

Witch 9

Chapter 9 Months of the Demons (Part 2)

“Not many, Your Highness,” the hunter replied. “During every Months of the Demons there will only appear two to three mixed species demons, otherwise Longsong Stronghold would be in huge trouble.”

“Well, you seem to be very observant,” Roland ordered the man to stand up and asked, “what’s your name? You don’t look like a man from my Kingdom of Graycastle.”

“Half of my lineage hails from the Mojin Clan, the townspeople call me Iron Axe.”

Mojin Clan, the people from the Shamin Kingdom, located southwest of the barren lands, it was said that they were the descendants of giants. Roland searched within his brain for any memories related to the Mojin Clan and realized that Iron Axe did not use the name his clan called him by, rather using the name given by the people of Border Town, and apparently he did not want to have a relationship with the Shamin Kingdom. As for why, since it was obvious that he was from the southwestern border of the desolate lands, he estimated, that there were a series of sad stories involved.

But for the moment those stories weren’t important; everyone was welcome in Border Town, regardless of his or her background.

Roland clapped his hands, “That’s not why I asked you to be here, Carter, bestow each of them with ten silver royals, then they can leave.”

“Thank you very much for the reward, Your Highness,” said the three in unison.

Afterwards the people were taken away by Carter. When he had finished his task, Carter returned once again and asked, “Your Highness, why did you ask them these questions? Do you want to stay here?”

Roland didn’t express any opinion and instead asked, “What do you think?”

“This matter is out of question, Your Highness!” Said the knight loudly, “According to the statement from the hunter, even a wild demon bear would be difficult to cope with. Outside of fifty yards a shot with a crossbow would have no effect; we would have to wait until it closed to forty yards, or even until thirty yards before making our shot, only our elite soldiers can accomplish this. Plus the demons are too numerous, and we can’t rely on strong walls, only standing side by side with the local guards to stop them. I’m afraid that the casualties would outstrip the accomplishments, our defeat would be assured.”

“You already saw what a witch is able to do, so why do you can’t think positively?” Roland sighed.

“This... The witches are evil, but Anna... Miss Anna does not look so, as your Knight Commander, I have to seek truths by looking for facts.”

“If I would give you a city wall, would you think it will be possible?”

“What?” For a moment Carter suspected that he had heard wrong.

“If I give you a wall, between the north slope of the mountain and the Chishui River,” Roland stressed every word he said, “Although they would not be like the enormous walls from Graycastle, but to stop animals, they should still be able to.”

“Sir, do you know what you are saying?” The knight didn’t know whether to be angry or to laugh, “Even your nonsense should have a limit, if you don’t stop, you will have to excuse my lack of manners.”

“We still have three months, don’t we? I looked at the past records, the first snow usually falls here at the end of the second month from now.”

“Even if we had three years it would not be enough! Building a wall would require many workers, for setting the foundation they have to compress the earth and every one or two feet would have to be reinforced; otherwise it would have a high risk to collapse. This would be the simplest of the earthen walls,” Carter shook his head again and again, “brick and stone walls are even more difficult to build and it would need hundreds of masons who would first have to cut the stones or bake the clay into bricks. Afterwards they would need to build it block by block. Your highness, all walls were built this way, without exception. A city being built in the time of a day and a night, that is only the stuff of legends.”

Roland indicated he had heard enough, “I see. You don’t need to be so upset, if there is no reliable wall in place, I will evacuate with you to Longsong stronghold. I’m not going to give away my life in this place.”

The knight knelt down, “I will protect you!”

Afterwards in the beautiful castle gardens, Roland nipped at his bitter ale. Looking at Anna who was intently eating cream cakes, his mood recovered a lot.

He had decided to stop the demonic beasts at the Border town – joining the elite soldier with the town guards, he would also intensify the farming by expanding the area the guards patrolled. If he wanted to build the wall, connecting the north slope of the mountain and the Chishui River within three months, he must use an appropriate technology from the modern times.

It was not the case that Roland had suddenly thought of this, previously he had checked the edges of the Border town (although he didn’t go personally), in his memory remained a clear picture — the northern slope of the mountain and the Chishui River were only separated by 600 yards at their closest point, it was a natural bottleneck. And due to the all year round mining in the North Mine, it was surrounded by rock gravel mined from the cave.

These gravel cast offs were ash gray, containing plenty of calcium carbonates, which could be used as limestone after grinding. With the limestone he had his solution, it would be equal to cement.

Yes, this would change the history of mankind, to be able to build with a water hardening material, with raw materials which were easily to obtain, which were simple to prepare, it truly numbered among one of the most efficient tools for tilling the fields.

Roland estimated the needed time, even if he would implement new technology, even with cement he wasn’t sure if it was possible, the amount of cement they actually needed was too big, he wasn’t sure if they could calcine so much cement powder within three months. And concrete toughness would be inferior, in the end they would need to reinforce it with steel, thus the probability to succeed in building a concrete city wall was not that great.

They had to maximize the usage of the existing materials and save cement, so building a fieldstone wall would be the most appropriate choice.

The so-called fieldstone, was a stone which had not undergone any grinding, it was just a natural byproduct of mining. This stone, because of the irregular shape of the edges and corners, there was no way to directly using it to build, instead it first need to be processed by the stonemason into usable bricks. But building a fieldstone wall while using cement as binder was possible, regardless of how oddly shaped the stone was it could be used, the gap between the stones was filled by the cement, saving cement and using leftover materials.

With this the big direction was set, but the actual implementation, he was afraid he would have to do it by himself, thought Roland. Regardless of whether it was the calcined cement or fieldstone wall, both were new things. Except for himself, no one had seen these things, and also no one knew how to make them. He was afraid he would be very busy for the next three months.

“You, look here.”

The sound of Anna’s clear voice came from behind him.

As Roland turned, he saw a small cluster of flames in her palm quietly burning, there was clearly no wind, but the flame tip was rising up and down, as if it would nod to her. She shook her finger, and the fire was like a toddler, moving slowly towards the tip of the finger. In the end, it stood at the top of the index finger, simmering down.

“You did it.”

It was an incredible scene, Roland felt admiration from the bottom of his heart. This was not illusion magic, nor a chemical trick, but it really was a supernatural power. But this was not the most attractive thing to Roland – many time more dazzling than the flame, was Anna’s look.

While she was intently staring at her fingertips, the lake water limpid eyes were reflecting the vibrant flame, as if an elf sealed within a sapphire. The traces left from the prison torture had already faded, though she rarely smiled, but her face was no longer lifeless. On the young lady’s tip of her nose was a speck of sweat, the rosy color on her white checks emitted vitality, even looked at also can let a person feel cheerful mood.

“What happened to you?”

“Ah... Nothing,” Roland noticed he looked at her for too long, he removed his gaze and coughed.” well, then, try using it to melt the iron.”

In the past few days, except for eating and sleeping, she always repeated her practice, in front of the hardworking enthusiast Roland could only endlessly blush in shame — even in the face of the college entrance examination he did not work so hard.

“Apparently she will not need long, until she completely grasps this power,” Roland thought. Following that, his ideas of new projects can be set on the agenda.