

Versatile 1671

Chapter 1671: I Would Rather Prostitute Myself

The sound of water splashing came from the other side of the mountains, as if the lake was boiling. Everyone could imagine the sight of a bunch of creatures moving rapidly across the lake even without seeing it.

“The Salamander Demons are here!” Gu Ying declared sternly. She displayed a surprisingly heroic bearing.

The team members were experienced, and synchronized well with one another. Zhong Li, whose job was to lure the Salamander Demons, sprinted in through the entrance. He had successfully lured the brainless Salamander Demons into the narrow passage!

“Seal off the entrance, now!” Zhong Li yelled at the Earth Mage while he was running on the water toward the island.

A huge boulder fell from the sky and blocked the passage like the door of a dam, separating the Salamander Demons who were racing ahead from the rest of their kind.

The Salamander Demons were not particularly fast or agile. They resembled mobile steel fortresses. They usually crushed their enemies by trampling and devouring them!

Mo Fan saw four Salamander Demons stranded in the passage when the boulder sealed off the entrance.

“Damn it, I was a little too slow, four of them came inside!” the Earth Mage grumbled anxiously.

“Four... isn’t that too much for us to handle?” a middle-aged Mage with a huge nose swallowed nervously.

“It’s fine, as long as we don’t make any huge mistakes while we are working together. We should be able to deal with them!” Gu Ying said firmly.

Gu Ying was the strongest in the party. Not only did she have two Soul Seeds, she had also reached the third-tier of the Intermediate Level. She could take on a Salamander Demon alone!

“Ice Lock!”

Gu Ying stared at the water that a Salamander Demon was swimming in. An icy chain around the size of a small tree trunk flew at the fleshy Salamander Demon and dragged it out from under the water’s surface!

“Attack it first!” Gu Ying said.

Gu Ying dragged the Salamander Demon closer so the rest of the team could focus their spells on it.

Mo Fan finally had a chance to take a closer look at the creature when the Ice Lock drew closer.

“Are you sure this thing isn’t a giant snail?” Mo Fan asked.

“What snail? It’s a Salamander Demon. Stay back, these creatures can spit out venomous darts!” Xie Hao warned.

To be frank, the creature did resemble a snail at first glance, mainly because it was carrying a shell on its back, a trait of the Spiral Shelled Monsters!

The shell was close to the size of a car’s hood, curving with a sharp tip at the top. Its surface reflected a dull sheen under the sunlight.

The shells of the Spiral Shelled Monsters were extremely annoying. Once, an army had carried out an operation to wipe out the Spiral Shelled Monsters off an island. The army stayed on their ships and blasted the island with spells. The island was on the verge of sinking from the continuous blasts, yet the Spiral Shelled Monsters simply hid within their shells. The island eventually sank, but the horde of Spiral Shelled Monsters was perfectly unharmed. The person in charge of the operation was probably overwhelmed by despair when they learned the creatures had survived their bombardment with ease!

The Salamander Demons had obviously inherited the shells of the Spiral Shelled Monsters. They were as sturdy as rocks!

Salamanders were similar to lizards. Amphibians were common in an environment of mixed water and land. Mo Fan described the creatures as giant snails because the bodies under the shells resembled the salamanders. They had soft flesh, feelers, and their bodies were constantly wriggling.

In other words, the Salamander Demons were lizards with soft flesh and a spiraling shell on their backs!

Lingling had mentioned how outstanding these creatures’ defense was. Their defense was easily the strongest among creatures of the same level. Mo Fan could not agree more as he watched the Hunters fighting the Salamander Demon!

Gu Ying, Xie Hao, and the big-nosed middle-aged Mage had already cast a few spells. However, none of their spells were effective when the Salamander Demon withdrew into its shell!

The Salamander Demon only came out of the shell after the wave of spells was over. It shrieked and proceeded with its counterattack!

“How...how is it not dead yet?” Xie Hao was dumbfounded.

Gu Ying was looking grim, too. She knew how outstanding the Salamander Demons’ defense was, so it was unwise to fight a group of Salamander Demons at once. However, she did not expect a single Salamander Demon to have such a terrifying defense!

“Even our captain’s Soul Seeds only left a single scratch on its shell. How are we supposed to kill it? The other three are already getting closer!” the big-nosed Mage exclaimed.

“How would I know!?”

An Intermediate Mage with a Soul Seed was already impressive in a Hunter Group. They were strong enough to fight Warrior-level creatures! The rest of the team was relying on Gu Ying to break down the Salamander Demons' defense so the others could kill them. Little did they know that even their captain's Soul Seeds were not strong enough to destroy the shells! Their defense was simply too insane!

Luckily, the Salamander Demons were slow. Otherwise, they would have no time to flee for their lives!

"Third-tier Intermediate Spells with Soul Seeds... she's already one of the strongest in the Intermediate Level, yet she still couldn't inflict any damage on the Salamander Demon. These Warrior-level creatures are unusually strong," Mo Fan evaluated the Salamander Demon's defense while watching the fight.

2

If an Intermediate Mage could not break through the creature's defense, they would have to rely on Advanced Spells.

The problem was, how many Advanced Mages would a city or a faction have? Considering the overwhelming numbers of the Salamander Demons, the Advanced Mages who bothered to fight would struggle to kill the Salamander Demons quick enough to match their reproduction rate, even if they gave their best!

"Again!" Gu Ying did not believe it.

She organized the next wave of spells. This time, she used the Shadow Element to nail the Salamander Demon onto a rock, allowing the others to land their strongest spells right on the target.

The Shadow Element did not stop the Salamander Demon from withdrawing into its shell. Mo Fan witnessed the rock being quickly devoured by the colorful blasts of the spells.

Water splashed wildly. When the spells faded away, tiny cracks had surfaced on the Salamander Demon's shell. Its soft body came out of the shell once again, as if it was hiding from a downpour. Its life was clearly not in danger despite the bruises and scratches on its shell.

Tiny cracks...

It was the most a team of Intermediate Mages could do after a few waves of spells. It was going to take at least ten similar attacks to break the shell!

The Foehn Hunter Squad had nowhere to go now that they were stuck on the island with the Salamander Demons!

Everyone clenched their teeth and continued to attack the Salamander Demons. To their relief, the Salamander Demons' offense was not particularly strong, and they were not rookies. They still had the situation under control when the rest of the Salamander Demons joined the battle!

The sky was starting to get dark. The team finally eliminated the four Salamander Demons before sunset.

No one was seriously injured from the battle, yet they were completely worn out by fatigue. They sat by the water and began to doubt their life choices.

“Seriously, I’ve never fought a tougher Warrior-level creature than these things. Their defense is already comparable to a Commander-level creature!” Zhong Li grumbled.

The team had been active around the vicinity of the Thousand Islands Lake for some time. They mainly focused on killing the giant lizards and swamp demons. It was their first time taking on the Salamander Demons. They were utterly shocked by their outstanding defense!

“Bloody hell, I thought we could earn some quick money here, but I didn’t expect to be fighting annoying creatures like these. If killing five Salamander Demons only gives us one heart orb, I won’t even bother wasting my time here. I can earn ten times more by sleeping with the young masters of the renowned clans for a few nights!” Gu Ying blurted out angrily.

“Boss, are you serious? I’m willing to pay two hundred thousand to spend time with you for three nights!” Zhong Li suddenly rose to his feet and looked at Gu Ying with great anticipation.

“Piss off! If you were good looking like Fan Mo, I wouldn’t mind getting two hundred thousand for three days and nights. As for you, I might have to reconsider even if you’re offering me two million!” Gu Ying shot back.

Mo Fan was still figuring out a way to deal with the Salamander Demons’ shells when Gu Ying’s sudden mention of him interrupted his thought process!

He wondered why those close to him kept saying that he was not handsome. Listen to what Gu Ying just said, he could even get a discount for hooking up with a prostitute because of his handsome appearance, let alone having one-night-stands with strangers. If he wanted, he could go for three-hundred-and-sixty-five days without a rest!

“Wait, are you telling me that not every Salamander Demon is going to drop a heart orb?” Xie Hao exclaimed suddenly.

“Of course not, only some have it. The odds are one out of five!”

“Holy shit, doesn’t that mean all our efforts are in vain if none of these four creatures have a heart orb!?” Xie Hao shrieked.

“It’s possible, knowing the odds,” Mo Fan said.

“Shh, enough with your inauspicious remarks, go check their remains!” Gu Ying rolled her eyes at Mo Fan.

Mo Fan dutifully began searching the remains of the creatures. He soon returned with an awkward face.

“Don’t you say a word, I’ll check them myself,” Gu Ying quickly rose to her feet and searched the remains carefully.

The others began to pale. They realized their efforts were in vain when they saw Gu Ying running back angrily!

Not a single heart orb from the Salamander Demons!

Their energy was depleted, too. It would take them three to four days to fully recover!

Taking into consideration the journey, preparations, the time they spent in the battle, and the time needed to recover, their team had wasted a whole week for nothing!

Gu Ying's face was the darkest. She was seriously considering prostituting herself!

She had to eat unpalatable food and sleep on the ground in the wild. She was constantly bothered by the mosquitoes and the pungent odor. It was common to be injured in battles, too. She was finally done with the fight, yet she had earned nothing from it. It was so much worse than going to luxurious hotels, enjoying high-quality red wines, the soothing aroma, and earning money by just lying still on the bed!

Chapter 1672: Tough As Nails

"Damn it, screw this, I'm a retard if I even bother accepting a quest like this from the government again!" Gu Ying was enraged, and threw a tantrum on the spot. If she was not running low on energy, she might even cast her Ice Spells at her teammates to vent her frustration.

"Boss, life isn't always a smooth journey. It's normal to go through a letdown at times. We just need to be patient. Maybe we can find two or three heart orbs from the next batch of Salamander Demons. Doesn't that mean we are still profiting?" Zhong Li quickly said some comforting words with an awkward face.

"Profit my ass! At this rate, everyone is only getting a hundred thousand at most for a month of work. There's nothing to eat here! Even the grass pokes ass when I'm taking a piss. I can endure it if we are actually earning a lot more, but why would I even bother suffering for this much money?" Gu Ying spat angrily.

Most Hunters would accept a huge job every half a year, spending a month or two living in the wild under dire circumstances. Some people could not even stand living in a rundown house for a day or two, let alone staying in the desolate wilderness that was swarming with demon creatures.

Therefore, Hunters would only suffer for a month or two in the wild to earn a fortune before resting for a few months. Otherwise, they would most likely suffer a mental breakdown.

In other words, even if they spent a month here in the wild, they were only getting a hundred thousand each. If they stuck to their normal routine, it meant they would only earn a hundred thousand for half a year.

A hundred thousand for half a year?

Couldn't they just find a normal job instead? Why would they bother risking their lives living in the wild?

"What shitty job is this? I'm done here, let's head back as soon as possible!" Xie Hao was displeased too.

"Zhong Li, can you please gather enough information about the demon creatures next time? Someone else can kill these Salamander Demons all they want!"

The team lost its will to fight. Mo Fan totally understood. Any Hunter in their right mind would not waste their time on a quest like this.

If an above-average Hunter Group like the Foehn Hunter Squad was unwilling to commit to the quest, the rest of the Hunter Groups were most likely going to give up and leave the Thousand Islands Lake, too.

At this rate, no one would bother wasting their time on the Salamander Demons, allowing them to mass reproduce!

“Let’s think about it again... I don’t want our time and effort to be in vain too. How about this? Why don’t we decide again after we’ve recovered? If it really isn’t going to work, we can head west and kill some lizard demons to compensate for our loss. It’s better than going back empty-handedly, don’t you think?” Zhong Li proposed.

“Yeah, I would rather kill the lizard demons in the swamps than waste my time on these Salamander Demons here!” the big-nosed Mage agreed.

The team was too tired to go anywhere. They set up tents on the deserted island, staying there for the night.

Every Hunter knew that it was dangerous to stay close to a water source at night, since demon creatures might come and get a drink. There was the risk of being dragged out of their tents and eaten as snacks while slept!

Mo Fan was told to take the night watch, as he was the only person with energy. In the eyes of the others, being on night watch was the only job that suited him!

Mo Fan looked down from the hillside and looked out over the water surrounded by the mountains. It was a peaceful lake. He could see the reflections of the clouds moving slowly past on the surface of the water.

“I can’t think of any weaknesses. I would have to rely on stronger spells to kill them, which means I’ll be consuming my energy faster...”

Mo Fan was troubled. He seriously found the Salamander Demons annoying. Their defense was comparable to some weaker Commander-level creatures, yet their numbers were insane...

Mo Fan suddenly heard a strange noise from the water while he was deep in thought.

It did not sound like the cry of a demon creature, but the sound of a higher density liquid flowing...

Mo Fan looked at the lake and noticed the water turning cloudy. It looked like someone had poured a huge barrel of polluted water into the lake!

“What’s going on?”

Mo Fan was curious. He quickly turned into a Shadow Bird and flew across the trees before landing on the shore by the lake.

“Did I imagine it?”

The water suddenly cleared up after Mo Fan reached the shore. He could even see the bottom of the lake under the moonlight.

The water had cleared up suddenly even though it was turbid just a moment ago. It took him a minute to fly down the slope, yet it was impossible for the water to clear up so quickly.

Mo Fan was constantly keeping an eye on the surface of the water. He was wondering if the surface of the lake was covered up, just like the blue moths had covered the lake in Wuzhen, preventing him from seeing any reflections on its surface.

Mo Fan was mindful of that tactic this time, yet he did not notice anything.

The water simply turned cloudy and cleared up again in no time.

“Was it because of gray clouds? Did I see it wrong?”

Mo Fan did not understand what was going on. He had no choice but to return to the tents.

“Where did you go? You were supposed to be on night duty. Why aren’t you doing your job? Are you giving up on your deposit?” Gu Ying demanded with a long face when she saw Mo Fan.

“I went to take a piss. My piss stinks. I was worried that it might bother you all, so I went further away,” Mo Fan explained with a grin.

“That’s disgusting. Why the hell are you explaining it to me in such detail!?” Gu Ying rolled her eyes.

“Why aren’t you asleep yet? Did you check up on me on purpose?” Mo Fan asked.

“I’m not in a good mood after realizing I’m not earning any money from this. I suffer from insomnia whenever I’m in a bad mood. They are so many of these creatures. We could earn a fortune if we can find a way to break their shells!” Gu Ying snarled.

“So you’re troubled by that, too...are you that desperate for money?” Mo Fan said.

“Who isn’t?” Gu Ying asked in return.

“You’re right.”

“I’m planning to save up for a Galaxy Vein and see if I can break through to the Advanced Level. It looks like it’s not going to work...” Gu Ying let out a sigh.

“A Galaxy Vein is pretty expensive. It will take you twenty years to save up for it at this rate,” Mo Fan murmured.

“Which is why I was thinking, if I couldn’t make any progress this year, I should just marry a rich guy. I can get anything I want with a little coquettish act and moans,” Gu Ying spat.

“You sound pretty serious,” Mo Fan smiled.

“I am serious. I’m thinking of quitting already. It’s too tiring. I’ve been a Hunter for almost ten years, risking my life and not even treating myself as a human being. I realized that I’m actually earning less than those flirtatious b**ches. They can get everything they want by just acting coquettishly and selling their asses,” Gu Ying spat.

“Ugh...” Mo Fan was suddenly lost for words.

Their leader was as tough as nails!

Chapter 1673: Seven Star Hunter Master

Zhong Li woke everyone up early in the morning on the next day.

“Boss, I just received a letter from the Hunter Union delivered by a roaming Post Eagle. It’s for a quest with a high reward, and it’s about the lizard demons that we are familiar with!” Zhong Li said excitedly.

“Show me!” Gu Ying ordered him.

The Post Eagles were a common way for the Hunter Union to communicate with Hunters in the wild. Normal communication equipment had no signal in demon creatures’ territories. The Post Eagles were specifically used by the Hunter Masters to relay important information and messages.

Xie Hao went closer and blurted out in surprise, “Looking for an infant of the Lizard Demons. A million for whoever gets it... That’s insane!”

“Is an infant of Lizard Demons worth that much? They are indeed hard to catch, but they are known for their tendency to stir up troubles. Could it be fake?” the big-nosed Mage wondered.

“The information is real. It’s a Hunter Master’s Post Eagle. It even has the seal of a Hunter Master. The seal hasn’t disappeared yet, so the quest is still valid!” Gu Ying said.

“We are in luck then! It won’t be difficult for us to catch an infant of the Lizard Demons!” Xie Hao said.

“The letter also mentions that the Hunter Master is looking for an elite squad of Intermediate Mages that is familiar with the Thousand Islands Lake and is experienced in capturing demon creatures. She’s willing to pay twenty-four million to hire the squad for a month or two, but the squad must catch an infant of the Lizard Demons within a week,” Gu Ying went on.

“Twenty-four million!” the members of the Foehn Hunter Squad gasped. Their eyes glittered!

“Twenty-four million. That means each of us will get four million if we split it evenly. That’s crazy! I don’t think we have ever accepted a quest with over ten million as the reward!” Zhong Li exclaimed.

Quests were classified into different levels. Hunters could only accept the higher-level quests after they had reached a certain rank. A quest with over ten million as the reward was already considered a huge job for them. Most Intermediate Mages could treat themselves to a long rest after completing a job like that, let alone a quest that was going to pay them twenty-four million! They could buy new magic equipment with the money. If they already had some savings, they could even afford to buy a cheap Soul Seed!

Soul-grade Seeds averaged around fourteen to eighteen million in price. If they could earn four million from just one quest, they would be very close to buying a Soul-grade Seed if they could find a few more quests with the same pay!

“(Cough cough), we have seven in our team now,” Gu Ying corrected him.

“Is he going to get the money, too? He did nothing, he’s only here to make up the numbers, yet we have to give him three million? That doesn’t make any sense!” the big-nosed Mage whined in displeasure.

If the quest’s reward was only a few million, they would not mind sharing it among the seven of them. It might feel like a waste, but it was better than wasting their time doing nothing because they did not have enough members for the quest. However, if the reward was twenty-four million, there was no way they would be willing to give away three million for someone that was only making up the numbers!

“That’s right, he’s only with us for the quest related to the Salamander Demons. He’s not part of this new quest,” the Earth Mage said.

“I don’t think that’s the right thing to do. He’s still one of us now,” Zhong Li said with an awkward face.

“That’s enough, what are you even arguing for? You sound like the twenty-four million is already ours when we haven’t even done a single thing! Fan Mo is now one of us, of course he’s with us for the next quest! Stop arguing!

1

“We should come up with a plan soon. If the Post Eagles are delivering the letters, it means other squads will receive the message too. We won’t get a single cent if another team ends up catching an infant of the Lizard Demons before us!” Gu Ying scolded the members mercilessly.

The big-nosed Mage and the Earth Mage were displeased, yet they dared not to talk back to their leader.

Mo Fan was quite surprised, too. It was true that they should not kick him out of the party since it was against the ethics of the Hunters Union, yet how many Hunters would even care about ethics when it came to money? Even if the incident was brought up to the Hunter Union, they were indeed technically signing up for a new quest, so they were not breaking the rule if they did not share a single cent with Mo Fan!

The fact that Gu Ying did not kick Mo Fan out of the party even though he was not contributing much changed his view of her. It was rare to see Hunters sticking up for their ethics, especially after learning how desperate for money she was.

“Actually, you don’t have to argue because of me. I was only interested in the quest for the Salamander Demon’s hearts. I won’t be tagging along if you guys are thinking of doing a different quest...” Mo Fan said.

Mo Fan had a good impression of Gu Ying, so he did not want her to fall out with the big-nosed Mage and the Earth Mage because of him. It was already difficult for her to build a reputation as a team leader as a woman. If she insisted on not placing her members first, the team might even disband as a result!

“Fan Mo, don’t abase yourself. We were rookies like you, too. We all came from the Basic Level. We weren’t able to complete the quest of collecting the Salamander Demon’s hearts because we weren’t prepared enough. You have wasted your time by coming with us, too. However, we are confident in completing this new quest. You are welcome to come with us and earn some money. You can use it to buy some resources that might help you reach the Intermediate Level.

“You are not young anymore. It’s indeed a little embarrassing to still be stuck at the Basic Level. Being good-looking alone isn’t enough in this world. You must have a certain strength and be financially capable. Otherwise, you won’t dare to go after the beautiful goddess you are fond of,” Gu Ying said.

Mo Fan was left speechless by Gu Ying’s speech.

Which eye of yours is telling you that I’m abasing myself?

A few million was basically nothing to him. It was not even enough to buy snacks for Little Flame Belle when she had a good appetite!

Forget it, if he told them that, they might assume he was bluffing again...

“Well, I’m currently investigating the Salamander Demons, so I’m only interested in quests that are related to them. I don’t have time for other quests,” Mo Fan said.

“Boss, he already said it himself. What’s the point of urging him to stay? We should hurry. If we waste our time further, we are really going to miss out on the chance,” the big-nosed Mage said. He glanced at Mo Fan, as if complimenting him for knowing his place.

“Yeah, we haven’t secured the reward yet,” the Earth Mage agreed quickly.

Gu Ying had a troubled face, but since Mo Fan had already said so, there was no reason for her to force him along.

“I’ll give you back your deposit,” Gu Ying said.

“Sure.”

Gu Ying returned the deposit to Mo Fan. To his surprise, she actually gave him twice the deposit. Gu Ying explained that they were responsible for failing the quest. They promised to bring him along to earn some money, yet they had given up on the quest halfway. Therefore, she had given Mo Fan twice the deposit as compensation.

Mo Fan did not want it, but he had no choice but to take it after Gu Ying insisted.

Mo Fan roamed around the Thousand Islands Lake after parting ways with the Foehn Hunter Squad.

He tried attacking the Salamander Demons to see how quickly he could eliminate them. As he expected, regardless of the Element he was using, the Salamander Demons were a lot harder to kill than normal Warrior-level creatures. Mo Fan only managed to clear the Salamander Demons out of a small area after spending the whole day fighting.

The Thousand Islands Lake was quite broad, and there were countless Salamander Demons occupying the lake. If even a magic cannon Mage like Mo Fan was struggling to reduce the numbers of the

Salamander Demons, it was obvious that culling the Salamander Demons with brute force was out of the question!

“Forget it, time to go back and see if Lingling has come up with a better plan.” Mo Fan felt extremely helpless. He had no choice but to go back, as it was starting to get dark again.

Mo Fan had wasted a few days at the Thousand Islands Lake, yet he had not found any effective way to exterminate the Salamander Demons.

Mo Fan found Lingling after he returned to Minghu Outpost.

Lingling was busy working on something, and was extremely focused. She was displaying the inviolable bearing of a genius.

Apas sat by the window, eating a red apple. Her sexy legs were swinging under her pleated skirt. She seemed carefree and relaxed, but she was just bored.

“If she’s not doing anything, can you keep her in your Contract Space?” Lingling said. She was obviously referring to Apas.

“I wasn’t disturbing you!” Apas was not pleased.

“The air you are exhaling is disturbing me from doing my work,” Lingling refuted promptly.

“Humph, annoying little brat!” Apas jumped down from the side of the window. She went up to Mo Fan and wrapped her arms around her hand. She stuck her body close to him and rubbed it against his hand while asking in a seductive tone, “Big brother, did you learn anything useful?”

“Not really, the Salamander Demons are very tricky to kill. If we are relying on brute force, we might have to hire a bunch of Super Mages, but that would also destroy the Thousand Islands Lake,” Mo Fan said. He did not mind Apas acting coquettishly. He was enjoying the sensation.

Lingling glanced at Apas. Her face had no expression, but her eyes were full of disdain and disgust.

“Take a rest for now. I’ll need you to visit the Hunter Union later,” Lingling said.

“Did you make any progress?” Mo Fan asked.

“A little.”

“That’s good to hear.”

Mo Fan had relied heavily on Lingling’s knowledge and her crazy insight to complete some of the high-level quests when he was still a low-rank Hunter. Of their partnership, Lingling was the brains, so Mo Fan only needed to be a simple-minded retard with well-developed limbs!

Mo Fan heard something tapping on the window. He was confused.

Apas looked excited. However, before Apas could reach the window, Lingling said sternly, “Don’t you dare touch it!”

The Hunter Lodge...

The strong smell of the swamp lingered in the hall. The Hunters quickly pinched their noses and stepped aside.

A squad of Hunters in rugged clothes covered in stinky mud came into the hall. They hurriedly went into a room, ignoring their smell and appearance.

It was the Foehn Hunter Squad. They had been very productive, completing the quest for an infant of the Lizard Demons in just four days. They came in right away to hand in the quest.

However, to their surprise, another Hunter Group was waiting in the room. They had obviously completed the quest and were waiting for their employer!

“Why are you here!?” Gu Ying pulled a long face when she saw the other group.

“Isn’t this Gu Ying? Why do you look like you have just been begging on the street...tsk tsk, what’s that smell? Did you fall into a latrine pit or something? You really should have washed yourself before coming here. This is the private zone for Hunter Masters. I wouldn’t want the Hunter Master to faint because of your smell,” an enchanting voice spoke up.

The person speaking was a woman in her thirties. Her face was covered by a thick layer of foundation. She looked beautiful at the first glance, but if anyone was to take a closer look at her, they might be disgusted by her thick makeup.

“What are you doing here?” Gu Ying said coldly.

“To hand in the quest, of course! My team caught an infant of the Lizard Demons, so I’m here to hand it over... Oh, don’t tell me you accepted the same quest. Such a pity, we were here first, and we’ve already informed the employer,” Li Yumei answered sweetly.

“That’s impossible. The infants of the Lizard Demons are only active in the Great Gorge during this current season. Our team never saw you in that area. There must be something fishy about the creature you’ve caught. Someone must be raising it to be used as a Contracted Beast after it grew up!” Gu Ying said.

It was no longer the mating season for the Lizard Demons. It was unlikely that anyone would find a youngling of the Lizard Demons, even if they searched the entire Thousand Islands Lake and other areas. However, the Foehn Hunter Squad knew a place with a unique environment that might have one or two infants of the Lizard Demons, which was why they were so confident in completing the quest. To their surprise, Li Yumei was here to hand in the quest too! There was no way she could have found an infant of the Lizard Demons somewhere else!

“You’re not the only person familiar with the Thousand Islands Lake. Are you accusing me of cheating just because I’m faster than you? The Hunter Master isn’t blind, he will make the call himself. If you ask me, you should just go home and take a shower. You really stink, we are still looking forward to a feast tonight!” Li Yumei said disgustedly.

“Damn it, damn it!” Gu Ying immediately lost her temper. She ran forward as if she was going to fight Li Yumei to death.

“You madwoman!”

A Hunter Mistress walked in as they were about to start a brawl. She frowned and rebuked them when she saw people fighting, "What are you doing? Don't you know violence isn't allowed here?"

"We are here to turn in the quest! They came after us. You should drive them out!" Li Yumei sniffed.

"Whoever that argues further will be tossed out! Since both teams have completed the quest, you are allowed to stay! The Hunter Master is willing to pay a hundred million for the squads that completed the quest. It's fine to have a few squads competing for the quest. The Hunter Master will personally evaluate the teams..." the Hunter Mistress went.

"Of course, I understand!" Li Yumei immediately responded with a smile.

Gu Ying had a twisted expression. Her face was dirty, and her disheveled hair was covered in filth. She looked completely different compared to her appearance when Mo Fan first met her. She was no different than a beggar on the street.

The quest paying a million for the infant of Lizard Demons was not that important. The following request to hire a squad with twenty-four million was the real deal. The team had gone all out to finish the quest first. They had waited in the swamp for three days and nights!

They had finally caught an infant of the Lizard Demons and rushed back, and did not have a chance to get some rest. Gu Ying would really be disheartened if her team missed out on the opportunity!

Most infuriatingly, this shameless woman was competing for the quest too!

Gu Ying and Li Yumei used to be members of the same group. Their leader was a very talented Mage. However, Li Yumei ended up shamelessly using her body to convince the leader to kick Gu Ying out of the group. She eventually became the leader's wife.

The woman had never done anything useful, yet her title and reputation had exceeded Gu Ying's. She had even reached the Advanced Level not long ago!

Gu Ying hated Li Yumei's guts. Li Yumei had already ruined her life once. If she messed up her last fight again, she would seriously have the urge to die together with Li Yumei on the spot!

The reward of twenty-four million was too important to her group. Apart from the money, they would be getting a lot of Contribution Points, allowing them to take on higher-level quests! It would be easier for them to take on quests that would pay over ten million, as employers were more willing to employ their group knowing that they had completed a quest that paid twenty-four million in the past.

They had been doing quests worth only a few million as the reward lately. How long was it going to take them to save up for a Galaxy Vein if they were splitting such rewards among the six of them!?

A fragmented Galaxy Vein already cost around fifty to sixty million!

Gu Ying had treated this quest worth twenty-four million very seriously. It was a precious opportunity for her, and would guarantee her the right to accept quests with over ten million. She might have a chance to save up for a Galaxy Vein if she worked hard for another five to six years!

"I've transferred a million to both your accounts. You will hand over the younglings now," the Hunter Mistress said.

“When will we know if the Hunter Master is going to hire us for the next quest? We are more interested in that. Is it possible for us to meet the Hunter Master? Our Foehn Hunter Squad is full of elites, and we are disciplined, just like the army. We promise that we can be of great help to the Hunter Master!” Zhong Li asked quickly

“The Hunter Master will make the decision after looking at the younglings. You can wait here or go back first. We’ll contact you again,” the Hunter Mistress replied evenly.

“Can you please let the Seven Star Hunter Master know that our Panshan Hunter Squad is a subsidiary squad of Hunter Master Lu Zhuo’s Hunter Group? We are more professional and reliable than some inferior, lowly Hunter Groups,” Li Yumei said.

“What did you say!?” Gu Ying snapped.

“Boss, keep your calm,” Zhong Li quickly advised.

“Humph, our strength and reputation say it all. The Seven Star Hunter Master definitely knows better... Mistress, we will excuse ourselves,” Li Yumei sniffed.

Gu Ying was trembling in rage as she watched Li Yumei leave with her party.

However, she did not leave after them. She stayed in the room and looked at the Hunter Mistress. She made up her mind as if she had decided to press her luck, “Mistress, can I meet the Seven Star Hunter Master in person? I can guarantee that there’s something strange about the youngling that Li Yumei brought. Our Foehn Hunter Squad might not be as famous, but our members are outstanding. We are willing to complete the quest at all costs. Please give us a chance!”

Gu Ying did not want to give up, especially after seeing how smug Li Yumei was. She decided to take the initiative to fight for the opportunity!

“I told you, the Hunter Master will decide after inspecting the younglings. What you say won’t make any difference,” the Hunter Mistress responded calmly.

“Please, let me meet the Seven Star Hunter Master!” Gu Ying bowed at the Hunter Mistress.

She could expose Li Yumei’s deception as long as she was given a chance to meet the Hunter Master.

Li Yumei must have bought the youngling. There was no way she had caught it from the wild! Someone like Li Yumei was not worthy to be hired by a Seven Star Hunter Master!

“I’ll relay your message, but the Hunter Master will still make the call.” The Hunter Mistress was touched by Gu Ying’s sincerity. After all, her team had come to turn in the quest even before treating their injuries!

The Hunter Mistress left the room and handed the infants of the Lizard Demons to the employer.

The Hunter Mistress returned after two hours. She was surprised to see the Foehn Hunter Squad was still in the room. They had been waiting for her to return!

“Don’t just wait here, go treat your wounds first and get some rest. I’ll contact you if I have any updates. I’ve already relayed your message. The Hunter Master is currently busy. As for whether the younglings

were tamed or caught in the wild, the Hunter Master will know for sure. Don't you worry," the Hunter Mistress encouraged them.

"Oh, okay," Gu Ying nodded in disappointment.

"Leader, don't give up yet. A Seven Star Hunter Master can easily see through Li Yumei's tricks..." Zhong Li said.

"Speaking of which, I didn't know the quest was from a Seven Star Hunter Master before coming here! It's rare to even see a Seven Star Hunter Master. I never thought the quest we were doing is from a Seven Star Hunter Master. No wonder it has such a generous reward!" the big-nosed Mage said.

A Seven Star Hunter Master!

A person like that was a great authority in Gu Ying and her party's eyes. The man Li Yumei had hooked up with was only a Three Star Hunter Master. He was just like a junior in front of a Seven Star Hunter Master!

Gu Ying did not expect their employer to be a Seven Star Hunter Master; it made her even more desperate to secure the opportunity. It would be a great advantage if they worked successfully for a Seven Star Hunter Master. They would be guaranteed to be able to take on quests worth more than ten million!

"Mistress, may I ask who the Seven Star Hunter Master is? I've seen the seal on the letter. I can remember many of the Seven Star Hunter Master's seals, but I don't think I've seen this one before. Is the Hunter Master someone that has kept a low-profile?" the big-nosed Mage asked cautiously.

The seal of a Hunter was a symbol of their identity. Truly famous Hunters did not even need to mention their names or titles, their seals alone were enough to indicate who they were. The big-nosed Mage had seen the letter, yet he could not link the seal with any of the famous Seven Star Hunter Masters.

"To be honest, I'm not familiar with the two Seven Star Hunter Masters, either. They are from a private Hunter Agency, but it's a very famous Hunter Agency. I'm sure you have heard of it before," the Hunter Mistress said.

2

"A private Hunter Agency?" The members of the Foehn Hunter Squad were shocked.

Most Hunters were actively looking for quests, but private Hunter Agencies were usually made up of Hunters that employers would actively visit, trying to convince them to take on their jobs. Therefore, most private Hunter Agencies were established by someone that had at least reached the rank of a Senior Hunter. They mainly focused on quests that were dedicated exclusively to a Senior Hunter!

"So... which private Hunter Agency is it?"

"The Clearsky Hunter Agency of the Magic City's Jing'an District."

Chapter 1674: A-Rank Quest

“The Clearsky Hunter Agency, the one with a long-established reputation in the Magic City! Don’t people always complain about their attitude? They always despise employers that go to ask them for a favor. I also heard that their agency is unmanned most of the time. They are known for their irresponsible attitude!” The big-nosed Mage was pretty familiar with the Hunter Agencies. He was surprised when he heard the name of the Hunter Agency involved.

The Clearsky Hunter Agency was considered outlandish by other Hunters. Most Hunters in the Hunter Union and the reputable Hunter Agencies were concerned about their image and reputation. After all, it was the key to earning money!

The Clearsky Hunter Agency was special. If the private Hunter Agencies were ranked according to the number of complaints they received, the Clearsky Hunter Agency was high on the ranking because they kept turning down their customers! Asking their Hunters for a favor was more difficult than recruiting Zhuge Liang!

{TL Note: Zhuge Liang was a famous character in history. In the Romance of Three Kingdoms, Liu Bei only managed to recruit him after paying him three personal visits.}

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However, the Clearsky Hunter Agency was still well-respected among the Hunters, mainly because the Clearsky Hunter Agency had a one hundred percent completion rate of the quests they accepted, even today!

When it came to difficult and tricky quests, many people would recommend that people try their luck at the Clearsky Hunter Agency. If Clearsky was willing to accept the quest, it was already half-completed!

“I just received some news,” the Hunter Mistress said.

Gu Ying immediately tensed up in worry. After all, her Foehn Hunter Squad did not have an impressive reputation, unlike Li Yumei’s Panshan Hunter Squad, which had connections with many Hunter Masters.

The other members were nervous, too. A quest worth twenty-four million as the reward was at stake. They could enjoy a long vacation after they were done with the quest!

“The infant of the Lizard Demons that your group caught meets the Hunter Master’s requirements. She has agreed to hire you. You can give me the details of your members. I will go ahead with the procedures. Once they are done, you will be officially hired by the Hunter Master. You must fulfill your duty,” the Hunter Mistress informed them.

“Wow, that’s great!” Zhong Li jumped up in joy.

The rest of the team embraced one another in excitement. They were rich, they were being paid twenty-four million! Each person was going to get four million, and it would only take a month!

Gu Ying stood still. Tears almost rolled down her cheeks.

If Li Yumei had not provoked her, she could only throw a tantrum and beat the crap out of her teammates to vent her frustration if she did not get the quest. She could suddenly see the sunlight poking out of the thick stormy clouds!

“Make sure you seize the opportunity. I hope you don’t disappoint the Seven Star Hunter Masters,” the Hunter Mistress encouraged them with a smile.

“Will do, we promise to give it our best!”

If their employer was really a Seven Star Hunter Master, the opportunity was clearly worth more than twenty-four million. Li Yumei’s squad had been pressuring them for a long time. They always ended up with the better employers and easier quests with higher rewards. Meanwhile, the Foehn Squad had worked harder to earn less money. Some employers even picked on them on purpose, just because the Panshan Hunter Squad was tied to a Three Star Hunter Master.

A connection to a Three Star Hunter Master was not to be underestimated. There were many Hunter Squads in China, and many Hunters waiting to earn a fortune. There were a lot of competent Hunter Groups, too. Since everyone was an Intermediate Mage, it was difficult to showcase their strength just by casting a few spells in front of their employers. How were they supposed to stand out among the Hunter Groups?

An employer would thus usually choose a Hunter Squad that was recommended by a Hunter Master!

Even though the strength of a Hunter Squad mattered the most, it was unlikely that the strength of the Hunter Squads differed by much at their current level. Even if the Hunter Squad did not complete the quests as requested, as long as the Panshan Hunter Squad had access to the easier quests with higher pay, the members could afford better magic equipment and resources to improve their cultivation. They would eventually get stronger, widening the gap between them and the Foehn Hunter Squad. Even the smallest advantage would eventually grow into a huge gap!

Therefore, when Gu Ying learned the quest was from a Seven Star Hunter Master, she was even more desperate to claim it. It might be the opportunity she had been looking for to resolve the difficulties that the Foehn Hunter Squad was currently facing!

At the inn in Minghu Outpost, Li Yumei was sitting on a wooden chair. She pulled a long face when she considered the quest worth twenty-four million escaping from her grasp.

“What is it, my little baby? Who’s making you mad?” A man with long hair came over and sat down beside Li Yumei. The man slipped his hand into Li Yumei’s clothes, seeing no one was around them.

“Humph, it’s because of the goddamned quest that is hiring a Hunter Squad. That Seven Star Hunter Master didn’t even bother giving you any face. They ended up choosing that b**ch Gu Ying’s group. Idiots!” Li Yumei swore angrily.

“Twenty-four million is a lot indeed, but you’re already an Advanced Mage. You shouldn’t let such a trivial matter bother you,” Lu Zhuo said.

“I just don’t feel good because she got the quest. I will soon leave the Panshan Hunter Squad, so I wanted to secure some benefits for them before I go,” Li Yumei said haughtily.

“Well, they did specify they were looking for an infant of the Lizard Demons captured from the wild. They aren’t that stupid to fall for your little tricks. Oh, I forgot to tell you, my team just accepted a new quest. It’s an A-Rank Quest,” Lu Zhuo said.

“An A-Rank Quest? Can’t you bring me along?” Li Yumei asked immediately.

She was now an Advanced Mage, yet she had yet to attempt an A-Rank Quest!

As a matter of fact, they had only completed a few B-Rank Quests so far. The quest given by the Seven Star Hunter Master with twenty-four million as the reward was considered a B-Rank Quest. The quest before it which had paid a million was only a D-Rank Quest.

Hunters needed reputation. The Hunter Union would reward Hunters with Contribution Points based on the number and the rank of the quests they completed, how satisfied the employers were, and their completion rate. The Hunter Union would then rank the Hunters based on their reputation and the Contribution Points they had collected.

A-Rank Quests were only available to Hunter Masters. If no one in a Hunter Group was a Hunter Master, they did not even have the right to see the details of the quest!

Li Yumei was now an Advanced Mage, yet her Contribution Points were still at the rank of an Advanced Hunter. If she participated in an A-Rank Quest and completed it, she would soon become a Hunter Master from the Contribution Points rewarded to her!

“I’m afraid not. After all, my team is pretty serious about it,” Lu Zhuo said after a slight hesitation.

Li Yumei might be an Advanced Mage, but she still had not learned how to use the Advanced Spells. She was not much stronger than an Intermediate Mage. Besides, Lu Zhuo was well aware of Li Yumei’s strength... she was only skillful in bed!

Chapter 1675: The Perfect Wife Among the Hunters

“What do you mean? I’m already an Advanced Mage. Can’t you just let me tag along? Aren’t you the leader of the Pancheng Hunter Group? You can easily decide everything. I’m going to join your Hunter Group in the future, too! How can you not bring me along? If you don’t, I won’t let you touch me again. Humph, take your hand off me. You are not allowed to touch me!” Li Yumei said angrily.

“Alright, but only if you don’t stir up any trouble,” Lu Zhuo sighed.

“That’s more like it. By the way, a Level A Quest should have a huge payout, right? Is it more than fifty million?” Li Yumei asked.

“There’s no money,” Lu Zhuo replied.

“No money? Why did you accept it then!?” Li Yumei blurted out.

“Contribution Points! Our employer is a Seven Star Hunter Master too! She’s looking for a group of Advanced Mages, and offering an insane amount of Contribution Points. It’s enough to promote me to Four Stars if I claim them all!” Lu Zhuo informed her.

“That many? If...if I join the team, wouldn’t it be enough for me to become a Hunter Master too?” Li Yumei’s eyes widened.

“Yeah, it’s enough for you, even if the Contribution Points are distributed equally,” Lu Zhuo nodded.

“That’s great, HAHAHA!” Li Yumei burst out laughing.

“How do you feel now? Much better?” Lu Zhuo smiled. He slid his hand back into Li Yumei’s clothes.

“That b**ch Gu Ying is still proud of herself for securing a quest with twenty-four million as the reward, but I will soon be promoted to a Hunter Master! I can’t wait to see her turning mad after hearing about it!” Li Yumei burst out laughing.

“You shouldn’t worry too much about her. She will soon be less worthy to even pick up your shoes for you...” Lu Zhuo said.

“I enjoy watching her face covered in dirt as I trample her under my feet!” Li Yumei declared.

“So does that mean I can do whatever I want tonight? Wherever I want?” Lu Zhuo asked with a malicious grin.

“Pervert!” Li Yumei rolled her eyes.

Fresh air blew into the room through the window and lifted the curtains. Mo Fan woke up, feeling refreshed after having a comfortable sleep last night.

The quality of his sleep had indeed improved because of the verdant hills and waters about. He felt energized after opening his eyes and stretching a little!

“Lingling, why are you awake so early?” Mo Fan saw Lingling busy with her experiment on the tall stool.

“She hasn’t slept yet,” Apas said.

“A little girl like you shouldn’t stay up all night, or else you will never grow up. Go get some sleep, now!” Mo Fan lifted Lingling up from the stool. He did not care about the progress she was making. He would not allow her to stay up all night and mess up her body.

Lingling was dedicated to the things she was doing. She often stayed up all night to do her experiments, but now that Mo Fan was around, he would not give her the chance to do so. She did not have to be so serious with many things. It was not the end of the world if she could not find a way to deal with the Salamander Demons!

“Let go, let go of me!” Lingling swung her claws wildly, dealing zero damage to Mo Fan. She ended up hurting her hands instead.

“Be a good girl, and stop being so stubborn. Do you really want to become a ‘Pacific Princess’ when you grow up? You will only grow with plenty of sleep. Those girls with a young face and huge bust like to sleep just like pigs!” Mo Fan placed Lingling on his bed and dragged the blanket over her.

Lingling continued to throw a tantrum, but Mo Fan simply stood beside the bed. He would not leave until she was asleep. She angrily pulled the blanket over her head.

“It’s better to take your time instead of rushing everything like you always do. Get some sleep, or I’ll forfeit the quest and send you back to school!” Mo Fan ordered her.

Lingling was afraid of going back to school. She had already memorized everything the school taught when she was eight, not to mention the dumb childish boys that kept showing off in front of her!

Lingling flipped up the blanket and told Mo Fan seriously, “I’ve learned more about the Salamander Demons!”

“Go to bed, we’ll talk again tomorrow, be good!” Mo Fan declared.

“I’ll sleep after I explain it to you!” Lingling insisted.

“Fine, go ahead,” Mo Fan sighed and nodded.

“I asked people to get me infants of the Salamander Demons and the Lizard Demons, respectively. I discovered that the Salamander Demons are similar to mules. They aren’t really a new species,” Lingling said.

“Mules? What do you mean?” Mo Fan was not familiar with the concept.

“Many species that are similar in builds and lineage can hybridize. For example, the scorpion demons and the snake demons can breed into a new species...” Lingling purposely glanced at Apas before she added, “The Lamias are a new species because they can mate with one another to produce offspring. I can give you a simpler example. The offspring of a donkey and a horse is a mule, but a mule isn’t a new species because it can’t mate with another mule to produce offspring. Even if it can, its offspring won’t live for long.”

“Should I write down some notes, teacher?” Mo Fan asked archly.

Lingling rolled her eyes and said, “The Salamander Demons are the offspring of the Lizard Demons and the Spiral Shelled Monsters. I’ve conducted some tests with their younglings’ blood. I discovered that the lineage of the Salamander Demons is incompatible with the Lizard Demons. If the Salamander Demons were a new species, they would inherit the lineage of the Lizard Demons and be considered part of their kin.”

“Mm, mm...” Mo Fan nodded, pretending to understand it all.

Lingling knew Mo Fan was hopeless when it came to theoretical knowledge. She cut straight to the conclusion, “The Salamander Demons are a crossbreed with a short life span. They can’t produce offspring by mating with one another!”

“That doesn’t sound right. If they can’t reproduce, why is the whole Thousand Islands Lake crawling with them? I’ve already looked around there. The numbers of Salamander Demons in the Thousand Islands Lake are enough to form a horde. I feel like they are mating non-stop, just to produce little Salamander Demons!” Mo Fan said.

"I initially thought they could mate with one another too, and their reproductive ability was insane, but it's unlikely that I'm wrong after I experimented. These Salamander Demons are like mules, they can't reproduce by mating with one another. The only reason that their numbers are so insane is that there is one unique mated pair that are producing eggs like a factory somewhere in the Thousand Islands Lake!" Lingling declared.

Mo Fan's eyes glittered after hearing her words. He said, "You're telling me, if we can find those two creatures and take care of them, we can stop these Salamander Demons from multiplying?"

The Salamander Demons were a threat because of their reproductive ability. Imagine if it would take them a month just to kill a third of their population, yet they were able to replace more than the number of Salamander Demons that were killed. However, if the Hunters could stop them from reproducing, it was only a matter of time until they eliminated every single one of the Salamander Demons!

"Mm, those creatures are very cunning. They have the adult Salamander Demons move the eggs to somewhere else to make it look like the Salamander Demons are reproducing everywhere rapidly. That way, the Hunters won't be able to track them down by observing the population density of their younglings," Lingling said.

"How did you figure it out?" Mo Fan was curious. Lingling had not set a single foot out the door!

"I dissected a Salamander Demon's youngling that I asked someone to catch for me!" Lingling said.

"Ugh... alright," Mo Fan decided not to ask any questions again.

He shouldn't have bothered asking about the process. He was satisfied just knowing the answers!

"Things are a lot simpler now that we know what we are looking for, instead of roaming around aimlessly like a headless fly. Get some sleep, the things you've learned are very important. I might even track down the progenitors and kill them by the time you wake up," Mo Fan said.

"Let me finish my experiments. I might be able to find their weaknesses!" Lingling grumbled.

"Not a chance, time to sleep. Apas, stay here. If she doesn't go to sleep, hypnotize her!" Mo Fan was worried about Lingling. He could not afford to let such a capable little loli fall sick after pulling an all-nighter. He had to rely on her to make a fortune and to get his revenge on his enemies in the future!

"Got it!" Apas gladly agreed.

"One last thing," Lingling reached her finger out and pouted when she saw Mo Fan about to scold her. She looked extremely adorable.

"Say it!" Mo Fan sighed his permission.

"It will be tricky to track down the creatures on your own. You aren't familiar with the Thousand Islands Lake, and you're a landlubber. I've already hired a squad of Hunter Masters and seven squads of Advanced Hunters. They have all been active around the Thousand Islands Lake. You can send them to search for the mated pair. You should be able to find them in no time," Lingling said.

Mo Fan was stunned for a moment before he finally said, "Lingling, you're really the perfect wife among the Hunters. You've organized everything for me!"

He did not even need to use his brain with Lingling as his partner. He just needed to do the dirty work when it mattered.

Lingling was about to say something when Mo Fan frowned and said, "No more talking. Another word and I'll be sleeping with you on the same bed. That way, you won't be able to marry anyone when you grow up."

"Three years minimum, and death sentence maximum, you better think twice!" Lingling harrumphed coldly. She hid under the blanket and tried to go to sleep.

"..." Mo Fan was left speechless. To his relief, Lingling obediently fell asleep.

She stopped making noises after some time. She was obviously asleep, judging from her steady breathing, and had lost her mature look and bearing. She was just like an adorable little kid. Mo Fan patted her on the head and left the room.

Lingling was born to be a Hunter. She was in high spirits whenever she was figuring out a way to solve mysteries and resolve dangers. She was quite happy when Mo Fan was back in the country, as if she finally had someone to play with her properly!

"A problem child," Apas said.

"You're more or less the same. Take care of her... I'm heading out!" Mo Fan said.

"I'm not a nanny!" Apas grumbled.

"I'll reward you, a meal of salted crayfish!"

"Mm, got it!" Apas was overjoyed.

Seeing Apas' reaction, Mo Fan could not help but wonder if he could easily convince the successor of Queen Medusa to willingly sign a Contract by offering her half a kilogram of crayfish...

Chapter 1676: Beyond Retarded

Mo Fan asked the Hunter Mistress to gather the hired squads by Minghu Lake to meet them.

Hunter Masters could issue quests too, and they were usually well-received by other Hunters. Not only did those quests have higher credibility, but they would also award a significant amount of Contribution Points.

Contribution Points were as valuable as money in a Hunter's eyes. A lot of Hunter Groups were willing to take Contribution Points as the reward to obtain higher ranks!

Mo Fan had no idea how many Contribution Points he had collected so far. Lingling was fully responsible for managing them. He was rather intrigued after learning Lingling had hired so many Hunters without using a lot of money.

“Basically, after you become a Hunter Master, every Contribution Point you earn can be treated as a special currency among Hunters. When you need other Hunters’ help for your quest, you can offer them Contribution Points as a reward. Someone will be willing to take your quest if the Contribution Points you offer are high enough. That being said, the Contribution Points that you give out will be deducted from your balance, and you will be demoted if they are lower than the required amount for your current title,” the Hunter Mistress Yang Ning told him.

“Oh, I see. I’ve never used my Contribution Points before,” Mo Fan said.

The quests that Lingling had accepted were suitable for just the two of them, and did not require a lot of manpower. Lingling would rather use money instead of Contribution Points, so their rank could rise faster.

However, Mo Fan was already a Seven Star Hunter Master, the highest rank below Senior Hunter. It was unlikely that he would become a Senior Hunter anytime soon, so it would not hurt to use his Contribution Points, as long as it would not take away his rank of Seven Star Hunter Master.

Mo Fan’s rank had risen insanely fast, mainly because he had completed a few S-Rank Quests, including the incident on Chongming Island, the Drowning Curse, and the Tear of Medusa. His rank had soared like a plane lifting off. After all, quests with a reward pool were extremely difficult, but the reward usually contained an insane amount of Contribution Points!

Mo Fan’s rank had skyrocketed after he completed the quest of the Tear of Medusa. After all, they only had two Hunter members in their party, unlike other squads who usually had around eight people. Some Hunter Groups even had more than a dozen members. Therefore, even if these Hunter Groups managed to complete a quest with a high reward, the money and Contribution Point each member would receive were not that great.

Their party only had two members, yet they had managed to complete S-Rank quests. As a result, their ranks had risen very quickly!

Mo Fan realized how useful the Contribution Points were after listening to Yang Ning’s explanation. It would be a waste of time if he had to run errands or kill some weak demon creatures himself!

“The truth is, it’s rare to see Hunter Masters completing quests on their own like you and Lingling. Most Hunter Masters will gather lower-ranked Hunter Groups to do their jobs. The Hunter Masters enjoy the meat, while the rest of the Hunter Groups get a share of the soup, just like what you’re doing today...” Yang Ning said.

It was obvious that the Hunter Mistress knew Lingling.

“Our Clearsky Hunter Agency is only interested in dubious and difficult quests... By the way, did you contact the Hunters that we hired?” Mo Fan asked.

“I did; they are on their way here,” the Hunter Mistress answered.

Mo Fan chatted with the Hunter Mistress at the teahouse beside the lake for some time. He finally understood the privileges of a Hunter Master. He had also learned a trick; he could let other Hunter Groups do some of the errands for him! The expense was like a drop in the ocean compared to the Contribution Points he had collected.

"I told them to be here at nine. Do you want me to tell you the details of the teams?" Yang Ning said.

"Forget it, I'm too lazy for that now. I'll go grab another pot of tea. The tea is pretty nice here," Mo Fan rose to his feet.

"Let me do it."

"It's fine, I can do it myself." Mo Fan went into the teahouse.

Yang Ning watched Mo Fan leave. She had known Lingling for a long time, but it was her first time meeting Mo Fan. It was rare to see such a young Seven Star Hunter Master. She flipped open the files to read his information again.

A moment later, she heard footsteps approaching.

Yang Ning lifted her gaze and saw a few unfamiliar faces. She frowned in puzzlement.

"Miss Yang, it's us, the Foehn Hunter Squad. I'm the leader, Gu Ying," Gu Ying smiled.

"Ah? My apologies, I'm sorry for not recognizing you... you looked so different the other day," Yang Ning politely shook hands with Gu Ying. She was quite surprised. The female leader was actually quite pretty when she made herself presentable. She looked completely different from her beggar-like appearance the other day.

Every woman was fond of beauty, yet she was willing to sacrifice her beauty just to complete the quest. Yang Ning was a little impressed by Gu Ying.

"Is the Hunter Master not here yet? Oh, we've come early. Miss Yang, did you introduce us to the Hunter Master?" Xie Hao blurted out.

"He's too lazy to hear me out. After all, there are a lot of teams on the list," Yang Ning said.

"A lot of teams?" Xie Hao was confused.

"Well, the Hunter Master did hire a group of Hunter Masters and seven groups of Advanced Hunters," Yang Ning said.

"As I thought..." Gu Ying let out a wry smile.

They initially thought it was a great opportunity for the Foehn Hunter Squad to earn the Hunter Master's favor if they performed well. They might be able to work together in the long term. Running errands for a Seven Star Hunter Master was obviously better than doing the quests that were issued by the Hunter Union!

However, they were not the only group that was hired. It would be difficult for them to stand out among the teams that were hired!

“You’ve come pretty early, perhaps you can meet the Hunter Master first... Huh, where did he go?” Yang Ning looked into the teahouse, but she could not find him anywhere.

Yang Ning was left speechless. She asked the Foehn Hunter Squad to wait there.

A while later, the rest of the groups arrived too. The seven groups, including the Foehn Hunter Squad, had all gathered at the platform. They had all arrived earlier than the scheduled time. Their energetic faces hinted that they were looking forward to cooperating with the Seven Star Hunter Master.

“It’s Lu Zhuo and his Pancheng Hunter Group!” the leader of a Hunter Group said.

Gu Ying’s expression sank. She turned away, not willing to look at the group of people that just arrived.

“Aren’t you Xiao Ying? What is it? You don’t recognize your old leader?” Lu Zhuo approached Gu Ying when he saw her.

Gu Ying did not want to talk to Lu Zhuo. She was in a bad mood all of a sudden. She told Yang Ning, “Didn’t you say we were hired by a Seven Star Hunter Master? Why is this guy here? If he’s the employer, I won’t take the job, regardless of how much he’s paying.”

“He was hired too,” Yang Ning smiled. She was not angry.

“Those Hunter Masters are all hired too?” Zhong Li exclaimed.

A Seven Star Hunter Master had hired a bunch of Two Star and Three Star Hunter Masters, and seven groups of Advanced Hunters. Did he accept an A-Rank Quest?

“The people nowadays, they always forgot they were once a rookie after forming their own group. They are pulling a long face instead of showing gratitude!” Li Yumei said mockingly.

Gu Ying was driven mad. Why was Li Yumei here? Why did she have to stumble into her every time!?

To think that she was going to work together with this woman for a quest! It was just torture for Gu Ying!

Yang Ning sat there and observed the Hunters. She noticed that most of them knew one another. The Advanced Hunters were greeting each other, but the group of Hunter Masters was aloof and unapproachable, not placing any attention on the Advanced Hunters. A few Advanced Hunters were trying to befriend the Hunter Masters instead.

“That’s a lot of people, did everyone arrive?” Mo Fan placed the tray on the table.

“Mm, everyone is here, let me introduce you,” Yang Ning rose to her feet.

“Fan Mo, Fan Mo, why are you here too?” Xie Hao exclaimed. He was the first to see Mo Fan.

Zhong Li, the big-nosed Mage, and Gu Ying saw Mo Fan, too. They immediately felt uneasy.

After all, they had kicked Mo Fan out of the party because of this quest!

“Humph, how dishonest were you? You said that you didn’t want to share the reward with us, but you’ve joined someone else’s team instead!” the big-nosed Mage said preemptively with a cold harrumph.

“Big nose, you shouldn’t say that. Fan Mo volunteered to leave the party because he didn’t want to trouble us. You can’t stop him from joining other teams!” Gu Ying warned him.

“Yeah, Fan Mo, we might not be on the same team, but we are working together still. Let’s give it our best. Our employer is a seven Star Hunter Master. You should be glad for the great opportunity since you are only a Basic Mage... is the tea for us? I shall treat myself to it then,” Xie Hao laughed. He happily took a cup of tea from the tray.

Mo Fan was completely surprised!

Why are they here!? Wait, so... the quest that was going to pay twenty-four million was issued by Lingling?!

Hang on, she did mention that she had asked someone to catch an infant Salamander Demon...

Luckily, he decided to leave the party instead of going with them. Otherwise, he would be beyond retarded if he didn’t know the quest was issued in his own name!

Chapter 1677: Aren’t You a Basic Mage?

“Errands boy, are you dumb or slow? Didn’t you see the Hunter Masters here? Why do you bother serving tea to those petty nobodies? Bring the tea over!” Li Yumei was seated at the next table. She did not want to miss out on any chance to trouble Gu Ying.

“Mm, the Seven Star Hunter Master won’t be here any time soon. Kid, give us the tea, we are a little thirsty,” Lu Zhuo glanced at Mo Fan and said.

Yang Ning remained seated with a smile. Things were getting a little interesting!

Even Mo Fan was stunned.

Holy crap, are hired Hunters so full of themselves nowadays? Are they seriously asking their employer to serve them tea?

“The tea is mine, go get it yourself if you want some,” Mo Fan placed the tray on his table.

“What do you mean? You sound unwilling. A young and inexperienced Hunter like you can only run errands for us. Do you think you can kill a strong demon creature on your own? Don’t you hide behind your team if you’re in danger when you don’t even know how to respect your seniors!” Li Yumei spoke up.

“What do you mean by seniors?” Mo Fan looked at Lu Zhuo and asked.

“I obviously mean Hunters that are more experienced and have higher ranks,” Li Yumei said.

“So you’re telling me that those with lower ranks should be serving tea instead?” Mo Fan asked.

“You can see it that way,” Li Yumei said proudly.

“Sure, then you should brew every team here a pot of tea and serve everyone. Make sure you pay for it too,” Mo Fan said in displeasure.

“What do you mean? I, Li Yumei, am an Advanced Mage! Don’t you dare provoke me with your childish tantrum. You should be glad that you have the chance to run errands for us. I can easily make you leave because of your attitude!” Li Yumei was getting a little angry.

Xie Hao quickly came over to advise Mo Fan.

“Brother Fan Mo, just bear with it,” Xie Hao said.

“This is interesting, it’s my first time seeing a hired Hunter asking their employer to leave!” Yang Ning was done enjoying the joke, and finally spoke up.

“What employer?” Li Yumei asked with a confused look.

“Him, he’s your employer,” Yang Ning pointed at Mo Fan with a smile.

“Isn’t the employer a Seven Star Hunter Master?” Lu Zhuo frowned.

“He is the Seven Star Hunter Master! Not every Hunter likes to wear their badge all the time,” Yang Ning said.

The seven people in the group of Hunter Masters and over sixty Advanced Hunters stared at Mo Fan with wide eyes.

As a matter of fact, they were also enjoying the scene. It was common to see Hunters bullying rookies and low-rankers, so they did not think too much of Li Yumei’s actions. To their surprise, the young Mage who seemed to be a freeloader was actually their employer?

“Miss Yang Ning, that’s too much of a joke. I might believe it if you say he’s a lackey working for a Seven Star Hunter Master, but you’re telling me he’s a Seven Star Hunter Master? Most Seven Star Hunter Masters are already Super Mages!” Lu Zhuo said.

1

Yang Ning looked at Lu Zhuo. She remained smiling, and did not explain further.

Lu Zhuo felt something was not right. He looked at Mo Fan closely.

“Are you really a Seven Star Hunter Master? You’re from the Clearsky Hunter Agency?” Lu Zhuo asked seriously.

“I have a partner; it was she that hired you to help me take care of the Salamander Demons. Yang Ning, you may send my information to them,” Mo Fan answered.

Yang Ning nodded. She immediately sent the details to every team’s leader with her phone.

The Hunter Union did not allow employers to send their details and contact numbers to Hunters before an official meeting. That was to prevent the employers and Hunters from bypassing the Hunter Union and reaching a deal privately.

Li Yumei and Lu Zhuo were dumbfounded when they received the information.

“This guy... he’s really a Seven Star Hunter Master!” Li Yumei’s mouth was wide enough to hold two eggs. Her face was filled with disbelief.

Similarly, Gu Ying looked down at the information, then looked up at Mo Fan. She repeated the same actions.

“Fan Mo... you...you’re not a Basic Mage?!” Zhong Li was the first to yell.

“I already told you more a dozen times, I am an Advanced Mage!” Mo Fan answered with a roll of his eyes.

“But...but... weren’t you joking with me?” Zhong Li said with wide eyes.

“I was serious every time I said it to you!”

“But why didn’t you just cast an Advanced Spell? Wouldn’t that convince me right away?” Zhong Li said.

Mo Fan was just about to say he did not bother proving it when he saw Gu Ying staring right at him. He could not help but feel a little awkward.

Mo Fan did not plan to hide his strength when he was looking to join a party. When they assumed he was a Basic Mage, Mo Fan simply used it as a disguise. He thought he would never cross paths with the party again, but Lingling ended up hiring them!

“Are you really a Seven Star Hunter Master?” Gu Ying asked, saying one word at a time.

“I am,” Mo Fan nodded. He smiled and explained when he saw the flicker in Gu Ying’s eyes, “My partner and I worked seperately. My job was to survey the Thousand Islands Lake. I wasn’t familiar with the place, so I gladly joined your party when Zhong Li recruited me. I didn’t know my partner was the one that issued the quest...”

Gu Ying was confused, too. Mo Fan had been with them all the time. There was no way he could have used the Post Eagle to deliver the message to them, it could only be done at the Hunter Union. She finally understood what had happened after hearing Mo Fan’s explanation.

Even so, Gu Ying was lost for words when facing the young and handsome Seven Star Hunter Master. She was already panicking inside.

There were shock and joy, but most of it was disbelief...

The young Mage they had randomly recruited to make up the numbers was actually a Seven Star Hunter Master that had only arrived recently to survey the Thousand Islands Lake!

Most importantly, their Foehn Hunter Squad was trying every way possible to establish connections with a Hunter Master, yet they ended up kicking one out of the party!

Many people thought a person with integrity would behave neither servilely nor overbearingly no matter whom they were facing, but was it really possible?

If someone had bet ten years worth of hard work and their dignity as a woman in exchange for a bright future, but it all depended on a single sentence or a nod of approval from a person, was it really possible to remain calm in front of a person that could easily decide your destiny?

Chapter 1678: His Partner Must Be Very Impressive

Gu Ying could no longer treat Mo Fan the same way. She always thought the fawn in her heart had died around eight years ago after slamming its head into the banister called reality. She did not expect it to come back to life and keep jumping up and down in her heart!

‘I’m sorry, we...we all thought you were just a Basic...’ Gu Ying finally blurted out after some time.

‘It’s fine, but we are quite fateful. We are on the same team again,’ Mo Fan said.

Big Nose and the Earth Mage were already regretting their decision after hearing the words ‘same team’. Why did they kick him out of the party over the negligible cut to their profits? They simply had an urge to die right on the spot!

Luckily, Mo Fan was not bothered by their actions.

—

Lingling had hired a lot of Hunters. There were seventy-two people, according to Yang Ning’s report. The Hunters were still discussing things loudly, since it was extremely rare to see such a young Seven Star Hunter Master. Some were still confirming Mo Fan’s information repeatedly.

‘My Heavens, how did he complete S-Rank Quests? They even had an international reward pool...’ a few Advanced Hunters were whispering softly, but their soft voices could not hide their astonishment.

‘He might be lucky if it was only one, but there are two S-Rank Quests on the list, and another one is confidential!’ the leader of Cangjin Hunter Group, Lan Jin, pointed out.

‘Oh wow, he’s the one that resolved the Drowning Curse. I am from Dalian. The Drowning Curse was a hot topic at our place. They kept saying the victims were sacrifices offered to the King of Sea. Even Senior Hunters tried looking for the reason behind it, but they couldn’t find anything!’

Not many people in China had heard about the reward pool for the Tear of Medusa, but the Hunters that were active along the coastline had heard about the Drowning Curse. They did not expect the young man to be the one that had completed the international S-Rank Quest!

Yang Ning stood beside Mo Fan and said to the teams, ‘Let’s sit down. I will explain the quest in detail. It’s a little complicated, so it might take some time.’

The Hunters immediately fell silent. After all, they were still professionals, and their discipline was only second to soldiers. Otherwise, they would not have been hired for the quest.

However, not only were the members of the Foehn Hunter Squad restless, Lu Zhuo and Li Yumei were feeling uneasy too, judging from their expressions.

The news was like a crash of thunder from a clear sky to Li Yumei!

“What are you waiting for? Go apologize now, do you want to get kicked out of the team?” Lu Zhuo nudged Li Yumei.

This Li Yumei was seriously a troublemaker. They would not be in this situation if she had not gone and displayed her superiority as a senior. Lu Zhuo even had the urge to slap himself on the face when he recalled what he had said. He was planning to befriend the Seven Star Hunter Master, yet he already messed up right at the beginning!

“Master, master, I...I was as blind as a bat. I hope you don’t mind what I said,” Li Yumei said with a forced smile.

Mo Fan was amused when he saw her reaction. He quickly put on airs. “Have you forgotten what you said?”

Seriously, people in every field liked to act superior in front of their juniors, as if they had been through a lot of hardships to get to where they were at now, hence their juniors were obliged to run errands for them...

“I didn’t forget, I didn’t forget, I’ll go brew the tea right away,” Li Yumei could not have cared less about embarrassing herself anymore. She quickly went inside the teahouse.

Li Yumei was still hoping to earn enough Contribution Points to be promoted to a Hunter Master!

“If a rookie is willing to run errands, it’s a way for them to pay their respect to their seniors, but it doesn’t mean it is their duty. The seniors shouldn’t treat these rookies as their slaves either... What’s with all these practices?” Mo Fan said when he saw the others gloating.

Mo Fan remembered the time when he first joined a Hunter Group as a rookie. Back then, Xu Dahuang and Fei Shi had never forced him to run errands for them. These so-called unspoken rules were tightly related to a person’s character. Those that lacked morals enjoyed feeling superior to others, so they enjoyed ordering their juniors around!

2

“The Hunter Master is right!”

Many Advanced Hunters had been hired for the quest. They were also rookies once, and were ordered around by old Hunters. Those with a good moral center would show understanding and not treat their juniors the same way. Others would learn from their seniors and waited until they could finally do the same to their juniors.

“Alright, let’s get down to business. Our job is mainly about the Salamander Demons! You should understand the situation by now; the Thousand Islands Lake is crawling with the Salamander Demons. If we don’t get rid of them soon, the Thousand Islands Lake will soon be taken over by a horde. I have an agreement with Councilman Jiang Xia. I will help him resolve the problem, and your job is to find the mated pair that are breeding the Salamander Demons and help me eliminate them!” Mo Fan said.

Mo Fan briefly explained how the Salamander Demons were reproducing to the teams.

A few Advanced Hunters were intrigued when they heard the information. They had always thought the Salamander Demons were breeding the normal way, considering how their numbers had increased rapidly in just a short period!

“As expected of a Seven Star Hunter Master, our group tried to find the reason behind their rapid reproduction, but we had no luck. However, you’ve found the reason so quickly!” Lu Zhuo quickly used the opportunity to flatter Mo Fan.

“Lu Zhuo, your group has seven members. Each of you will lead a group of Advanced Hunters. We will split into seven teams!” Mo Fan allocated the teams.

“Don’t worry, my team is full of elites. We will find where the Great Salamander Demons are hiding. Don’t you worry... however, the Great Salamander Demons are going to be tricky to deal with. You will have to be there in person,” Lu Zhuo said.

“Just report to me as soon as you locate them!” Mo Fan said.

“Will do, let’s move out.”

—

The teams were soon assigned their jobs. Every member of the Pancheng Hunter Group would lead a group of Advanced Hunters to search the remote areas of the Thousand Islands Lake.

Gu Ying came up to Mo Fan and asked, “Fan Mo, can...can you not let Li Yumei be our leader? She has only reached the Advanced Level recently. She can’t even use an Advanced Spell. We are assigned to search a dangerous area, too. Our safety isn’t guaranteed with her leading us!”

“Oh? I remember I only asked for Hunter Masters with at least two Elements in the Advanced Level!” Mo Fan looked at Yang Ning.

“A team might have abused their connections to bring her in. We don’t really have a good way to prevent it from happening, but you can reduce the reward accordingly when the job is done,” Yang Ning said helplessly.

“The unreliable ones always bring the most trouble. Forget it, I don’t mind as long as we can find the Great Salamander Demons. Let her be, I’m too lazy to deal with her,” Mo Fan said.

If he was to rebuke Lu Zhuo now, it might disrupt their plan. Mo Fan was willing to turn a blind eye to the freeloaders as long as they could finish their job.

“What about us?...” Gu Ying persisted.

“I will assign Li Yumei to another team. Your team must be very familiar with the Thousand Islands Lake if you can find the island surrounded by mountains. I’ll let my Summoned Beast follow you!” Mo Fan said.

Mo Fan summoned the Flying Creek Snow Wolf.

It had been some time since the Flying Creek Snow Wolf had some exercise. Even though he was helping his lackeys expand their territory in the Summoned Beast Plane, he normally let the Moon-Devouring White Wolves handle the fights. He did not have to do the dirty jobs, as he was the leader of the pack.

“Old wolf, you will follow Gu Ying and protect her team. Do you understand?” Mo Fan said.

The Flying Creek Snow Wolf was unwilling. Why was he not Summoned for an intense fight? Why did he have to look after a bunch of people instead?

“Stop howling. You only know how to hook up with female wolves in your den. Do you seriously think you are a breeder? Aren’t you worried about having weak kidneys? Do your job and stop complaining,” Mo Fan berated him mercilessly.

The Flying Creek Snow Wolf lost his noble bearing. He lowered his head and followed after Gu Ying.

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The Flying Creek Snow Wolf left Minghu Outpost with the Foehn Hunter Squad. The members of the Foehn Hunter Squad noticed the Flying Creek Snow Wolf following behind them in low spirits when they reached the wild. He looked more like a sleepy aged dog instead of a guardian beast.

“Can we trust the wolf? I thought he would be following us himself. We can witness his strength as a Seven Star Hunter Master too, but he only sent his Summoned Beast. Is he looking down on us?” Big Nose grumbled.

“Big Nose, you should really keep your mouth shut. If it wasn’t for you, we might be on the same team with a Seven Star Hunter Master now. You are only making it difficult,” Zhong Li rebuked him, displeased.

Zhong Li and Gu Ying were friendly toward Mo Fan, and had parted ways without any hard feelings. The quest was a great opportunity for them. Even if Mo Fan was an aloof person, he would still give them special treatment, considering they were once his teammates...

“Why am I to be blamed for it? Who would even think a young guy like him is a Seven Star Hunter Master? I wonder what his real strength is. There’s no way I would believe he had earned the rank himself. I bet his partner must be very impressive!” Big Nose said.

“I think so too. His partner must be very impressive,” Xie Hao agreed.

Chapter 1679: Cannon Fodder Squad

The Foehn Hunter Squad traveled along the shore of the lake to the west. They had been allocated four search points. The first area they were heading to was likely where the Great Salamander Demons were, an island covered by primitive plants. The plants had almost grown down into the lake.

Thousand Islands Lake was extremely large. The Salamander Demons would hide under the plants to conceal their presence. Without them, someone would have noticed abnormalities after so many Hunters came to the Thousand Islands Lake to earn a quick fortune.

The information exchanged between Hunters was extremely quick. If someone had found the Great Salamander Demons, the Hunter Union would already have records. As such, the Foehn Hunter Squad believed the four areas were most likely where the Great Salamander Demons were hiding, based on their experience and analysis of the Salamander Demons' behavior!

"Speaking of which, did you notice that the number of Lizard Demons has decreased? The Lizard Demons were crawling all over the place like bugs in the swamps before, but we didn't have any trouble crossing the swamp to catch a youngling of the Lizard Demons last time. It should have taken us more than a few days to complete the quest," Xie Hao suddenly spoke up.

"Yeah, it feels weird to me, too. The Lizard Demons should be quite active during this season," Zhong Li nodded in agreement.

"There isn't any trace of the Salamander Demons on this island!" Big Nose called out.

"Let's head to the next area, then," Gu Ying said.

—

At the Cloud-Shaped Island, Lu Zhuo and Li Yumei were leading the team. Two members of the Cangjin Hunter Group were with them. Every member of the Cangjin Hunter Group liked to wear their trademark headscarf.

"Darling, do you think that guy is really a Seven Star Hunter Master?" Li Yumei whispered to Lu Zhuo.

"He definitely is, there's no way you can fake that!" Lu Zhuo glanced at Li Yumei.

For some reason, Lu Zhuo did not feel comfortable when Li Yumei was around, especially when he saw her shamelessly pour tea for the teams. He felt embarrassed, even though he had been the one to ask her to do it.

"But how is that possible? You are only a Three Star Hunter Master, when you're already so capable. How is he four stars higher than you? Does he have a formidable background?" Li Yumei said.

Li Yumei's words made Lu Zhuo feel uneasy.

Lu Zhuo did find it hard to believe. The guy clearly looked a few years younger than him. How did he even complete the S-Ranked Quest of the Drowning Curse?

"Did you forget about his partner? His partner was the one that figured out the reason why the Salamander Demons' numbers are so overwhelming..." Lu Zhuo said.

“You’re saying that he’s not really that impressive, but he has a capable partner? So he’s just a freeloader like me?” Li Yumei’s eyes glittered.

“He should have some tricks up his sleeves, but he won’t be too much stronger than me. I’m curious about how his partner helped him to become a Seven Star Hunter Master at such a young age. If I had an old senior like that to guide me, there’s no way I’d be just a Three Star Hunter Master now,” Lu Zhuo harrumphed coldly.

“I told you, no one is more impressive than my darling among the Hunters. Humph, that guy was acting so full of himself, yet he was only relying on his partner!” Li Yumei felt a lot better, and soon recovered her usual proud demeanor.

“You should only say those things in front of me. You better watch your mouth when he’s around. Either way, his rank is still higher than ours. We can probably get some benefits from him,” Lu Zhuo said.

“Of course... but that b**ch Gu Ying dared to complain to him about me. Such a pity, I almost became their leader. I would have played them to death!” Li Yumei sniffed.

“You better behave yourself. His partner is already displeased after you tried to fool them with a youngling of the Lizard Demons that you bought, and you offended him again today. Just mind your manners and do what a freeloader should for the Contribution Points. Are you worried that you won’t have a chance to get back at her after you become a Hunter Master?” Lu Zhuo said.

“You’re right.”

“Leader, there’s a cave connected to the lake. It might be where the Great Salamander Demons are,” the leader of the Cangjin Hunter Group, Lan Jin, called out to him.

“Mm, take your men and investigate it,” Lu Zhuo said.

“Ah? Aren’t you coming with us? It might be dangerous if the cave is only a narrow passage. Even if the Great Salamander Demons aren’t here, it might have some other creatures too. The few of us are going to struggle against them. We won’t dare go down without you!” Lan Jin answered.

“Don’t worry, I’ll be keeping an eye outside. I’ll back you up right away if anything happens,” Lu Zhuo smiled.

“Al...alright.”

Lan Jin led the rest of the team into the cave while Lu Zhuo and Li Yumei waited outside.

“Why aren’t you going in with them?” Li Yumei asked with a confused look.

“These caves that are connected to the Thousand Islands Lake are extremely dangerous. Some strong demon creatures in the lake treat these caves as their nests, since they can stay on the island or dive into the lake. It’s better to let them investigate first. If I’m stuck inside and happen to stumble into a Commander-level creature, I won’t come out alive!” Lu Zhuo said.

“A Commander-level creature? Could there really be one in a place like this?” Li Yumei exclaimed.

“Of course there is! The Thousand Islands Lake is so huge, with so many islands across it. Only inexperienced teams investigate these caves in person. Our group would usually send a Summoned Beast into it first,” Lu Zhuo grinned coldly.

“I’ve learned something today,” Li Yumei nodded.

Their group of Hunter Masters was indeed different. Li Yumei suddenly realized her Panshan Hunter Squad was a group of cannon fodder compared to Lu Zhuo’s experience and knowledge!

Lu Zhuo glanced at Li Yumei and noticed that she was wearing a low-cut shirt. Her breasts were bouncing as she nodded. Most importantly, he could see her tits through the thin shirt.

This b**ch, how dare she not wear any undergarments? She knew she was going to meet the Seven Star Hunter Master!

“What does that mean?” Lu Zhuo pulled a long face and pointed at Li Yumei’s chest.

“Ah? What are you referring to?” Li Yumei was startled. She quickly lowered her head and looked at herself.

Li Yumei was not a total idiot. She knew how to discern people’s thoughts from their body language, especially men’s. She immediately reacted, “Isn’t it all your fault? You insisted on doing it in the morning. We were almost late for the meeting, so I didn’t even have time to put one on!”

Lu Zhuo thought about it. They were indeed in a rush in the morning!

After the tension eased up slightly, Lu Zhuo reached his hand out to fondle Li Yumei’s breasts, seeing that no one was around. It felt different touching them with the shirt in the way, especially when she least expected it.

“What are you doing? We are still outside!” Li Yumei quickly put on a shy expression.

“They are inside the cave. It’s going to take them a while. I’ve already looked around. There aren’t any demon creatures around, apart from those inside the cave, so it isn’t dangerous here...” Lu Zhuo was suddenly in the mood for some action!

Chapter 1680: Carnage Poisonous Salamander

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The Half-Submerged Island was off to the west of the Thousand Islands Lake. Half of the island was under the surface, while the other half was exposed above the surface. Not many people knew about the island, since they had to travel past some dangerous waters to reach it.

The Foehn Hunter Squad was currently on the island. Zhong Li was good at looking for shortcuts and surveying terrain in the wild, and managed to find a safe path to the island.

They were on a small boat. It was safer to use primitive transportation in the territory of demon creatures. The boat glided along with the current and slowly approached the Half-Submerged Island.

“There are a lot of monsters on the island. Be extra careful when we are on it,” Zhong Li reminded the others.

Zhong Li had discovered the Half-Submerged Island about a year and a half ago. There were some hard-to-see undercurrents close to the island. A few boats had sunk for no reason around the island.

The team soon arrived at the Half-Submerged Island. They went through a dense wood with many red flowers, and noticed a slope going down the island into the lake that was covered in plants. They could see a huge shadow under the lake, most likely the other half of the island.

“Look out!” Big Nose suddenly yelled.

Zhong Li was leading the way. He quickly backed away in fear.

Gu Ying was surprisingly bold. She went forward and cleared the plants blocking the path. She glanced at the thing that made Big Nose panic and drawled, “What’s with the fuss? It’s just a carcass!”

Zhong Li took a closer look and realized it was just the remains of a Lizard Demon. There were flies circling above it. It had obviously been dead for some time.

They crossed the dead body and continued forward. They saw another dead Lizard Demon after taking a few steps. The dead body was severely rotted, and even the bones were exposed.

“What’s going on here? Why are there so many dead Lizard Demons?” Xie Hao asked with a confused face.

The closer they came to the water, the more dead Lizard Demons they saw. They could not even find enough space to stand on. The whole place was littered with dead bodies and bones!

“Holy crap, there are more in the water. They are all white!” Zhong Li leaned forward and almost jumped into the air in shock.

There was a boundary line between the upper half and the lower half of the island. The upper half consisted of rotting carcasses, but the dead Lizard Demons below the line in the water only had white bones left. The Foehn Hunter Squad had often crossed paths with the Lizard Demons, so they could identify them right away.

“I think we should leave at once. Let’s report our discovery to Yang Ning,” Gu Ying frowned.

The fact there were so many bones here indicated the existence of a terrifying creature on the island. The creature had been hunting the Lizard Demons and dragged them here to eat!

“I...I agree,” Xie Hao was a little scared.

They quickly turned around and left. When they reached the wood of red flowers, a strong and cold wind suddenly blew over them from behind.

The wind was carrying the chill from the water of the lake., and they all immediately shivered. Zhong Li looked behind and saw a wriggling body climbing out of the water.

It had a dark blue lizard's skin, which suddenly turned blood-red after it was exposed to the air. It was like thick blood was constantly pouring down on its body.

"It's...it's a Carnage Poisonous Salamander! Holy shit! Run!" Zhong Li's limbs weakened when he saw the creature.

The Carnage Poisonous Salamanders were the most vicious Commander-level creatures among the Salamander Demons. Zhong Li once had a mentor. His body had festered and his eyes were blind. Every time Zhong Li visited him, the middle-aged Hunter would be lost in thought as he recalled his painful experience, which a Carnage Poisonous Salamander was responsible for!

The creature was terrifying because it had two forms. It was in its first form whenever it was in the water. Its dark blue skin was the perfect disguise. Humans would find it hard to notice even if it was extremely close, as its skin would blend in perfectly with the water.

The creature would enter its second form whenever it was exposed to the air. Its skin would undergo remarkable changes when it made contact with the air, producing a deadly poison. With just the slightest touch, a person would feel extremely itchy. The body of Zhong Li's mentor did not fester because of the poison, but because the man had torn apart his own skin by constantly scratching it. No one had found the antidote to the poison!

Zhong Li had seen his mentor when the poison first broke out. The man had to fight the urge to tear his skin off. Zhong Li believed that his mentor would eventually end his own life to free himself from the torture.

The Foehn Hunter Squad had no intention of turning and fighting the creature. After all, it was a Commander-level creature!

A moist gust of wind swept in from behind, following a poisonous breath exhaled by the creature. The Carnage Poisonous Salamander started crawling forward after leaving the water. Its speed was crazy. It reached the wood of red flowers in the blink of an eye!

"What now? What should we do now!?" Xie Hao screamed.

"We should have left earlier. Why were we stupid enough to venture so deep into the place? There were so many dead bodies around!" Big Nose cried.

"What's the point of saying that now?"

There were so many carcasses. Normally, they would have left instantly when they noticed something did not feel right. However, when they thought about the handsome reward and the extra Contribution Points they would receive if they found any clues, they were unusually bold and decided to go a little further. They did not expect to provoke such a terrifying creature!

The Carnage Poisonous Salamander was pursuing them relentlessly. It had no intention of letting the Hunters go. The Foehn Hunter Squad finally reached the entrance of the island, but the Carnage Poisonous Salamander was less than two meters behind them. They could see its cheeks bloating, as if it was about to spit something at them!

"Awoo!"

The Flying Creek Snow Wolf suddenly sprang out from the woods as it howled. He spread his sharp claws and dashed past the Carnage Poisonous Salamander. The Hunters did not see the Flying Creek Snow Wolf's actions clearly, but they could see the flickers of white light emitted by his claws!

The Flying Creek Snow Wolf executed several attacks in a row, and blood soon poured out from the wounds all over the Carnage Poisonous Salamander. The wounds were deep enough to see its bones!