Reincarnated as a Castle - (LitRPG, Kingdom Building, Progression)

chapter 66-80

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Not long after that, the goblins finally finished butchering the entire bear.

"Hell yeah! Good job, everyone!" I cheered.

All the goblins cheered as well, putting their asses on the ground and wiped their sweaty head.

The System then promptly absorbed the final batch of materials and distributed the Powerstone rewards.

Looking through my inventory, I felt another overwhelming rush of satisfaction.

The pure joy of being rich!

The sheer amount of resources I had gained from this single colossal bear was honestly ridiculous.

1,820 Meat (1 kg per unit)

340 Bones (1 kg per unit)

220 Fat (1 kg per unit)

4 Bear Fangs

15 Bear Claws

1 Colossal Bear Pelt

1 Colossal Bear Liver

1 Colossal Bear Gallbladder

60 Fur (1 kg per unit)

15 Powerstones (F)

The bear's skull and heart were missing from the list, but those were the two materials I'd already sold to the System to help evolve my four goblins.

Interestingly, the regular bear meat, bones, fat, and fur were still worth roughly the same amount of Points as their counterparts from the Horned Gray Wolf when sold to the System.

1 Meat → 3 Points

1 Bone → 1 Point

1 Fat → 2 Points

1 Fur → 10 Points per kg

However, everything else fetched a considerably higher price.

Bear Fang → 15 Points each

Bear Claw → 20 Points each

Colossal Bear Pelt → 400 Points

Colossal Bear Liver → 200 Points

Colossal Bear Gallbladder → 150 Points

I quickly did the math in my head.

The meat alone was worth 5,460 Points... The bones gave me another 340, while the fat added 440.... The four fangs were worth 60 Points, and the fifteen claws added another 300...

Then there were the special materials like the fangs, claws, pelt... etc. Adding everything together... I now got a total of 7,950 Points worth of materials!

And if I sold everything right now, with the System taking its usual 10% fee, I'd still walk away with 7,155 Points.

That was an absurd amount of Points from a single bear! Such a number I had never expected to ever see before!

Nearly eight thousand Points' worth of materials was now sitting in my inventory.

"Haha, guys! Looks like a whole bunch of new upgrades are coming our way!"

Then, while the goblins rested, I prepared some more water for them so they could wash themselves off later. After that, I opened the System again and checked my current shops.

For now, I had:

- System Shop Level 2

- Construction Shop Level 2

- Item Shop Level 2

- Sovereign Shop Level 2

- Castle Core Level 2

With the amount of wealth I had accumulated now, I should have no problem raising everything to Level 3.

However, there was still an order to things.

The Construction Shop, Item Shop, Castle Core, and Sovereign Shop all required the System Shop to reach Level 3 before I could upgrade them further.

So, naturally, the System Shop came first.

I opened the upgrade interface.

[Upgrade: System Shop Level 2 → Level 3]

Cost: 2,000 Points

Unlocks:

New Basic Material: Elemental StonesNew Function: Advanced Material Exchange

Prerequisites:

All other Shops have reached Level 2At least 5 Citizens

...

Now that I had six Citizens, all the prerequisites had been fulfilled.

Meanwhile, looking at the unlock section, both the Elemental Stones and the new function immediately caught my attention. I couldn’t wait to see what they were all about.

Well then...

It was time.

"System!" I commanded. "Upgrade System Shop!"

The System immediately popped up a confirmation window asking me to confirm the purchase.

I confirmed it without hesitation.

The upgrade went through smoothly.

[Ding!]

[Upgrade Successful!]

[Congratulations! System Shop Level 3 Unlocked!]

[New Basic Material Unlocked: Elemental Stones]

[New Function Unlocked: Advanced Material Exchange]

I immediately opened the shop to take a look at the new material.

"Woahhh!"

I couldn’t help but exclaim when a series of colorful icons appeared before me.

"So these are Elemental Stones!"

Just like Powerstones, Elemental Stones took the form of crystals. The difference was that instead of being pure white, each one shimmered with a distinct color corresponding to a different element.

There were six in total.

Fire — Red

Water — Blue

Earth — Brown

Nature — Green

Light — Yellow

Dark — Purple

With each purchase, I could only choose one specific elemental type.

The only problem was the price.

Each Elemental Stone cost a whopping 300 Points.

This time, however, I had no real frame of reference. I had no idea whether that was cheap or outrageously expensive, mainly because I still had absolutely no clue how magic worked in this world.

Interesting...

Does this mean I'll be able to unlock elemental magic soon? Or maybe use these to craft something with elemental powers?

Well, guess I will find out soon!

I filed those questions away for later and moved on to the other newly unlocked function.

[Advanced Material Exchange]

And as it turned out, this function was just as useful. It allowed me to convert basic materials into other materials within the same category.

The first option was [Advanced Material Exchange — Metal].

Through it, I could convert iron into copper, silver, or even gold. The exchange rates, however, were absolutely brutal.

10 Iron → 1 Copper

1,000 Iron → 1 Silver

10,000 Iron → 1 Gold

After that, it was basically just a matter of adding more and more zeroes. And naturally, the System would charge its usual 10% transaction fee every time I made an exchange.

Still, having access to these precious metals was pretty nice. It already gave me quite a few ideas.

For starters, I was going to create a currency system very soon.

Next came [Advanced Material Exchange — Rock].

Through this function, I could convert ordinary stone into various other geological materials.

1 Stone → 1 Clay

1 Stone → 1 Sand

2 Stone → 1 Chalk

5 Stone → 1 Limestone

10 Stone → 1 Marble

10 Stone → 1 Basalt

And there were plenty more options beyond those.

This one was particularly useful. If I needed a specific material for construction later, I wouldn't necessarily have to go searching for a natural deposit somewhere in the wilderness.

I could just turn the mountain of stone around my castle into whatever I needed.

Next, there was [Advanced Material Exchange — Wood], which allowed me to exchange ordinary wood for different types of timber, such as maple, pine, blackwood, mahogany, and several others.

Unlike the rock materials, though, I had absolutely no idea what each type of wood was best suited for. My knowledge of wood was... severely lacking.

Well... I guess I'll just have to experiment with them.

And lastly, there was [Advanced Material Exchange — Elemental Stones].

Just as the name suggested, this function allowed me to exchange one type of Elemental Stone for another elemental attribute.

That meant if I ended up with too many Fire Stones and needed Water Stones instead, I could theoretically convert them.

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Chapter 67: Level 3 upgrades!

I had no immediate use for an Elemental Stone, nor did I really need the Advanced Material Exchange right now.

So, I moved on to upgrading the other shops.

I still had over 5,000 Points' worth of materials left in my inventory. That should have been enough to upgrade my remaining three shops, the Construction Shop, Item Shop, and Sovereign Shop, along with the Castle Core to Level 3.

But doing all of that would bleed me dry again.

And even after upgrading the shops, I would still need Points to actually buy things from them.

So I needed to choose carefully and prioritize some upgrades over others.

With that in mind, I decided to prioritize the Castle Core.

It was simple. Prioritizing the economy was almost always the right choice.

I opened the Castle Core upgrade interface.

[Upgrade: Castle Core Level 2 → Level 3]

Unlocks: Skill [Generator Level 3]

Upgrade Cost: 1,000 Points

...

[Generator Level 3]

Generates **100 Points per day**.

...

"Hmm. Yeah, sounds good!"

That was a massive improvement over the current 10 Points per day.

"System, initiate Castle Core Level 3 upgrade!"

As soon as I gave the command, the System interface appeared before me.

[Ding!]

[Purchasing Castle Core Level 3 Upgrade... Success!]

[Initializing Castle Core Upgrade Process...]

[Estimated Completion Time: 3 Days]

...

Huh???

Just like last time, as soon as the System began initializing the upgrade, a sudden wave of sleepiness washed over me.

"Wait, what?! Three days?!"

"Come on! System, why didn't you tell me this sooner?!"

I had assumed it would take only a few hours, just like the previous Castle Core upgrade.

But apparently... this time, it was going to take a freaking three days!

I was absolutely not happy about that.

For the entire three days, I would be completely useless and helpless. I wouldn't be able to issue quests, communicate properly, or do anything to help my citizens.

What if my castle got attacked during those three days?

What if something happened that required my immediate attention?

"AAAAA! Not like this!"

The overwhelming sleepiness continued to grow heavier and heavier.

I had to do something.

Thus, using every last bit of focus I could force myself to maintain, I hurriedly prepared some instructions for my citizens by writing it inside a quest scroll!

"To my citizens...

I know this is sudden, but I have to hibernate while preparing for an important upgrade.

I will be gone for three days.

Please stay within the castle's territory and do not wander too far away.

If you want to, you can take the Wood Chopping Quest while I'm gone.

If anything bad happens, such as a monster attack, or especially if you spot any Dark Giant Spiders, immediately retreat inside the castle and do not come back out.

Gopuran... you're the Bear Slayer, so you're the captain now.

While I'm gone, you will have the highest authority. Take care of the others and..."

And just like that, I thought I was done for.

But then...

[Ding!]

[The System is now offering a new privilege: Staying Awake.]

[Would you like to remain awake during the Castle Core upgrade by paying Points?]

[Cost: 5 Points/hour]

...

"Haha... you greedy bastard System..."

I cursed as I stared at the message.

"So that's what you're really after, huh?!"

I had a deep suspicion that this was just another one of the System's scammy tactics.

Five Points per hour...

Three days meant seventy-two hours.

That would be **360 Points** straight into the System's greedy little pockets.

But... well, it was still better than being forced to sleep for three days.

"Alright! Take it! Take my Points! Keep me awake!"

[Ding!]

[Special Privilege purchased successfully.]

[-5 Points]

[You will now be able to remain awake during the Castle Core upgrade.]

[Points will be deducted from your balance automatically every hour.]

[You may stop paying at any time. However, doing so will immediately put you to sleep for the remainder of the upgrade.]

And just like that, it was as if someone had injected an entire truckload of super-strong coffee directly into my system.

Boom!

The overwhelming sleepiness vanished!

My mind instantly cleared, leaving me with a strange sense of heightened awareness and clarity.

At the same time, I could feel the castle itself beginning to change.

Every brick, every stone was humming with energy.

The Castle Core deep within my territory began radiating a powerful force, growing hotter and hotter.

The process had officially begun.

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Now that the Castle Core upgrade was underway, I turned my attention to the other shops.

"Now, which shop should I prioritize next?"

The more I thought about it, the more I leaned toward upgrading the Construction Shop.

The reason was simple.

If I upgraded the Construction Shop to Level 3, I would be able to build some pretty amazing-sounding facilities, such as a Blacksmith Workshop, Alchemy Workshop, Training Ground, and even a Skill Library.

Upgrading the Item Shop would certainly give me access to better food and better equipment, but wouldn't it be better if I could simply build a Blacksmith Workshop and start making my own weapons instead?

As for the Sovereign Shop...

The next skill it would unlock was **[Personal System]**.

It sounded pretty interesting, but I had absolutely no idea what it would actually do.

Without knowing what I was getting, upgrading it right now didn't seem like the wisest choice.

So, for the time being, the safest and most useful option was clearly the Construction Shop.

"System! Upgrade the Construction Shop!"

Shortly after...

[Ding!]

[Upgrade Completed!]

[Congratulations! Construction Shop Level 3 Unlocked!]

[New Buildings Unlocked: Blacksmith Workshop, Alchemy Workshop, Skill Library, Training Ground...]

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"Hoho! These are looking good!"

Looking through the list of buildings I could now construct, I couldn't help but feel excited.

Honestly, the one I was most excited about was the Blacksmith Workshop.

Muahahaha! No more relying on that stupid gacha system for good weapons!

Now I could simply make my own!

Of course, I still had no idea how good the weapons produced by the Blacksmith Workshop would actually be, but just having the option was already a huge step forward.

However, it was already nighttime, which wasn't exactly the best time to start construction projects.

I turned my attention back to the goblins.

They were still busy washing themselves, scrubbing away the blood accumulated from butchering the giant bear. Judging by how exhausted they looked, they would probably be heading to bed soon.

It had been a very long day, after all.

So, for now, I decided to let them rest and relax.

There was no need to rush.

Tomorrow was going to be another busy day.

Reincarnated as a Castle - (LitRPG, Kingdom Building, Progression)

Chapter 68: Building Construction

The next morning, all six goblins woke up early and gathered in my courtyard, waiting for their quests while the sky was still dim and the sun had yet to rise.

They spent the time doing some light warm-ups and stretches, looking surprisingly eager to get started.

Meanwhile, the Castle Core's upgrade was progressing smoothly. With every passing hour, I could feel its energy growing stronger as the upgrade gradually took effect.

"Hehe, Big Boss! What am I going to do today?" Gopuro asked, hoisting his giant iron axe onto his shoulder.

"You'll keep chopping wood," I replied.

"HELL YEAH! LEAVE IT TO ME!!!" The guy practically roared with excitement. "I'm gonna chop down this whole forest!!!"

"Haha... this guy..." I couldn't help feeling amused.

Honestly, what the hell is with Gopuro and his obsession with chopping wood?

Is he ever going to get bored of it?

"Alright, then. You can get going."

"Yup!"

Gopuro immediately hurried over to the quest paper posted on my castle wall and accepted another Wood Chopping Quest. With that settled, he marched toward the forest, whistling a cheerful little tune with his giant axe resting proudly on his shoulder.

And just like that, Gopuro's assignment was taken care of.

Before long, the sound of another tree crashing to the ground echoed from the forest as he put his [Big Slash] skill to work.

Well, at least I knew he wouldn't be slacking off.

Now... it was time to deal with everyone else.

"Big Boss, I like chopping wood too!" Gopugiga suddenly declared, flexing his massive muscles. "As you can see, I can carry the biggest logs!"

"Yeah! Count me in, too!" Gopuflammy chimed in enthusiastically.

"Haha, I appreciate the enthusiasm, but there's more important work to do than just chopping wood!" I said. "Don't worry, though. I'll make sure everyone gets paid fairly for their work!"

"Ooooh!"

The goblins' eyes immediately lit up at the mention of payment.

"Alright! Big Boss, just tell us what to do!" Gopushadow said eagerly.

"Don't worry. Everyone will have a job."

I surveyed the group, already sorting through the tasks I had in mind.

If I wanted to turn this castle into a proper territory, I couldn't have everyone spending their days doing the same thing. We needed more than a steady supply of wood. We needed infrastructure, supplies, and eventually, specialized workers who could help the settlement grow.

Fortunately, I had just the thing to get started.

*****

A few moments later...

"Alright! Let’s build something!"

Ever since the Construction Shop reached Level 2, I had unlocked the **[Building Construction]** skill. However, I hadn’t really had the chance to put it to use yet.

Now, it was finally time to give it a try.

As I activated the skill, a neat interface appeared in my vision, presenting me with two options.

[Upgrade Existing Buildings]

[Construct New Buildings]

At the moment, my only existing structures were the castle itself and the surrounding walls.

Upgrading the castle would allow me to add more floors above ground or excavate another basement level. As for the walls, I could make them taller and thicker to improve the castle’s defenses.

However, neither option seemed particularly necessary right now.

My six citizens were perfectly content living in the spacious main hall, while the raccoons seemed quite happy in the basement. There was no urgent need for additional living space, and my current walls were still more than sufficient to protect the goblins from ordinary threats.

So, I went straight for the second option.

[Construct New Buildings]

Now that the Construction Shop had reached Level 2, my Building Construction skill had automatically upgraded to Level 2 as well, unlocking a whole bunch of new construction options.

Among them were some particularly interesting facilities, such as the Blacksmith Workshop and the Alchemy Workshop.

However, there was one small catch.

Before I could construct higher-tier buildings, I first had to fulfill their lower-tier prerequisites. Apparently, more advanced facilities required certain basic structures to be completed before construction could begin.

For example, the Blacksmith Workshop required both a Storage House and a Charcoal Kiln.

It made sense, I supposed. A blacksmith needed somewhere to keep raw materials and equipment, not to mention a steady supply of charcoal to fuel the furnace.

With that in mind, I decided to start with a few essential structures.

The first buildings I planned to construct today were:

A Well

A Storage House

A Charcoal Kiln

A Cookhouse

These four would provide the basic infrastructure my little territory needed. The Well would give my citizens a more reliable source of water, the Storage House would help me organize the resources we gathered, the Charcoal Kiln would supply fuel for future metalworking, and the Cookhouse would make preparing meals much more convenient.

With those facilities in place, I could gradually move on to more advanced construction.

Now then, let's see what we have here.

I selected the building tab and opened the list of available structures. Each option came with a detailed description, its material requirements, and the construction cost, which varied depending on the System Assist Mode I chose.

Interestingly, some buildings even came in different designs, allowing me to choose between construction materials.

I decided to start with the Storage House.

For it, I could choose between a wooden version and a stone version.

Considering that Gopuro was planning to spend his days chopping down trees, I figured wood wouldn't be in short supply anytime soon.

So, naturally, I went with the wooden design.

[Wooden Storage House Lv. 1]

Description: A basic storage facility constructed primarily from wood. Provides sheltered space for storing building materials, tools, equipment, and other supplies. Protects stored goods from rain and other environmental elements while keeping them organized and readily accessible.

Storage Capacity: 50 m3

Material Cost:

Wood: 150Stone: 5

Construction Cost: Depends on System Assist Mode

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The material cost seemed quite reasonable.

"Alright, let’s find a place for it."

As I clicked the **[Build]** button in the Storage House tab, the System behaved much as it had when I purchase furniture from the Furniture Shop. A faint grid materialized across the ground around me, and a 3D holographic preview of the Storage House appeared in my courtyard.

With this, I could move the hologram around freely and see exactly where the building would fit within my territory.

If it overlapped with an existing structure or occupied an unsuitable area, the hologram turned red. If the location was unobstructed and suitable for construction, it glowed green instead.

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Chapter 69: Building Construction (2)

Now, where should I put it?

The Storage House was a rectangle measuring 4 × 7 meters, taking up a total of 28 m2 of land. 𝑜𝑜𝑚

My castle already occupied around 200 m2, sitting right in the middle of my 540 m2 territory. With the castle taking up such a large portion of the available space, squeezing in additional buildings would make the courtyard feel rather cramped.

So, I decided to solve the problem the easy way.

I spent 160 Points to activate the [Land Expansion] skill, increasing my territory's area from 540 m2 to 700 m2.

As expected, the space enclosed by my castle walls expanded accordingly.

The courtyard grew wider, giving me plenty of room for future buildings. The distance between my gate and the forest remained exactly the same though, because it was just internal land expansion.

But then, the goblins had a rather different reaction to the sudden change.

The moment I activated the skill, all six of them froze in confusion as the surrounding landscape suddenly shifted. A second later, their confusion gave way to outright panic.

"AAAAA!" Gopuflammy shrieked, her face turning pale. She grabbed the blue-haired goblin girl beside her, shaking her. "Gopuberry, did you see that?! Did the gate just... just run away from us?!"

"Yes! I saw!" Gopuberry replied, looking equally bewildered.

Meanwhile, Gopushadow clutched his head and wailed.

"Waaaa! Big Boss! Why are we shrinking?!"

"Hey, relax!" I reassured them. "Nobody's shrinking! I just used my magic to make the land bigger! Now we have more space to build houses and all sorts of other buildings!"

Hearing that, some of the goblins sighed in relief, while others went from terrified to excited in the blink of an eye.

"OOOOOOHHHH!"

The fear in their eyes vanished almost instantly.

But the strangest reaction came from Gopugiga, the biggest guy in the group. He had already dropped to his knees, clasping his hands together in prayer.

Tears welled up in his eyes as he raised his trembling hands toward the sky.

"A miracle! A miracle! Big Boss! Big Boss really is a god!"

His words seemed to trigger something in the others.

The goblins gasped as though they had suddenly realized the truth, then promptly threw themselves to the ground and prostrated themselves before me.

"Aaaah! It really was a miracle!"

"Yes! I knew it! Big Boss is a god! He was just hiding his true power from us!"

Meanwhile...

Oh, come on!

Again with the god thing?!

Haha...

Well, to be fair, the System's space-warping abilities really were pretty godlike. I couldn't exactly blame the goblins for jumping to that conclusion...

Anyhow, now that I had more land to work with, my courtyard no longer felt cramped. I could finally start planning my little territory properly.

I positioned the Storage House near the western wall, leaving enough room around it for easy access and future expansion.

Somehow, as soon as I settled on the location, I found myself already planning to build another one on the eastern side to match it.

Because if there was one thing I couldn't tolerate, it was... an asymmetrical layout!

Yeah!

Everything had to be **SYMMETRICAL**!

Just as I settled on the perfect spot, a System prompt appeared before me.

[Ding!]

[Are you sure you want to construct Wooden Storage House Lv. 1 at this location?]

[Warning: Relocation is possible after construction, but will cost 5 Points per square meter of the building.]

Well, that was good to know.

Since the Storage House occupied 28 m2, relocating it would cost me a total of 140 Points.

Yikes. That's pretty expensive.

At least, it was expensive by my current standards. Once I started constructing larger buildings that required far more valuable materials, paying a few hundred Points to relocate one might not seem like such a big deal anymore.

Maybe I would want to move this Storage house someday.

But for now, this was its perfect spot.

With that in mind, I selected **[Confirm]**.

[Ding!]

[Initiating Construction Process: Wooden Storage House]

[Please select your preferred System Assist Mode!]

Three options appeared before me.

[Fully System-Assisted Mode]

[Partially System-Assisted Mode]

And finally...

[Fuck It, I'll Do It Myself Mode]

*****

Haha... just kidding. The last option was actually called **[Freedom Mode]**.

I had already read through the descriptions of all three modes, and their functions were pretty straightforward and self-explanatory.

First, there was **Fully System-Assisted Mode**.

This one was simple. All I had to do was dump the required materials, such as wood, stone, and iron, at the construction site, and the System would handle everything else. It would process the raw materials and somehow transform them into a completed building automatically.

Of course, such convenience came at a significantly higher cost than the other modes.

On top of that, I wouldn't be able to customize the building to my liking. Everything would follow the System's default blueprint, leaving me with little room to make any changes.

At the opposite end of the spectrum was **Freedom Mode**, otherwise known as the "Fuck It, I'll Do It Myself" Mode.

Basically, the System would provide me with the blueprint and leave the rest to us. We'd have to handle everything ourselves, from processing the raw materials to cutting the planks, laying the bricks, and assembling the entire structure.

But there was one major problem.

My citizens were goblins.

They had little to no knowledge of construction, let alone the skills needed to process raw materials and build proper houses. Without the System's assistance, there was no way they could handle the entire process on their own.

Still, that didn't mean they couldn't help with the tasks they were capable of.

And that was where **[Partially System-Assisted Mode]** came in.

Under this mode, the System would provide the blueprint, process the raw materials, and guide my citizens through the construction process, instructing them on what to do at each step.

In other words, it was basically an on-the-job training program for my newbie construction workers.

And who knew?

There's a chance they might be able to learn actual construction related skills from this?

With that in mind, I selected **[Partially System-Assisted Mode]**.

[Ding!]

[Partially System-Assisted Construction Mode Activated.]

[Step 1: Please load the required materials for the Wooden Storage House into the designated construction area.]

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Chapter 70: Building Construction 3

[First, please load the required materials for the Wooden Storage House into the construction site.]

A section of the ground within the designated construction area suddenly lit up green, marking out a space for the materials.

Oh! I guess this is where I drop the wood and stone!

And so, I did just that.

Wood: 150

Stone: 5

I loaded all the required materials into the designated area.

[Ding!]

[Construction material loading completed!]

[Please select your citizens and designate them as builders!]

[Worker Capacity: 0/5]

In other words, I could assign up to five builders to this project!

Five little yellow construction-hard-hat icons materialized in my vision as I mentally selected the **[Assign Worker]** button.

One by one, I dragged two of the icons onto Gopugiga and Gopuran.

[Ding! Citizen Gopugiga has been successfully assigned as a construction worker for Wooden Storage House Lv. 1.]

[Ding! Citizen Gopuran has been successfully assigned as a construction worker for Wooden Storage House Lv. 1.]

Sadly, no actual hard hats appeared on their heads.

Now that's a bit of a scam.

Still, the moment the assignments went through, both goblins straightened up, their eyes lighting up as if they had just heard something echo inside their minds.

Without me having to say a word, they immediately turned toward the designated construction site and marched over.

Huh? What the heck did the System just tell them?

Curious, I decided to ask.

"Wait, what did you hear just now?"

"There are voices! Voices of divine messengers! They're telling me what to do!" Gopugiga replied, his expression filled with awe.

"Yeah! If we follow the voices, we can build the Storage House!" Gopuran added excitedly. Then, she tilted her head slightly. "Big Boss, are these voices your followers, too?"

"Erm... well, yeah..." I answered awkwardly. "Haha, something like that."

Honestly, hearing them talk about mysterious voices inside their heads sent a chill through me. It was a little creepy, not gonna lie.

Still, I knew it was just the System doing its job, so there probably wasn't anything to worry about.

At least, that's what I told myself.

Meanwhile, the two goblins continued toward the construction site, apparently eager to get started.

I kept a close eye on them, curious to see how the whole process would unfold. After all, even though I had supplied all the wood and stone the System requested, building an actual house normally required quite a few other things.

For starters, there were all the smaller materials needed to hold everything together: rope or other bindings, wooden pegs or nails, door hinges, handles, and so on.

And then there were the tools.

At the very least, the goblins would need hammers, chisels, saws, and shovels to process the materials and assemble the structure properly.

But at the moment, I didn't have any of those things in my inventory, apart from a few stone hammers.

So... how exactly is the System going to make this work?

A series of notifications soon appeared before me.

[Calculating Points required to run this construction project... Complete.]

[Material Conversion: Converting basic resources into construction-grade materials. Cost: 150 Points.]

[Tool Rental and Guided Instruction: 5 Points / Worker / Hour.]

[Estimated Completion Time: 8 Hours.]

[Total Estimated Cost: 230 Points.]

Aha! I see.

So the System uses Points to process my raw materials and supplies the necessary tools and other construction materials, too!

Within seconds, the material-processing phase was complete.

The piles of raw wood I had supplied were now neatly transformed into planks and properly cut structural beams, all stacked beside the construction site. Everything was cut to the appropriate dimensions, ready to be assembled into an actual building.

At first, it almost looked like some absurd alchemy ability, transforming one material into another in the blink of an eye.

But the more I thought about it, the less surprising it seemed.

After all, the System had basically been doing this since day one. As long as I had enough Points, I could purchase all sorts of things, from meat and wood to weapons and furniture.

I had always wondered how it actually worked.

If the System wasn't some kind of ridiculously overpowered alchemy god, then perhaps it was a massive dimensional warehouse filled with an endless supply of tools, materials, and goods, all available for purchase with Points?

A wild guess, sure, but not entirely unreasonable!

Anyway, while I was busy pondering the System's true nature, hammers suddenly appeared in the hands of my two construction workers. Other necessary tools materialized around the construction site as well, neatly arranged and ready for use.

My attention immediately snapped toward the hammers.

Oh! Can I keep those after the construction is finished?

I zoomed in on one of them, eager to inspect my potential new acquisition.

Unfortunately, the System promptly crushed my hopes.

[Construction Hammer]

Description: A temporary tool rented by the System for assigned construction workers. Cannot be taken outside the designated construction site. Will disappear once construction is complete.

...

Haaizz... well, I guess there's no cheating the System!

With everything prepared, Gopugiga and Gopuran finally got to work, following the instructions that echoed inside their minds.

Gopugiga handled the heavier tasks, moving the wooden beams into position and holding them steady, while Gopuran followed the instructions to assemble the smaller components. Whenever they hesitated, they seemed to receive further guidance, allowing them to correct their mistakes and continue without much trouble.

Soon, the rhythmic clanging of hammers began to ring through the courtyard.

Well, look at that! My little goblins are officially construction workers now!

With **Partially System-Assisted Mode**, assigning two builders to the project would cost me an additional **230 Points** on top of the material costs, and the estimated completion time was only **8 hours**.

By comparison, **Fully System-Assisted Mode** would cost a whopping **500 extra Points** on top of the materials and take a full **24 hours** to complete.

In other words, I was saving hundreds of Points and a considerable amount of time by letting my goblins handle the construction themselves!

More importantly, if my goblins could gain some kind of Construction skill or experience from doing this work, that would be even better.

With improved construction skills, we'd be able to complete future projects more efficiently, saving even more time and Points!

Reincarnated as a Castle - (LitRPG, Kingdom Building, Progression)

With Gopugiga and Gopuran already hard at work on the Storage House, it was time to assign jobs to Gopuflammy and Gopuberry as well.

I reopened the Construction panel and initiated the construction of a Simple Well.

The material cost was 30 Stone and 5 Wood. It would be a relatively small well, built primarily from stone, with a diameter of around 3 meters and a depth of 10 meters.

Once completed, it would provide my little settlement with a reliable source of water, an essential step toward making the castle more self-sufficient.

However, there was one thing I wasn't entirely sure about.

Normally, digging a well required finding a suitable source of groundwater first, right? It wasn't as simple as picking a random spot and digging a hole until water magically appeared.

So, how would the System handle that?

Fortunately, I got my answer as soon as I entered the building placement stage.

Along with the usual placement grid, the System highlighted several patches of land in pale blue, marking areas where groundwater was accessible at a suitable depth.

Oh! So that's how it works!

Apparently, the System could analyze the underground terrain in my territory and identify promising locations for wells. All I had to do was choose a suitable spot and let the construction process handle the rest.

Nice!

With the location settled, construction began without a hitch.

Since the well was considerably smaller than the Storage House, the estimated construction time under Partially System-Assisted Mode was only five hours.

That was perfectly fine. Once Gopuflammy and Gopuberry finished their own project, they could simply head over and help Gopugiga and Gopuran with the Storage House.

Yup, looking good!

With that settled, nearly all my goblins had their assignments for the day.

All except one.

And that was my speedy little guy, Gopushadow.

*****

Finally, I turned my attention toward him.

"Big Boss, what about me? What should I do?" Gopushadow asked eagerly. He had been standing around restlessly this whole time, clearly itching to get started.

Well, I already had a role that seemed practically tailor-made for him.

Exploring and Scouting the forest!

With his exceptionally high Speed stat, he was practically the perfect candidate for the job.

The previous day, I still hadn't managed to map out the surrounding forest completely. There were plenty of unexplored areas left, and I wanted to get a better understanding of our surroundings before we expanded any further.

And who better for the job than my fastest citizen?

I activated [Vassal's Eyes] and connected to Gopushadow's senses. Our vision synchronized almost instantly, allowing me to see exactly what he saw.

Then, at my command, Gopushadow headed back into the forest.

*****

A few moments later, Gopushadow was leaping from tree to tree at astonishing speed, darting through the forest canopy like a literal shadow.

His Speed stat was more than three times higher than Gopuro's, though that didn't mean he could literally move three times faster. There seemed to be some kind of hidden formula governing movement speed, one I still hadn't quite figured out.

Whatever the exact calculation was, the guy was absurdly fast. Watching the forest rush past through his eyes almost felt like flying through the treetops myself.

Woosh!

Woosh! Woosh!

Trees, branches, and patches of sunlight blurred past as the slender goblin zipped between the treetops, covering several meters with each leap. He weaved through gaps in the foliage with barely a pause, leaving me struggling to take in the scenery.

Still, speed wasn't everything. At this rate, we could cross half the forest without learning anything useful about our surroundings!

I had to remind him to slow down before we could continue the scouting mission properly. Fortunately, Gopushadow obeyed without complaint, allowing me to get a better look at the forest as we continued in the opposite direction from Gopuran's previous scouting route.

Hopefully, we'd discover something new this time.

For a while, the landscape offered little beyond the usual forest scenery. Dense trees towered overhead, their tangled roots buried beneath thick undergrowth. Jagged rocks protruded from patches of moss, and clusters of glowing mushrooms dotted the shadows beneath fallen logs. Here and there, I could spot a few more berry bushes or big insects.

Still, nothing particularly noteworthy caught my attention.

Then, all of a sudden, Gopushadow came to a halt on a thick branch.

His sudden stop caught my attention, and I directed my focus toward whatever lay ahead of him.

Beyond the trees was a small clearing surrounding a pond. The morning sunlight spilled through the canopy, illuminating the grass and casting shimmering reflections across the calm water.

And standing beside the water...

Wait... is that...?

I recognized those creatures immediately.

A female Starry Deer!

She was tall and graceful, with a beautiful orange coat speckled with tiny white markings that resembled stars scattered across the night sky.

But the real scene-stealer was the tiny fawn standing beside her.

It was so small and adorable that it looked like a living stuffed toy. The little thing skipped happily around its mother, chasing a glowing ladybug through the grass with all the carefree energy of an excited child.

Wow...

It had been quite a while since I'd last seen them.

Back when I was still alone in the castle, these very deer had occasionally wandered into my territory and stayed for a while. During those lonely days, their visits had been a small but welcome comfort.

However, ever since the goblins had moved in a few days ago, the deer had disappeared.

In fact, most of the animals that used to visit my castle had left. The only ones that still stuck around were the raccoon family living in my basement and the birds that occasionally perched on the walls.

I'd often wondered where the deers had gone.

Now that I'd finally found them again, I couldn't help feeling genuinely happy.

But then...

"Yum yum! Leave it to Gopushadow!"

That voice sent a jolt of alarm through me.

Oh, FUCK!

Of course!

OF COURSE!

My green little bastard had spotted the deer and immediately decided they were nothing more than walking food!

Before I could react, Gopushadow whipped out his bone dagger and lunged straight toward the mother deer!

"WAIT! SHADOW!" I shouted through [Ruler's Voice]. "DON'T KILL HER!"

The dagger flashed dangerously close to the doe's neck.

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Thankfully, Gopushadow managed to pull back at the very last moment.

The sudden change in direction threw off his balance, though. Instead of landing a clean strike, bam! He slammed awkwardly into the deer's side and tumbled across the ground in a rather undignified roll.

The startled doe let out a sharp cry before bolting into the forest. Her little fawn immediately dashed after her, its tiny legs scrambling to keep up as the pair disappeared among the trees.

And then... the clearing fell silent.

****

"Urrghhhh..." Gopushadow groaned as he slowly pushed himself up, rubbing his head and arms after the rough landing.

Fortunately, he seemed perfectly fine, without so much as a scratch.

"Big Boss... why?" Gopushadow then asked, looking utterly confused. "You don't want more food? But deer meat is very delicious! Everyone loves deer meat!"

Faced with that innocent question, I found myself at a loss for words. The truth was, I didn't have an answer ready.

Instead, his question forced me to confront something I'd never really thought about before.

Hmm... why?

Why didn't I want to kill them? Why does this feel different?

We had killed wolves and bears without a second thought. I hadn't felt even the slightest remorse over those deaths. Hell, I'd even killed plenty of goblins before!

So why did the thought of killing those deer bother me so much?

Was it simply because they'd once lived inside my castle?

I couldn't quite put my finger on it, and for the moment, I had no answer to give Gopushadow.

****

A few minutes later, after I'd gathered my thoughts, I was able to come up with a good reason and now tried explaining it to him.

"Gopushadow, that deer has a baby. If you kill the mother, the little one might die too, because there won't be anyone left to take care of it."

"Hmmmmm..." Gopushadow scratched his head, considering my words. "Yeah, I suppose... But baby deer is tasty too, no?"

Oh, for crying out loud...

Of course that's what you're thinking about!

"That's not the point!" I replied. "Think about it this way. If you let the baby deer live, it'll grow bigger and produce more meat for us later, right?"

Gopushadow's expression suddenly brightened.

"Damn! Big Boss is right!" He slapped his thigh in realization. "Once the baby deer grow up into adult deer, baby deer will give more meat!"

"Exactly! And if you let them grow up and reproduce, you'll eventually have even more deer to hunt!"

"Oooh!"

The dude seemed to get it now.

Muahahaha!

That was about the best reasoning I could come up with on the spot. It's just basic livestock management, really.

The principle was simple: let young animals mature, spare adults that are still raising their offspring, and give populations time to replenish themselves. That way, there would be more animals to hunt in the long run.

...Though, to be honest, that wasn't the real reason I'd stopped Gopushadow.

Even if there had been only one deer, with no fawn standing beside it, would I still have wanted to kill it?

No. I wouldn't.

As it turned out, the answer was embarrassingly simple.

Because deer are cute.

That was it.

Yeah... call me a hypocrite or whatever, but apparently, even a castle like me had a soft side. My conscience would absolutely eat me alive if I ordered the slaughter of something that adorable.

Unfortunately, my conscience wasn't the only thing I had to consider.

Because the more I looked into this, the more problem arose.

First... that doe had been pretty big. If I'd let Gopushadow kill it, I could have earned a decent number of Points by selling its remains. Not as much as I'd get from a Horned Wolf, perhaps, but probably at least half as much. That alone might have been enough to buy several E-tier weapons.

Thus, sparing every deer I encountered could mean giving up a considerable amount of meat, materials, and Points over time.

Yet indiscriminate hunting came with its own problems too. If my citizens hunted too many animals of any one species, their populations could collapse, disrupting the forest's ecosystem and damaging the environment we depended on.

And my goblins were only getting stronger. As hunting became easier for them, it would also become easier to kill more than the forest could sustain. Left unchecked, they might eventually wipe out entire animal populations.

That would be disastrous.

In hindsight, it was probably a good thing I'd started thinking about this before my little settlement grew any further.

...

Thus, I spent the next thirty minutes coming up with what I decided to call the Castle Hunting Rules.

First, we would leave the young alone and spare mothers still caring for their offspring.

Second, we would focus on dangerous beasts that threatened my citizens, making the forest around the castle safer.

Finally, we would avoid hunting any one kind of beast too heavily, giving their numbers time to recover between hunts.

Of course, I'd eventually need to work out the proper seasons for hunting each kind of beast. The trouble was, I hadn't even lived through a full year in this world yet. For all I knew, its seasons might be completely different from Earth's.

Still, the days had been growing longer and hotter, so summer seemed to be approaching.

As I pondered the matter, another idea occurred to me.

Wait a minute... Why rely entirely on hunting in the first place?

Perhaps I could tame Starry Deer or other herbivores and raise them within my territory. That would give me a steadier supply of meat, useful materials, and Points.

In theory, it was an excellent plan.

In practice, I had absolutely no idea how to pull it off.

I was a webnovel author, not a farmer or rancher. I knew next to nothing about raising animals, let alone breeding them.

Which meant that, sooner or later, I'd probably have to ask the System for help with that, too.

*****

A few moments later...

Although we hadn't managed to catch those deer, our scouting expedition soon yielded something far more interesting.

High above the forest floor, Gopushadow continued leaping between the treetops, his sharp eyes scanning the undergrowth below. Through [Vassal's Eyes], I followed his gaze.

Then, something unusual caught my attention.

Hmm? What's that?

A strange green creature was sitting on the forest floor.

It was a large, shapeless blob about the size of a beanbag chair, its translucent body wobbling gently as though it were made of living jelly.

And at that very moment, it was slowly engulfing the carcass of a dead bird, its gelatinous body creeping over the remains as the creature dissolved its meal bit by bit.

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Reincarnated as a Castle - (LitRPG, Kingdom Building, Progression)

Chapter 73: Dangerous green creature

That green creature... it was a slime!

Hell yeah...

Back when I'd given Gopuro and Gopuran those drawing quests, the two goblins had sketched several blob-shaped creatures. I'd immediately recognized them as slimes, and ever since then, I'd been wondering when we'd finally encounter one in the flesh.

And now, at long last, here it was.

A green slime.

It was bigger than I'd expected, roughly the size of a beanbag chair. Judging by its dimensions, it looked large enough to swallow a full-grown raccoon or even a small goblin whole. At the center of its translucent, gelatinous body floated a glowing green core, pulsing steadily like a tiny light bulb.

In the fantasy games I'd played back on Earth, slimes were usually among the weakest monsters. They were the sort of creatures beginner adventurers hunted for easy experience at Level 1.

But that didn't mean I could afford to underestimate this one.

From what I could see, it looked genuinely dangerous.

After all, it was clearly capable of dissolving matter. Through its semitransparent body, I could watch the dead bird being broken down in real time. Its flesh softened first, followed by its feathers and even its tiny bones, all gradually dissolving into an indistinguishable mush within minutes.

The sight reminded me disturbingly of a living stomach.

So... this thing is basically a giant blob of acid?

Interesting...

I wasn't sure what practical uses I could find for such a substance yet, but my mind was already racing through the possibilities.

Maybe some kind of biological weapon?

If someone attacks me or my citizens, I could just dump a bucket of slime on their head!

Though, we'd definitely need some kind of protective gear before experimenting with these things.

But before I could say anything, Gopushadow had already leapt down from the tree and landed right beside the slime!

"Whahaha! Hello, jiggly friend!"

He laughed cheerfully and began slapping the creature with his hands.

Bap! Bap! Bap!

The slime's body rippled with every impact, wobbling back and forth like an oversized water balloon.

Wobble, wobble~

Wobble, wobble~

The slime wobbled.

"WHAT?! SHADOW! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?! IT'S DANGE—"

Before I could finish shouting, the slime reacted.

Its gelatinous body stretched upward like a mass of pulled dough, then suddenly collapsed over Gopushadow in a cascading wave of green goo.

In the blink of an eye, the goblin was completely engulfed.

And the idiot hadn't even tried to dodge!

He'd simply stood there and let the thing swallow him!

"NOOOOO! SHADOWWWW!"

I practically screamed through [Ruler's Voice], fully convinced that my precious citizen had just been eaten alive.

Dread surged through me as my vision turned entirely green. Inside the slime's translucent body, I could clearly see Gopushadow suspended in the gelatinous mass, completely surrounded by the creature's wobbling flesh.

SHADOW! YOU IDIOT! I TOLD YOU IT WAS DANGEROUS!

I watched in mounting horror, waiting for the slime to begin dissolving him the same way it had dissolved the bird.

Five seconds passed.

Then ten.

Then nearly half a minute.

And yet, Gopushadow remained completely intact.

Then...

Bloop!

The slime suddenly spat him out.

Gopushadow landed on the forest floor, unharmed, and immediately burst into delighted laughter.

"Wahaha! That tickles! Again! Again!"

I stared at him in disbelief.

...What?

The slime, meanwhile, seemed to have lost interest in its new playmate. It simply wobbled away through the undergrowth, leaving me to watch its retreat in utter bewilderment.

What the hell just happened?!

****

But before I could even process what had just happened, Gopushadow was already chasing after the slime.

He rammed into its squishy body, then tried jumping on top of it, only to be bounced right back off. No matter how hard he tried, the creature refused to let him inside again, its gelatinous body springing back into shape after every impact.

"Hey, what’s going on?" I asked. "Why did you suddenly jump into it like that?"

"Huh? Because it’s fun!"

Gopushadow replied as though it were the most obvious thing in the world, before charging into the slime again.

Apparently, whatever the creature had done to him had felt so good that he couldn't get enough of it.

Hmmm... what the hell is going on?

The whole situation was getting sillier by the second.

Just what did that slime do to my goblin to make him go crazy like this? He's practically begging to be swallowed alive again! What is he, some kind of masochist?!

Then, something caught my attention.

Wait a freaking minute!

Gopushadow's arms...

Something about his skin looked different.

It had developed a healthy sheen that definitely hadn't been there before, almost as though he'd just rubbed on some kind of magical lotion. The usual rough, dry patches were completely gone, replaced by smooth, healthy-looking green skin that looked even shinier than Gopuran's skin.

Wait... no way!

A new theory flashed through my mind, and I immediately turned my attention back to the slime.

Suddenly, everything started to make sense.

Thinking back to what I'd witnessed earlier, I realized that the slime had only consumed the bird carcass. It hadn't touched the surrounding grass or trees, and when a few small pebbles had accidentally gotten caught in its body, it had simply spat them out a few seconds later after making them shiny too.

So this thing only digests dead organic matter!

Yeah... that must be it!

And as for Gopushadow... Turns out, it just gave him a full-body exfoliation!

No wonder he was enjoying himself so much!

"WAAHAHA! THIS IS AMAZING!"

I couldn’t believe it. Thanks to Gopushadow, I’d stumbled upon an incredible discovery!

And now, I knew exactly what I needed to do next.

"Shadow! Bring this slime back to our castle!"

"YES! BIG BOSS!"

Gopushadow responded enthusiastically, his grin widening as he lunged forward and attempted to scoop the wobbling creature into his arms like a giant, living jelly pillow.

"Heyyaa! Jiggly friend! Come home!"

Unfortunately, the slime wasn’t having any of it.

Its body wobbled and morphed, turning almost liquid as it slipped straight through his grasp. No matter how tightly Gopushadow tried to hold it, he simply couldn’t get a proper grip, let alone lift the thing off the ground.

Eventually, even he had to give up.

Hmm... if we can’t carry it, we’ll just have to make it follow us.

And that gave me an idea.

Slime bait!

I sent Gopushadow scouting for something suitable and, after a little searching, he returned with several rotten fruits scattered across the forest floor.

Perfect.

We skewered the fruits onto a stick, creating a rather questionable-looking kebab, then approached the slime with our makeshift bait held out in front of us.

For a moment, nothing happened.

Then, as soon as the fruit stick entered the creature’s reach, the slime suddenly perked up. Its gelatinous body lurched forward, chasing after the rotten fruit as Gopushadow hurriedly backed away!

"Wahaha! It works!"

With a little patience and a steady supply of rotten fruit, we managed to lure the enormous green blob all the way back to my castle.

And just like that, our little expedition returned home with an unexpected new addition.

The slime was safely deposited in my courtyard, wobbling innocently on the ground.

Reincarnated as a Castle - (LitRPG, Kingdom Building, Progression) Chapter 74 -

REINCARNATED AS A CASTLE - (LITRPG, KINGDOM BUILDING, PROGRESSION)

Chapter 74: Waste experiment

I now had a giant green blob wandering around my courtyard.

Wobble Wobble~

It's just endless wobbling.

Curious, I used [Eye of the Overlord] to inspect it and see what information I could get.

[Green Forest Slime]

Level 3

Just a slime that wanders around the forest and eats waste.

...

HAHAHA! This is so cute!

The slime kept jiggling and wobbling, its gelatinous body bouncing gently with every movement. If I had hands, I would no doubt have been tempted to give it a good slap just to see how much it wobbled.

Of course, I also wanted to give it a name.

I had to resist the urge to call it Green Rimuru, though. In the end, I settled on Midorin instead.

Hehe! That's a pretty cute name!

And what happened next was even sillier.

When the goblins took a break from their hard work, they all gathered around Midorin. One by one, they lined up and took turns jumping into the slime, treating it like some kind of giant, living spa bath.

Sploosh! Sploosh!

And, unsurprisingly, Midorin was more than happy to consume all the dead skin they shed!

By the time everyone had finished their turns, their skin had become so glossy and smooth that it almost looked unreal.

It was as though they'd all just received a VIP spa treatment, complete with a magical full-body exfoliation!

Everyone was extremely happy and satisfied, some even wanted to jump in the second time but of course, they got rejected.

However, once everyone returned to work, Midorin did something even more incredible.

At first, I thought it was simply wobbling around my courtyard at random. But after watching it for a while, I noticed something strange.

Wait... is it chasing something?

Turned out, it was chasing animal poop!

Apparently, raccoon droppings and bird poop had accumulated all over my courtyard. I'd already been planning to have someone clean up the mess, but I hadn't gotten around to assigning the task yet.

And now, here was Midorin, happily gobbling up every last bit of it!

Incredible!

Who would have thought that a creature capable of dissolving dead organic matter could also serve as a natural cleaning tool?

But the more I watched Midorin munching away at the filth, the more I realized just how useful this little fellow could be.

Slime toilet! Heck yeah!

For now, waste disposal in my territory was still somewhat manageable. I'd simply instructed my citizens to use buckets and dump their contents in the forest every morning. Alternatively, they could just relieve themselves directly beside the trees.

It wasn't exactly an elegant arrangement, but it got the job done.

However, I knew that wouldn't last forever.

As my territory expanded and my population grew into the hundreds, then thousands, and eventually tens of thousands, this crude system would inevitably collapse under the sheer volume of waste.

The stench alone would become unbearable. Disease could spread among my citizens, and their productivity would plummet. Before long, my glorious rising civilization might turn into nothing more than a festering pile of shit.

Nope. Absolutely not. I am NOT letting that happen!

Which made Midorin's arrival all the more miraculous.

Perhaps this little green blob encounter wasn't by mere coincidence after all. Maybe fate itself had delivered the perfect solution to one of the biggest problems my future kingdom would face!

Muahahaha! Who needs some fancy, complicated waste disposal system when I have these incredible poop-eating green slimes?

At this rate, Midorin might just become one of the most useful residents of my castle!

****

And so, I had Gopushadow constructed for me what would be the first ever primitive slime toilet.

It's not anything fancy.*free*

Just dig a small pit in the ground, place and secure a plank on top of it so people could sit.

Then, whenever anyone wanted to take a dook dook, they would just throw the slime into the pit and then do their business directly on top of it.

Yeah, it's just that simple.

A few minutes later, it was already about to be put into the test.

****

Now, Gopugiga squatted above the pit, his belly rumbling with an ominous internal churn like there's a storm brewing inside him.

Since this guy was eating five times more than the others, his output must naturally be five times greater.

An absolute giga unit? An absolute giga pooper!

Below him, Midorin waited patiently for its meal, its gelatinous body quivering in anticipation like a kid waiting for candy.

"HHhhhhnnnggghhh!"

Gopugiga strained, his face twisting with effort.

Soon, a massive load was squeezed out of his ass!

Meanwhile, all the other goblins watched the dude shitting with bated breath.

The giant mass left his stretched out butthole... then dropped straight down.

Right onto the slime.

Blorp!

It immediately began to sink into the slime's body. Soft bubbling followed, and within minutes, it was completely digested.

"WHHOOOORAAAAA!"

Everyone erupted into cheers as the experiment proved a success!

Especially me. I was thrilled beyond words.

With this, my castle could finally be clean again! I had finally solved the waste management problem!

I was already thinking of sending Gopushadow out to hunt more Green Slimes. These things were incredible.

But then... something even more unexpected happened.

The slime suddenly stretched upward.

Before Gopugiga could even react, a thick tendril of green jelly shot up from the pit and drilled straight into his asshole!

Schlorp!

Gopugiga froze, his eyes bulging in horror. The dude’s face twisted into a chaotic mix of confusion as the slime cleaned his ass!

Within seconds, his butt was squeaky clean, practically shining in the light.

Everyone then turned to look at each other, their reactions all over the place.

Some terrified, others wearing wide, stretched grins.

Meanwhile...

"Damn..." I winced.

I wasn’t sure what to think or feel about this...

On one hand, it had to be absolutely horrifying to have a slime tentacle violating your asshole.

But on the other hand... this would greatly improve my citizens’ hygiene!

Thus, as a wise ruler, I had to put my citizens’ health first.

I declared the slime toilet a great success.

Then, as everyone returned to their work, I had Gopushadow go look for more slimes.

After all, we needed a lot of them!

Because surely, it would be weird to jump into a slime for dead-skin exfoliation right after you literally just shit into it moments ago, right?

*****

In the end, by late afternoon, Gopushadow returned with a few more slimes. With this, my castle now had four Green Slimes, all diligently working to clean up the shit in my yard.

I wondered if I could bring one into my basement.

There was literally an army of raccoons living down there, and I would love to have something to clean their den. But at the same time, I was worried the raccoons might just tear the slime apart.

Chapter 75: A productive day

As the sun sank toward the horizon, bathing the sky in deep shades of orange and crimson, the six goblins finally put down their tools for the day and returned to the castle to rest.

They gathered around the large fire pit in the center of the courtyard, their bodies glistening with sweat after hours of hard work. Despite their exhaustion, everyone wore a bright smile, clearly pleased with what they had accomplished.

"Good job, everyone!"

I praised them for their efforts before distributing a few extra Power Stones as rewards.

Hehe... We got a lot done today.

First, our slime experiment had been a resounding success! Not only had Midorin proven capable of cleaning up the animal droppings scattered around my courtyard, but we'd also found a potential solution to my territory's future waste disposal problems with the slime toilet!

With this, my tiny kingdom no longer had to suffer from the stench and unhygienic conditions that had been plaguing it!

Second, the construction teams had done an excellent job. Both the Wooden Storage House and the Simple Well were finally complete.

And they hadn't stopped there. Once the construction work was finished, the goblins had even joined Gopuro in chopping wood during the final hours of the day.

With all six of them working together, they'd managed to gather an absurd amount of timber.

That was nearly 1,300 Points' worth of wood alone!

Muahahaha! Now that's what I call a productive day!

Naturally, I wasn't about to let them end the day on an empty stomach. So I organized another feast, purchasing a generous supply of meat from the System and distributing it among my citizens.

The goblins happily accepted their rewards and immediately set about preparing dinner. Soon, the courtyard was filled with the crackling of the fire, the sizzling of meat, and the cheerful chatter of my hardworking little residents.

While they busied themselves with the feast, I turned my attention to the two newly completed buildings.

I'd already inspected both of them earlier, and I had to admit that the results were impressive.

First, there was the Simple Well.

Now that construction was complete, its information panel displayed a more detailed description of its functions.

Description: A stone well connected to an underground water source beneath your territory.

...

Description: The well automatically draws a fixed amount of water from the underground source each day at no cost.

...

Description: Spend Points to draw additional water from the underground source. The total amount of water drawn each day cannot exceed the well's maximum daily extraction limit.

(Note: The water drawn from the well cannot be sold back to the system!)

...

Description: Water drawn from the well is purified by the System, removing harmful pathogens and impurities to produce clean, refreshing water.

...

I was pretty satisfied. The output was actually impressive!

A thousand liters of water every day, completely free! And if I needed more, there's always an option to spend points for more!

For reference, if I wanted to buy drinking-quality water directly from the System's Food Shop, one point would only get me ten liters. Compared to that, the well was an absolute bargain.

Those 1000 free liters were effectively worth 100 Points every single day. Without the well, I'd have to pay that much just to obtain the same amount of water!

Thus, for a small territory like mine, that was an excellent start. My citizens would have plenty of water for drinking, cooking, washing, and other daily needs without having to trek into the forest to find a stream.

Of course, that was only enough for the time being.

As my population grew, so would our daily water consumption. And if I wanted to establish workshops, expand our farmland, or start raising livestock, the demand would increase even further.

Next was the Wooden Storage House.

Another essential building that I desperately needed.

Description: A basic storage facility constructed primarily from wood. Provides sheltered space for storing building materials, tools, equipment, food, and other supplies.

…

Description: Allows items to be stored safely within the building, up to its maximum storage capacity.

…

Description: Allows you to designate specific items for automatic sale. Whenever a designated item is deposited into the storage house, it will be automatically sold at the System's standard selling price.

You can also set a maximum storage limit for each designated item. Any quantity exceeding that limit will be automatically sold.

…

At first, I thought the Wooden Storage House would simply increase my storage capacity and offer little else. My [Inventory] skill currently allowed me to store a maximum of 100 m3 of items, so gaining another 50 m3 was already a pretty decent upgrade.

But then, after seeing the Auto Sell function…

Muahahaha! At last, no more micromanaging every transaction!

I loved this feature!

Not only would it save me a tremendous amount of mental effort, but it would also help keep my inventory organized without requiring constant supervision.

Just imagine what would happen once my territory grew to the size of a kingdom, with thousands, if not tens of thousands, of transactions taking place as my citizens gathered resources, produced goods, and traded with others.

Manually managing every single transaction would be an absolute nightmare!

Hehe... Now this is what I call proper automation!

Anyway, after the big dinner feast, I gathered everyone's attention once more to discuss our plans for the following day.

There were still a few more buildings to construct, mainly the Charcoal Kiln and the Cookhouse. If everything went according to plan, we should be able to finish both by tomorrow.

That would complete all the prerequisites for unlocking Tier Two buildings, including the Blacksmith Workshop and the Alchemy Workshop. Once those were ready, we could finally begin construction the following day.

Hehe... Things are progressing nicely!

But that wasn't the only matter I wanted to discuss with my citizens.

There was something else I'd been thinking about for a while, and I wanted to hear their opinions before making a decision.

"Hey, guys. I'm thinking about inviting more goblins to join us. Do you think we could visit other goblin tribes and invite them to come live in our territory?"

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Use arrow keys (or A / D) to PREV/NEXT chapter

Reincarnated as a Castle - (LitRPG, Kingdom Building, Progression)

Chapter 76: Recruiting plan

My goblins were more than happy with my suggestion.

"YEAH! More citizens mean more workers! And more workers mean a bigger army!" Gopuro pumped his fist enthusiastically, already excited.

"That’s not all!" Gopuran added, her eyes sparkling like stars. "With hundreds more goblins like us, we could gather so much food that nobody would ever have to go hungry again! And those Dark Giant Spiders wouldn’t dare come near our home!"

Unlike her brother, who was already dreaming about the army, Gopuran seemed more excited about the prospect of building a prosperous community.

Meanwhile, Gopugiga let out a hearty laugh and slapped his thick chest.

"BIG BOSS! Let’s build the strongest Super Goblin Kingdom! The biggest! The strongest! Nobody will be able to bully us ever again!"

"And Big Boss will become the God of all Goblins! HECK YEAH!" Gopushadow chimed in.

I couldn’t help chuckling at their enthusiasm.

"Haha, I hope so!"

After all... an army of hundreds of Super Forest Goblins?

Now THAT would be awesome! Unstoppable, even!

And it wasn’t just about military strength, either. With that many more workers, my castle’s development would accelerate dramatically. Construction would become faster, resource gathering would become more efficient, and I could finally start working toward some of my bigger plans.

Naturally, everyone seemed to be in favor of the idea.

However, just as I was beginning to feel optimistic about our prospects, Gopuran’s expression suddenly changed. She lowered her gaze in thought, her earlier excitement giving way to a hint of concern.

"Hmmmm..."

"Oh? What’s the problem?" I asked.

"I’m just thinking... which tribe should we invite?"

Her question seemed to dampen the mood almost immediately.

Gopuro’s grin faded, while Gopugiga scratched his head, looking as though the problem had never even occurred to him. Others narrowed their eyes in thoughts as well.

Then, after a brief exchange among themselves, I finally understood why they were acting this way.

It turned out that not all goblin tribes in this forest were on friendly terms with one another. Quite the opposite, in fact. Many had been bitter rivals or outright enemies for generations, constantly fighting over territory and resources.

Their former tribe had maintained alliances with several nearby tribes, but those allies had already been attacked and wiped out by the Dark Giant Spiders.

As for the other tribes...

Well, let’s just say they weren’t exactly on friendly terms with my citizens.

"I see... So that’s why you never sought refuge with the other tribes while fleeing from the spiders, huh?" I said.

"Yeah..." Gopuro murmured, his usual boisterous voice noticeably subdued. He stared into the fire. "Some of them would’ve driven us away. Others might’ve attacked us outright."

A heavy silence settled over the group.

For a moment, nobody seemed eager to speak.

Then Gopuberry, the blue haired girl who had been sitting quietly at the edge of the group, raised her head.

"Well... it’s not like every other tribe is our enemy!" she said. "There are still some neutral tribes we could approach, right? Maybe they’d be willing to listen?"

Everyone turned toward her.

Gopuro’s ears perked up, and his expression gradually brightened.

"Right! There must be some decent tribes out there! Like the Bright Red Nose tribe!"

Gopuflammy gave a firm nod, while Gopugan finally relaxed a little.

The atmosphere began to lighten.

And then...

"Nah! Screw those enemy tribes!"

Gopugiga suddenly rose to his feet, his booming voice cutting straight through the conversation. He clenched his massive fists, looking more excited than angry.

"We’re strong now, so why should we be afraid of them? If they don’t want to join us willingly, we can just force them to!"

And hearing that...

"RIGHT!!!"

"LET'S GO!"

Gopuro immediately sprang to his feet, while Gopuflammy grinned, rolling her shoulders as though she were already looking forward to testing her strength.

Meanwhile, Gopushadow's lips curled into a sly smile.

Even Gopuran's now fired up.

"Haha, it's join us or die! There's no other option!"

...Wow.

I couldn't help feeling impressed by how quickly the mood had changed.

One moment, everyone was worrying about old tribal rivalries. The next, half of them were practically ready to march into enemy territory and start a war.

Well, people always said that violence couldn't solve everything... And it wasn't like I was someone who tended to resort to violence, either.

But sometimes, I guess a little violence really was necessary! And this might just be one of those times!

Besides, I had plenty of confidence in my own abilities.

After all, joining my castle came with so many benefits. My citizens had access to a steady supply of food, better living conditions, and most importantly, opportunities to grow stronger, to evolve into a much more superior variant.

Seriously, with benefits like these, who wouldn't want to join?

And so, we spent a few more minutes discussing which tribe we were going to recruit next.

Unsurprisingly, everyone agreed with the Bright Red Nose tribe.

*****

The next morning...

"Big Boss, what are we gonna do today?"

Gopuro asked with his usual cheerful energy, his massive iron axe already hoisted over his shoulder. Judging by the eager look on his face, he was ready to spend another day chopping wood.

Dude probably expects me to say, "Go chop some more wood."

But nope!

Today, I had a different task in mind.

"Gopuro, would you like to accompany Gopuran to recruit the Bright Red Nose Tribe?"

The moment I asked, Gopuro's eyes lit up.

"WOOOOH! YES!!! BIG BOSS, LEAVE IT TO ME!!!"

He flashed a huge grin, so excited that his body literally shaking. It seemed the prospect of meeting another goblin tribe was far more appealing than another day of swinging his axe.

Of course, he wasn't the only one interested.

"Big Boss, send me too! I wanna go!" Gopushadow immediately chimed in, raising a hand.

"Big Boss, take me!" Gopugiga also declared, pounding his fists together with a heavy thud. "Me is strong! If they try anything funny, I'll crush them!"

...And there it is. I knew someone would bring up the possibility of a fight, haha...

"Sorry, guys, but I still have work for you to do here," I explained. "We need to finish building the Charcoal Kiln and the Cookhouse!"

That was one reason.

The other was that I didn't want to intimidate the Bright Red Nose Tribe by sending an entire squad of heavily muscled Super Forest Goblins to their doorstep, especially with someone as big as Gopugiga. Plus, his enthusiasm for crushing anyone who looks at him funny makes him a terrible choice for a diplomatic mission.

They were a neutral tribe, after all. If my goal was to establish friendly relations, showing up with too many people might make them suspicious or put them on guard.

Besides, Gopuran was probably the most mature and level-headed goblin I had. If anyone was suited for the job, it was her.

As for Gopuro, well...

He might be a little muscle-headed, but he was Gopuran’s brother. I figured the two would work well together, and his cheerful, outgoing personality might even help put the other goblins at ease.

Still, convincing everyone else to stay behind proved a little more troublesome.

Eventually, I ended up adding Gopushadow to the group, because perhaps a scout might be useful.

"Don’t worry. If anything happens, I’ll know about it and send reinforcements right away." I assured the rest.

That finally seemed to ease their concerns.

"Alright! Big Boss, trust us!" Gopuro declared, thumping his chest confidently. "By the end of the day, we’ll have hundreds of new goblins joining our castle!"

Haha... That’s a pretty ambitious promise, buddy.

But why not???

Seeing his confidence made me feel a little more optimistic.

Alright, then. Let’s see how this recruitment trip goes!

If you find any errors (non-standard content, ads redirect, broken links, etc..), Please let us know so we can fix it as soon as possible.

But before everyone headed out to carry out their assigned tasks, there was something else I wanted to do first.

Namely, distribute another round of gifts!

Previously, I had upgraded the Item Shop to Level 3. And with that upgrade, three new food items had appeared in the shop!

At first, I thought they would just be regular food items with slightly better nutritional value or perhaps a more delicious taste.

But nope!

This time, we were talking about something completely different!

[Magic Apple]

Description: An apple that contains a blessing from the System.

Effect: Immediately grants the eater 2 free random Core Attribute points, distributed among non-magic-related stats!

...

[Magic Plum]

Description: A plum that contains a blessing from the System.

Effect: Immediately grants the eater 2 free random Core Attribute points, distributed among magic-related stats!

...

[Magic Pear]

Description: A pear that contains a blessing from the System.

Effect: Immediately grants the eater 50 base Max HP and Max Stamina!

****

The moment I saw them, my reaction was... Holy crap!

These weren't ordinary fruits. They were practically little bundles of free stat points!

After explaining their effects to my citizens, I wasn't surprised to see their eyes light up with excitement.

"Ooooh! Magic fruits?! Sounds delish!" Gopuro exclaimed.

"I can boost my stats too? Hell yeah!" Gopuflammy clenched her fists, already looking eager to get her hands on one.

Meanwhile, Gopushadow was already wiping his drools.

"Haha, I wonder what they'll taste like. I can't wait!" he exclaimed.

"BIG BOSS! I WANT TO EAT THEM ALL!" Gopugiga bellowed, the gluttony already showing in his eyes.

However...

"Nope!" I announced. "Unfortunately, you can only pick one!"

It wasn't that I didn't want to give my citizens more free fruit. Quite the opposite, actually!

The thought of boosting their stats was incredibly tempting. Stronger citizens meant a stronger castle, after all. If I could make my goblins more powerful simply by feeding them a few magic fruits, why wouldn't I want to do that?

Unfortunately, there was a catch.

Or rather, a limit.

Each citizen could only benefit from the stat-boosting effect once per month. Eating a Magic Apple, Magic Plum, or Magic Pear after already consuming one of these fruits within the same month wouldn't provide any additional benefits.

And that wasn't even the worst part.

The worst part was... these things were freaking expensive! A whopping 100 Points per fruit!

There was no way I could afford to hand them out like candy, especially when I still had so many buildings to construct and other expenses to worry about.

Thus, after explaining the restrictions, I gave my citizens some time to consider their choices.

Meanwhile, I began weighing the options myself.

First, there were the Magic Apple and Magic Plum.

Both are granting 2 random Core Attribute points, but the attributes they affected were different. The Magic Apple boosted physical stats such as Attack, Defense, and Speed, while the Magic Plum boosted magic-related stats such as Magic Attack, Magic Defense, and Magic Capacity.

And honestly, the choice seemed pretty obvious to me.

I didn't have a single magic user among my citizens. Every goblin I had currently was practically the embodiment of raw physical strength. So, for now, the Magic Apple seemed like the better choice.

But when it came to the Magic Pear...

Hehe...

I already had two particular candidates in mind!

This pear was practically tailor-made for my two special cases: Gopugiga and Gopushadow!

First up was Gopugiga, my ultimate tank.

His entire build revolved around his [Brute Strength Lv.1] passive skill, along with his enormous HP pool and stamina reserves. For a goblin like him, additional HP and stamina were probably the most valuable stats he could receive.

Since the skill amplified his physical capabilities multiplicatively, an additional 50 HP would effectively become 100 HP, making the boost far more valuable on him than on anyone else.

In other words, this fruit would make an already ridiculously durable goblin even harder to take down.

On the other hand, he should probably stay away from the Magic Plum, considering the penalty he suffered: -50% to all magic-related stats.

Then there was Gopushadow.

Well, that guy was currently way too squishy for my liking.

Compared to the other Super Forest Goblins, his physique was noticeably less impressive. He was smaller, skinnier, and far less durable-looking overall. Sure, he was fast and sneaky, but even a speed-focused build needed some survivability, right?

After all, there was no point in being the fastest goblin around if one unlucky hit could send him straight to the afterlife!

Thus, giving him an extra 50 base HP and stamina seemed like the safest investment possible.

****

But to my surprise...

"Me want Magic Pear, please!" Gopuro raised his hand.

"Yeah! Me like Magic Pear too!" Gopuran chimed in.

"Big Boss, I wants Magic Pear!" Gopuflammy added enthusiastically.

Gopuberry turned out to be no different, also expressing her preference for the Magic Pear.

In the end, every single one of them chose the same fruit.

"Huh? Wait, what?" I asked, genuinely confused. "Come on, how come you guys all want the Magic Pear?"

For a moment, I wondered if goblins simply preferred pears over apples or something.

But apparently, that wasn't the case.

"Hehe." Gopuran scratched her nose sheepishly. "We tasted apples before, but we've never eaten this fruit called a pear!"

"Yeah!" Gopugiga nodded enthusiastically. "Will it be sweet like apple? Me want to know!"

"Big Boss, me can't wait!" Gopushadow bounced in place, his legs already restless and his eyes sparkling with excitement. A string of drool even began to form at the corner of his mouth. "Me want taste it now!"

"Haha, alright, alright!" I laughed.

Now that I thought about it, giving all of them extra HP and stamina probably wasn't such a bad idea anyway!

With that decided, I materialized six Magic Pears in front of them.

The fruits were plump and golden-green, each one nearly the size of a bowling ball. Their smooth skins glowed with a faint magical light, while a sweet fragrance drifted through the air. The scent was unmistakably that of fresh pears, so sweet and mouthwatering that even I was tempted to take a bite.

The goblins immediately snatched up their respective fruits.

And then...

CHOMP!

These little gremlins devoured their entire pears in a single bite, like a bunch of starving vacuum cleaners!

"HHHMMMM! IT SO SWEET!"

"Ohhh! Bit sour too!"

"I like it!" Gopushadow exclaimed, already licking the juice off his fingers.

"BEST FRUIT ME EVER HAD!"

All six goblins looked absolutely delighted, happily chewing away as a soft glow enveloped their bodies, signaling the activation of the fruits' magical effects.

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Reincarnated as a Castle - (LitRPG, Kingdom Building, Progression)

Chapter 78: To the Bright Red Nose Tribe

After my citizens finished eating their magic fruits, it was time for everyone to get to work.

I immediately initiated the construction of two new buildings: the Cookhouse and the Charcoal Kiln.

Gopuberry and Gopuflammy would be in charge of the Cookhouse, while Gopugiga would handle the Charcoal Kiln. With everyone assigned their respective tasks, both buildings should be completed by the end of the day.

Meanwhile, my little diplomacy team was getting ready for their mission as well.

Both Gopuro and Gopuran had brought their best equipment: the Big Iron Axe and the One-Handed Iron Sword, respectively. With their weapons at their sides, the two looked practically ready for battle.

And as for Gopushadow...

Well, I had something special prepared for him, too!

Today's selection from the Daily Equipment Shop had turned out to be surprisingly interesting.

[Twin Iron Daggers]

Type: Weapon

Rarity: E

Description: A pair of super sharp iron daggers. Their lightweight construction makes them particularly suitable for agile fighters who favor speed over brute force.

Effects: DEF +2; SPD +4

Special Effect:

Grants the skill [Fury Strike Lv. 1]

...

[Fury Strike Lv. 1]

Description: Attacks against an enemy apply a Fury Strike debuff, increasing the damage dealt by the next attack against the same target. If the target is not attacked again within a certain period, the accumulated bonus damage is lost.

Maximum Stacks: 10

Damage Bonus per Stack: 10%

Debuff Duration: 5 seconds

Additional Effect: Applying the debuff again refreshes its duration.

....

I wasn't able to reroll the substats to get the best possible combination, but hey, at least the skill was pretty cool!

Unlike Gopuro's Big Iron Axe and Gopuran's One-Handed Iron Sword, the Twin Iron Daggers came with a passive skill. That meant Fury Strike required no mana and could remain active as long as its conditions were met.

Its effect was also brutal. At maximum stack, this skill would literally double his damage output! And given how fast this guy was, he should be able to get stacks on enemies easily.

Yeah... It's just like the weapon was practically made for him.

And so...

Gopushadow eagerly accepted the daggers, his eyes sparkling with excitement.

He immediately slipped into a fighting stance and slashed at the air. Then, he expertly twirled the daggers between his fingers before launching another series of swift strikes.

Slash! Slash!

His arms moved so quickly that they became little more than a blur.

This made me wonder where the heck did this guy learn all of these flashy knife tricks.

"So, how are they?" I asked. Although it’s pretty obvious the guy was really enjoying his new toys.

"Big boss, They’re awesome!" Gopushadow replied. "And they look so cool, too!"

Right...

Even though they were just a simple pair of iron daggers, they somehow looked incredibly cool in Gopushadow’s hands. Perhaps it was because the dude already had the look of a natural assassin, with his slender build and spiky white hair. With a gleaming dagger in each hand, he now seemed even more dangerous than before.

With that taken care of, I gave the three of them some additional food and water supplies for the journey.

And with that, all their preparations were complete.

I linked my vision to Gopushadow’s, allowing me to see everything from his perspective.

"Let’s go! To the Bright Red Nose Tribe!" Gopuro declared enthusiastically.

"Yeah!" Gopuran and Gopushadow cheered in unison.

The three waved goodbye to the others before setting off into the forest, ready to begin their recruitment mission.

******

Twenty minutes later...

We were now deep in the forest once again.

The surroundings looked much the same as before. The same dim, shadowy atmosphere. The same towering trees and tangled vines stretching across the undergrowth.

My three goblins were now Level 14, considerably stronger than before, and all of them were equipped with decent weapons. So, even if another Colossal Bear showed up, we should be able to deal with it without too much trouble.

Still, that didn’t mean we could afford to let our guard down.

The three continued moving cautiously through the forest, carefully watching their surroundings and listening for any signs of danger.

This time, Gopuro took the lead, confidently striding through the undergrowth with his massive iron axe resting on his shoulder. Gopuran and Gopushadow followed close behind, leaving their guide to choose the route.

Or, more accurately, they were trusting Gopuro not to get them hopelessly lost.

After all, neither of them remembered the way to the Bright Red Nose Tribe.

Only Gopuro knew.

Or at least... that’s what he told everyone.

...

"Ermm, brother," Gopushadow suddenly called out, glancing at the trees around them. "You sure you know where we’re going? We’ve been walking for ages!"

"Yeah!" Gopuran chimed in. "Don’t tell me you’re just wandering around and pretending you know the way!"

Gopuro burst into laughter.

"Hahaha! Don’t worry! Me know the way very clearly!"

He thumped his chest confidently, looking as though he had personally memorized every single tree in the forest.

Well... that’s exactly what someone who has absolutely no idea where he’s going would say!

I couldn’t help feeling a little concerned.

But Gopuro seemed completely unfazed by their teasing. He continued marching forward with the confidence of a seasoned explorer, occasionally pushing aside branches and stepping over tangled roots as if he knew exactly where every turn would lead.

Well, at least he looked confident.

And confidence was... something, I supposed.

By this point, we were already more than five kilometers away from my castle.

I had upgraded my [Vassal's Eyes] skill to Level 2, increasing its maximum connection range to ten kilometers. That was twice its previous range, allowing me to monitor my citizens across a much larger area.

According to Gopuro's estimates, the Bright Red Nose Tribe should be somewhere within that range.

And apparently, he had a plan.

According to him, finding a small stream would mean the tribe was nearby.

Whether this was reliable local knowledge or just another excuse for him to keep marching confidently through the woods remained to be seen.

But soon enough... *eel*.

"Hey, guys! You hear that?" Gopushadow suddenly asked, raising his head.

"Yeah!" Gopuran replied, pausing to listen.

I could hear it, too.

A faint, bubbling sound drifted through the trees, growing clearer as they approached. Water trickled over rocks somewhere ahead, its gentle murmur standing out against the rustling leaves and distant bird calls.

It was the sound of a small stream.

Gopuro's face immediately lit up.

"SEE?! I TOLD YOU GUYS!"

He puffed out his chest, looking absolutely delighted with himself.

"Haha! Good job, Puro!" I praised him.

For once, I had to give him credit!

Chapter 79: To the Bright Red Nose Tribe (2)

And just like that, we followed the sound of the water.

The small stream Gopuro had mentioned should be somewhere around here. Once we found it, all we had to do was follow it upstream, and we should eventually reach the Bright Red Nose Tribe.

At least, that was the plan.

"But hey, why do you call it the Bright Red Nose Tribe?" I asked, more out of curiosity than anything else.

"Well, because they have really red noses!" Gopuro replied matter-of-factly.

"Haha, really?"

"Yeah!"

Gopuro then told me a little about what he knew of the tribe.

Apparently, their noses weren't naturally bright red. They painted them that way!

From what he explained, every goblin tribe in the forest had its own distinctive appearance. Some painted patterns on their noses, others marked their arms, while a few preferred to wear funny hats or other accessories. It was simply a way for members of different tribes to recognize one another.

That reminded me of something.

When Gopuro and Gopuran had first come to my castle, both of them had worn white markings on their faces, almost like tribal tattoos.

"So, what was your tribe called, then?" I asked.

"Oh, it was the White Whiskers Tribe!" Gopuran answered.

"Oh? White Whiskers?" I repeated before chuckling. "Haha, that's a cute name!"

"Yeah!" Gopuran said.

"But now we are the Castle Tribe!" Gopuro suddenly declared with pride.

That actually made me laugh.

"Haha, true, true."

"And soon, the Bright Red Nose Tribe will be eaten by our Castle Tribe too!" he continued enthusiastically.

"Haha, that’s right!" Gopushadow pumped his fist.

Hearing that, I couldn’t help laughing at their choice of words.

Well, I suppose recruiting them is a little like eating them up, in a way!

Of course, whether the Bright Red Nose Tribe would be quite so eager to join us remained to be seen.

Hopefully, we could settle things peacefully.

****

And so, with that cheerful thought in mind, the three goblins and I continued chatting as they made their way through the forest toward the stream.

They occasionally pushed aside branches or stepped over exposed roots, while Gopuro seemed to be enjoying his role as their guide a little too much.

For a while, everything went smoothly.

Until...

...something caught Gopuro’s attention.

His cheerful expression gradually faded as he slowed his pace and began sniffing the air. His ears twitched, and he glanced toward the trees ahead as though he had picked up a scent he didn’t recognize.

A moment later, Gopuran and Gopushadow seemed to notice it, too.

The three exchanged a quick glance before coming to a halt.

Their expressions turned serious. Without another word, they drew their weapons and cautiously scanned the surrounding trees.

Huh?

What’s going on?

I focused on their surroundings as well, trying to spot or hear anything unusual. But I couldn't see anything out of the ordinary, nor could I hear anything that seemed particularly suspicious.

In fact, the forest was so quiet now it was even a little bit creepy.

So why had my goblins suddenly become so alert like that?

"Oi! What's happening?" I asked through [Ruler's Voice].

Gopuro didn't answer immediately. Instead, he tilted his head slightly and sniffed the air again.

"Puran, Shadow. You guys smell that?"

"Yeah..." Gopuran replied, scrunching her nose.

Beside her, Gopushadow also gave a short nod. His usual playful expression had disappeared, and his fingers tightened around the handles of his twin daggers. There was even a slight tremor in his hands now.

Meanwhile, I was still completely in the dark.

This was because [Vassal's Eyes] only allowed me to share my citizens' vision and hearing. I couldn't experience their sense of smell, so whatever they had detected remained a complete mystery to me.

A sense of unease crept through me.

Damn it...

Is it another enemy?

A wolf? Or another Colossal Bear?

Or, worse... a giant spider?!

I really didn't want to run into any spiders right now.

"Puro, answer me! What's going on?" I pressed.

Gopuro's expression grew grim.

"Big Boss, I smell blood!"

Huh? Blood?

"Yeah..." Gopuran added, her voice unusually serious. "It’s definitely the scent of blood. There’s no mistake about it."

She paused, sniffing the air once more before continuing.

"And not just any blood. It’s goblin blood..."

What?!

The revelation caught me off guard.

Goblin blood?

"Wait a minute. You can actually tell the difference between goblin blood and other kinds of blood?"

"Yes," Gopuro answered simply.

For once, even he wasn’t joking around.

Seriously? Goblins can distinguish blood by species just from its smell?

That was completely new information!

Then again, thinking back on it, perhaps I shouldn’t have been so surprised.

I remembered the time my castle had been attacked by a group of goblins. Back then, the attackers had probably been able to smell their own tribemates’ blood left behind on my iron portcullis, too.

Well, that would explain a few things.

But more importantly, if all three of them could smell goblin blood nearby, there might be injured goblins somewhere ahead. Or worse, we might have stumbled upon the aftermath of a fight.

Hmmm...

Whatever they had discovered, it clearly wasn’t something to take lightly.

"Be careful, then," I warned them.

"Yes..." the three replied, their eyes fixed on the forest ahead.

They then began advancing cautiously, their steps growing slower as they followed the scent of blood. Gopuro kept his massive iron axe ready, while Gopuran and Gopushadow stayed alert, watching the surrounding trees for any sign of danger.

Meanwhile, I mentally prepared myself for the worst too.

More specifically, I readied my blessings, making sure I could activate them at a moment's notice to boost their abilities if anything went wrong.

And then, soon enough, we found it.

The source of that bloody smell....

*****

"Damn..." I muttered.

The sight before me was downright horrifying. It was like seeing a horror movie happening in real life.

The three goblins wore grim expressions, too. Even through their eyes, I could tell that whatever lay before us was far worse than we had expected.

The stream we had been looking for was no longer an ordinary stream.

Instead, its once-clear water had turned a deep, blood-red.

Reincarnated as a Castle - (LitRPG, Kingdom Building, Progression)

Chapter 80: The bloodstained water

For a moment, all of us froze at the sight before us.

The stream had been dyed red with goblin blood. Which could only mean one thing...

Something terrible had probably happened to the Bright Red Nose Tribe, and I already had a pretty good idea what it might be.

The Dark Giant Spiders...

A chill ran through my bricks.

If those monsters were truly responsible, then it meant their attacks were spreading far faster than I had anticipated. Their expansion was becoming increasingly difficult to contain, like a wildfire raging through a forest, consuming everything in its path.

At this rate, it might only be another week or two before they reached my castle.

Damn it... I'm running out of time.

I needed to accelerate my preparations as quickly as possible. Every day I wasted could mean the difference between surviving their attack and watching my castle fall.

But for now, I had another problem to deal with.

Gopuro slowly approached the stream and stared at its blood-red waters. His massive iron axe remained in his other hand, while his free hand clenched into a tight fist. His entire body was trembling in rage.

Gopuran and Gopushadow weren't faring much better. Both wore grim expressions, their eyes fixed on the crimson water flowing past their feet. There's not only blood, but we saw some ripped off body parts as well...

It was horrible....

After a moment of silence, Gopuro finally spoke.

"Big Boss... what do we do? Should we still go to the Bright Red Nose Tribe?"

"Hmmm..."

I considered his question carefully.

It was a perfectly reasonable concern. Continuing onward could mean walking straight into an unknown danger. We had no idea what awaited us, and charging blindly into a potentially dangerous situation would be foolish.

On the other hand, I couldn't help wanting to find out what had happened.

Was this really the work of the spiders, or had another goblin tribe started a war with the Bright Red Nose Tribe?

In both cases, one thing for certain, there might still be survivors.

If the attack had happened recently, there could be injured goblins waiting for help, or hiding somewhere, similar to my goblins a few days ago.

And not only me, Gopuran was thinking along the same lines.

"We have to continue," she said firmly. "The blood is still fresh. The attack might have happened not long ago, which means there could still be survivors..."

"Right! We have to help them!" Gopushadow immediately agreed, his earlier nervousness giving way to determination.

He then begged me, gripping his twin daggers tightly.

"Big Boss, please! Please let us go in!"

"Hey, calm down," I immediately replied.

"This is looking very dangerous," I continued. "I understand your desire to help, but at the same time, I can't simply ignore the risks."

These three were my precious citizens, after all, and I had no intention of sending them into a situation they couldn't handle.

But then, Gopuran added.

"Big boss, we'll be careful. Besides, from what we know, Dark Giant Spiders only leave the Cursed Land at night. It's morning now, so we should be relatively safe."

"Wait!" I blurted out after hearing that. "Is that true? How do you know?" I asked, wondering how the heck did I miss this important information.

"Well, we don't know for sure, but..."

She paused briefly before explaining what she knew.

Apparently, two or three months ago, when all this first started, the spiders hadn't begun attacking the tribes yet. At first, only a few left the Cursed Land and into the forest. Usually, there were just one or two at a time, and they mostly hunted lone goblins or other animals after dark.

But as time passed, their numbers grew. Eventually, they started organizing larger attacks against entire tribes.

Even so, every attack they had heard about only happened around midnight, including the one attack that annihilated their tribe.

"Yeah... That's what we suspect." Gopuran said. "If they usually hunt and attack after dark, then daytime should be safer. But we can't be certain."

I see...

It wasn’t exactly reassuring, but it was better than nothing.

At least, we had a reasonable basis for believing that we wouldn’t immediately run into a swarm of those monsters in broad daylight.

Still, I couldn’t completely rule out the possibility that some spiders might be lurking nearby.

"Haiz..." I let out a brief sigh.

These goblins really weren’t making my job easy.

"Alright, then. Are you three absolutely sure you want to continue?" I asked, letting them decide.

"Yes!"

All three answered without the slightest hesitation.

"If we can save more goblins, our Castle Tribe will grow stronger!" Gopuro declared.

"Big Boss, please let us go!" Gopushadow added.

Gopuran simply nodded, her expression resolute.

I couldn’t help feeling a little conflicted.

On one hand, I was worried about their safety. On the other hand, if we wanted to survive the coming danger, we couldn’t afford to remain passive forever.

Every goblin I managed to save would become another valuable warrior in the battles to come.

"Alright," I finally relented. "We’ll continue, but we’re not going in recklessly. Stay alert, and if things get too dangerous, retreat immediately. Understood?"

"Yes, Big Boss!"

The three answered enthusiastically.

Still, there was no way I was going to let them venture into a potentially dangerous area with only the three of them.

If the Dark Giant Spiders really were responsible for this massacre, I wanted as much fighting strength on hand as possible.

And fortunately, I had three more goblins back at the castle.

Thus, using [Ruler's Voice], I immediately contacted Gopugiga, Gopuflammy, and Gopuberry, ordering them to head toward our current location as quickly as possible. I also instructed them to bring their weapons and prepare for a possible battle.

The three responded at once and set off without delay.

And then, in just about thirty minutes later, the reinforcements finally arrived.

Gopugiga, Gopuflammy, and Gopuberry emerged from the forest, fully armed and ready for battle.

Their expressions were serious as they took in the sight of the blood-stained water.