white dragon Frostsire shot her a look, simultaneously releasing his oppressive aura.

Lireesa immediately trembled all over, enduring immense pressure.

"There's nothing to discuss. If you're dissatisfied, you're welcome to challenge me."

"Whoever it is, I'll take you on!"

Utterly domineering, and filled with contempt.

At this moment, both the Dwarf race and the Blood Elf race chose silence. They were in no position to voice objections.

Then, Orion, Lireesa, and Dain all looked towards Grand Duke Richard.

As the former rulers of this continent, and a Human Kingdom that still possessed a Saint, what would their attitude be?

"Respected Dragon Emperor, Your Majesty, the Sea Race curse mark has already been inflicted. We have nothing more to say on that."

"However, we can choose silence. We can choose to avoid the Sea Race."

Grand Duke Richard's words caused Lireesa's and Dain's gazes to dim; they seemed to have lost the will to resist.

"Of course, we can also send envoys to the Sea Race, spread word of today's events, and apologize to them."

"In any case, the territories of our four races are not in the sea. We have little to lose there."

"Compared to a stable internal environment, those coastal territories... we can do without them."

Grand Duke Richard's tone then shifted, becoming resolute, and also rather grim.

His meaning was clear: if the Dragons could forcibly drag their four races into this, then their four races could also forcibly disassociate themselves from the Dragons.

And because of this animosity, their four races could even backstab the Dragons.

It was just that the word 'backstab' couldn't be uttered at this moment; to say it would mean openly breaking off all relations, and whether they could even leave this place would become questionable.

"Your Majesty the Dragon Emperor, what we want to know now is, what benefits can we gain from this war?"

Just when everyone thought Grand Duke Richard would continue to challenge the white dragon Frostsire, the man's tone changed, and he began asking about benefits.

Orion stared at Grand Duke Richard, mentally categorizing him as a dangerous individual.

Then, Orion looked at the white dragon Frostsire. He too wanted to know what this Dragon Emperor might promise.

However, what they received was silence.

Thump!

Just then, a loud noise rumbled from the distant deep sea. The shockwave traveled extremely far, and the few individuals at the Sacrificial Grand Ceremony all sensed it.

"The Sea Race has reacted!"

"Something's about to happen!"

"War is coming!"

"This is bad!"

These were their reactions: some remained composed, others' expressions changed drastically, and some were struck with fear.

Three minutes earlier, in the deep sea.

The sacrificed Reverse Whale, in its final wail, had not only unleashed the Sea Race's curse mark; it had also used its life to transmit a message to its kin.

"Chthonius has been sacrificed!"

Chapter 670: The Sea Race was coming

In the darkness of the deep sea, a pair of immense eyes opened. Upon hearing the Reverse Whale's wail, those eyes gradually became shot with crimson.

"The fate of a Reverse Whale should not be sacrifice, but a return to the deep sea."

"The Dragons, they have touched upon our taboos. We need war to wash away this humiliation."

"Summon our kin! We shall scourge the Dragon territory, and use their blood and flesh to commemorate Chthonius!"

"..."

Within the deep sea, five colossal shadows successively arrived, unleashing immensely powerful secret techniques that stirred up a great tsunami.

The Sea Race was coming!

Whitecliff, Ancient Castle.

The white dragon Frostsire showed no reaction to the great rumbles from the deep sea; everything was within his control.

"What benefits do you want?"

The white dragon Frostsire looked at Grand Duke Richard, his face a mask of sneering ridicule.

Grand Duke Richard frowned. He could, of course, sense the utter disdain in the white dragon Frostsire's eyes and words.

The white dragon Frostsire was completely unconcerned by his earlier threats.

Grand Duke Richard didn't speak, his expression fluctuating unpredictably.

For such a situation to occur, there was only one possibility: no matter how the other four races responded, the white dragon Frostsire didn't care.

To be so unconcerned, he definitely had something to rely on.

"Dragon Emperor, Your Majesty, the Stoneheart Horde is interested in the Sea Race!"

"Carving out a sea region of our own is a future goal for the Stoneheart Horde."

Just then, Orion's composed and clear voice reached everyone's ears. Including the white dragon Frostsire, everyone turned to stare at him.

Orion reached out, ignoring their gazes, picked up a platter of fruit used as a centerpiece on the conference table, and popped all of it into his mouth.

Then, he downed a whole cask of fine wine before finally speaking nonchalantly, just as the others were growing impatient.

"Dragon Emperor, Your Majesty, do you think it better for us to cooperate fully, or for each to fight their own battles?"

No one spoke. Dain the Dwarf, Grand Duke Richard, and Grand Elder Lireesa all looked at Orion as if he were an idiot.

Only Dragon Emperor Frostsire squinted, reassessing Orion.

"It seems you don't quite trust me!"

Whoosh!

Wind suddenly stirred within the entire hall, though none came from outside.

The entire Ancient Castle was enveloped by a formidable pressure.

Orion's expression was indifferent as he fully unleashed the pressure of his Legendary peak cultivation. A terrifying aura radiated outwards, pressing down on Richard, Dain, and Lireesa until they could hardly breathe.

"This...!"

"Impossible!"

"Ah!"

Even the white dragon Frostsire, upon his main seat, wore a look of shock.

"The aura of an Archlord!"

"No, you're still at the peak of Legendary level, but your power has reached the Archlord level..."

Truth be told, Orion's pressure even had a slight suppressive effect on the white dragon Frostsire.

However, also being at the peak of Legendary level, the white dragon Frostsire had ways to mitigate and resist this pressure.

Orion had shown his hand, making the white dragon Frostsire understand that Orion could genuinely contend with a lower Archlord.

"Giant King Orion, you are qualified to cooperate with our Dragon race."

"The friendship between the Stoneheart Horde and the Dragon race will be unbreakable."

The white dragon Frostsire employed a slight maneuver, and Orion's pressure lost its effect.

Seeing the white dragon Frostsire speak, Orion also withdrew his pressure, shrugged, and then smiled at the assembly.

Richard, Dain, and Lireesa exchanged glances, their eyes filled with lingering shock and uncertainty.

The Five-Race Conference being renamed the Sacrificial Grand Ceremony, the Dragons sacrificing a Sea Race lord, Grand Duke Richard threatening the Dragons, and the Stoneheart Horde's sudden, proactive entry—these rapid changes were completely unexpected by everyone.

Even Orion's display just now had been a spur-of-the-moment decision.

The covert strife between the Dragons and Humans had made it difficult for Orion to clearly assess the situation.

Under these circumstances, Orion decided to enter the fray and stir things up a bit, to take the opportunity to probe the limits of each race.

Previously, in the Champions Alliance public channel, the Deputy Commander had warned Orion that he might be targeted.

The normal course of action would have been for Orion to learn to be low-key, to practice forbearance, and to seek steady development.

However, after arriving in Whitecliff, entering the Ancient Castle, and experiencing Dragon Emperor Frostsire's pressure, Orion decided to be more high-profile, to place himself in a more conspicuous position.

Since he had made this decision, Orion didn't mind going along with the white dragon Frostsire's wishes and joining this contest against the Sea Race.

If they won, the Stoneheart Horde would reap huge benefits.

If they lost, the Stoneheart Horde could, at worst, abandon its coastal regions and develop inland.

Furthermore, by being so high-profile, Orion also wanted to see if he could draw out the entity that was supposedly targeting him from behind the scenes.

If such an entity truly existed, who were they?

As for the potential crises the Stoneheart Horde might face? So what?

Orion did not fear battle, and neither did the Stoneheart Horde.

Besides, Orion had long prepared a path of retreat; what was there to worry about?

"Hahaha... Since the Giant King has chosen to join, I am very pleased. Next, I shall let you witness the true foundation of the Dragon race's strength!"

The white dragon Frostsire laughed uproariously, his laughter growing louder and louder until it finally transformed into a dragon's roar.

After the dragon's roar, seven Legendary-level powerhouses walked out from the Dragon Nest one after another, standing suspended in mid-air.

Seven Legendary-level auras emanated outwards, sweeping across the entire city of Whitecliff.

At this moment, Whitecliff fell into silence.

Then followed an unparalleled excitement and agitation, immediately succeeded by the overwhelming roars (dragon shouts) of the Dragon race's populace.

"Praise be to His Majesty, the Dragon Emperor!"

"Praise be to His Majesty, the Dragon Emperor!"

"..."

The shouts reached the Ancient Castle, and the white dragon Frostsire was very satisfied with this.

"Giant King, what do you think of the Dragon race's current strength?"

"Does the Dragon race possess the power to invade the Sea Race?"

Orion's face was expressionless, but inwardly, he too was profoundly shaken.

Not including the white dragon Frostsire and Glacial Dragon Jorik, the Dragon race had suddenly revealed seven lords—two at upper-Legendary level, three at middle-Legendary level, and two at lower-Legendary level.

With this kind of power, they could indeed invade the Sea Race, and perhaps even the continent.

"The Stoneheart Horde is willing to face the Sea Race alongside the Dragon race, to usher in a new era together."

With his decision, Orion acknowledged the Dragon race's might.

The white dragon Frostsire laughed heartily, nodded at Orion in acknowledgment, and summoned a subordinate to begin preparing the terms of an alliance.

Only then did the white dragon Frostsire turn to look at Grand Duke Richard.

The Stoneheart Horde could only be considered a rising power; the white dragon Frostsire's true target was the Human Kingdom represented by Richard.

Grand Duke Richard was truly a character. The speed at which his expression changed within the three seconds the white dragon Frostsire gazed at him left Orion astounded.

Initially, Richard's expression was gloomy, then it shifted to surprise.

Next, it changed from surprise to doubt.

After that, from doubt to terror.

Finally, the terror vanished, and the expression that settled on Richard's face was a smile, warm and humble.

"Respected Dragon Emperor, Your Majesty, as you wish, the Human Kingdom is also willing to join the ranks resisting the Sea Race."

"The vast sea regions are also something the Human race greatly aspires to."