

Dungeon S 901

Chapter 901 Revamping the Shop Instance

Ever since Christmas, Jin had wanted to renovate the Shop Instance so his new customers would have a better first impression while his repeating customers would have a more inclusive experience using it.

He had been experimenting with new interior designs inside the Dungeon Maker and felt that the ones he found had been extremely inadequate. It did not feel right when he tried to balance the needs of the masses while trying to do a makeover to give a better aesthetic to the whole Shop Instance. There was no sense of closeness or familiarity if something was too grand in his designs.

It was only after the Demon War Defence that it clicked inside of him that there was actually no reason to create an interior design. If it was an instance like all others, so why should he restrain it as part of a building? With more resources in his hands, Jin could create something quite different from his past designs.

And with the Chinese New Year, he had also repurposed and recreated the Shop Instance to fit the holiday's theme so they could experience with the Chinese New Year thematic designs as well.

"Hi, everyone. Happy Chinese New Year! There will be an update to the current Shop Instance in five minutes, but it should not affect your current activities. However, we will ask you to move out of the old Shop Instance once I have pushed the data into the server. So if you wish, take as many pictures as you want of the old Shop Instance before it is taken down." Jin said through a microphone via the Dungeon Maker Instance.

"Hopefully, they will appreciate this version just as much as they did the previous one." Jin thought as he waited the five minutes. He could have done it instantly if he wanted to, but he chose not to. Then he clicked on the 'Load' button on his Dungeon Maker Interface as it created the new Dungeon Instance. And soon after he pushed the data into the System's servers, he went in first to have a quick look of the area.

When he saw that everything was to his liking, he allowed the System to open it for everyone. Not even a second after, his customers started to teleport into the new Shop Instance to see what Jin had changed.

To their surprise, they found themselves back in time.

It wasn't back to the initial version when Jin had just started out, but back in historical time. There was an extensive row of old shophouses similar to the ones which were popular in the 1930s to 1950s. Jin had taken his inspiration from Hong Kong's Queen Road which the British first built it in the 1940s. The row of shophouses gave a nostalgic jump to the past where everything was less modern and more face to face interaction.

At the centre of it all was a two way street with a train platform in between them. Jin had incorporated Lynn's Restaurant Train into his Shop Instance, so people did not have to go into a new instance, breaking the immersion.

And that was Jin's main idea for his new Shop Instance.

He wished to incorporate all the current Service Instances he had into one gigantic Shop Instance and hoped this would make people make use of his Service Instances. At the same time, have fun travelling around the new 'shop' instance rather than merely teleporting for the sake of convenience.

Naturally, he did not remove such an option, but he did rename it into 'fast travel', and they could only do it by going to a shop houses that specialised in such services. That was none other than the 'Tourist' Information Centre. The Dungeon Supplier had supplied Panda NPC Employees to take charge of the shophouses in order to relieve the load of the other NPCs and his employees within the Shop Instance. Naturally, Yun could take over whenever she wanted, but she was no longer needed to man the counter twenty four hours round the clock.

As for his Service Instances, they could also be accessed without the fast travel via the train, by foot or even by flying which Jin monetised a little on. For those who are at low grades and wished to fly around with Qing Gong (Light Martial Arts), Jin sells temporary flying inscription charms at his tourist information centre which would temporarily boost their chi. This allowed them the ability to fly to the service instances with their Qing Gong.

The Emerald Mountain Hot Spring Instance as the name suggested, had been placed at the mountains where the cultivators would have to make an effort to reach there. The same goes to Deep Fishing Reservoir and the Wunderpanda Theme Park, which could be seen from the top of the mountains.

However, sensitive service instances like the Emerald Mountain Hot Springs were all adjusted to show Pandas and Red Pandas using the hot spring pools whenever any cultivator flew over them. The cultivators would still be able to enter a separate service instance and use the services as previously intended.

As for open service instances like the Wunderpanda Theme Park, they had been placed with a distance detecting feature. Once someone entered the area above it, they would be asked to get out or pay for it. Failure to comply within the time limit would warn them, that the cash would get subtracted from their cash wallet. And after which, they would still be allowed to enter the theme park.

Other than that, Jin did place some minor discounts to encourage people to take the train but made sure everything was also reachable by foot. Similar to aeroplane miles, Jin had made an experimental Panda Miles programme which would keep track how much the cultivators had walked. If they travelled sufficiently, they would be given rewards like a one time discount which had a maximum cap of 5% or even used to redeem Panda medals.

With the creation of the new Shop Instance, Jin had not intended to make it so wide and vast, but the System stated that with this new instance format, it would collect sufficient data for Jin's new Virtual Reality Network platform.

Initially, the System needed even more processing capability to power such a large instance since it had used to collect even more monsters and animals. But because of how Jin had closed and combined various instances into this particular Shop Instance, it eventually became feasible creating this new possibility.

Panda Street Instance.

Chapter 902 Panda Street Shophouses

The Panda Street Instance had everything that the old Shop Instance had, only more compartmentalised since they had been broken into shophouses for people to mingle around. Jin had utilised the very same concept he first used when he opened his shop.

While it might look like small shophouses from afar, it was a different experience once they walked into the store as the area widened within the shophouses. This allowed groups of people to come in without an issue and would expand accordingly.

For example, the Bai Twin's Weaponry and Armoury Store Instances had been incorporated into multiple shophouses. Bai Wan had separated his shop based on the type of weapons being sold. Melee weapons had one store dedicated to them while the ranged items were another. He later further separated them based on the types sold.

With swords as the most popular of them all, Bai Wan had put them on the first floor and subsequently the axes and spears on the second. Blunt weapons and niche weapons had the third floor for themselves because he wanted people to at least look at them and do some window shopping so that they could have some love for the community obsessed with swords.

And speaking of swords, the range was absurdly wide. So much that Bai Wan had been given a separate shophouse to accommodate the higher grade swords and the varieties. The same went for magic weapons where Jin started to sell staves, wands and books as part of the store expansion. Jin knew that there might not be that many mages according to System statistics but at least by offering such an option, it could prompt mages to at least try his dungeons.

On the other hand, Bai Xin's Armoury Shophouses was even more frightening because of the number of clothes she had in her possession. From traditional armour to reinforced defensive clothes with inscriptions, she literally owned half the row of shophouses in the Panda Street. Jin felt that this would be a better choice than an ever-expanding department store which would make the cultivators feel as if there was no end when window shopping.

With the genres compartmentalised by the shophouses, it should give the shoppers a set of specific choices. What's more, Bai Xin could now open a shophouse that solely sold her own personal wares. This gave her more control of the products she wished to market and promote her items without it being bogged down by the wide variety of choices the cultivators once had with the department style instance.

But because of the large catalogue they had, Jin had collaborated with Bai Xin and Bai Wan to create a submodule in his Pandamonium App that would give them partial control of the items they wished to showcase.

Based on their inputs, Jin had also revamped the shopping sub-app that should see an increased uptake in the number of people browsing it. And with the items in weekly rotation, several obscure items could be showcased and entice people to buy it.

Not only that, but he had also started to incorporate the Pandafull Delivery Team to send wares in Shenzhen for. (Since his team got a little bigger after the defence against the Demon Rats Ambush.) It was also to see the response of the customers to see if they could catch on getting stuff from his store. After all, Pandafull was just a minor delivery service as compared to the other big names out there.

Regardless, Jin had been thinking of making people like Bai Xin and Bai Wan as official Panda Clan Associates and allowing them to have access to a small part of the System without them knowing that it was the System.

And not only them, but the advent of the newly concocted chi potion by Yu Xiang, the potion researcher had also prompted Jin to create this Panda Clan Associates position. This would not only enhance their current skills but enable them to move faster and further in creating higher grade products at mass quantity too.

Speaking of Yu Xiang, Jin had already rewarded her team plenty by allowing her to open her very own potion shophouse in his Panda Street Instance. With the ability to create whatever shop interior with no budget limits like the Bai Twins, this gave her the ability to build her dream shop. However, what she desired most was better equipment for producing even higher quality potions, and that was when Jin told her that doing it in his Shop Instance would be the only choice.

Unlike the Chinese medicinal Shop Instance which Jin created for them to do their makeshift research, the System had actually allocated very, very little resources to those instances so that they could be standalone without the System's interference. After all, the System preferred to spend as little as possible while taking as much rent from the tenants. (Of course, Jin did regulate it so that the shopkeepers had a fair price.)

So with the allure of having a more complete lab within the Shop Instance Yu Xiang ended up agreeing to create that shophouse. However, Jin emphasised that only quality items could be sold in the potion store, and she would still be fighting with Octofussy's General shophouse for profit until she proved her worth.

Yu Xiang did not care about all that as all she wanted was to create even better potions. Which is also why Jin had delegated her potion-making into the first official manufacturing job to the Pandapolis Industrial Sector. So, she did not have to worry about making said potions as part of her job and concentrate on researching better ones.

Furthermore, a new lab department was officially created for Yu Xiang and her team in Ayse's Research Lab Instance, although clearance wise, the humans had very restricted access to most of the lab. All the lab machines were teleported into the new department, and Jin hoped that Yu Xiang and her team could mingle with his minions and they would give each other insight into what they knew. (The Cosmetic Inscription were a good excuse why the minions sometimes did not look human.)

Of course, that would also mean more secrets would be spilt out. But there was no need to worry as the dungeon supplier had the Director of 'Secret Keeping' by his side and he knew how to keep a tight leash around when it came to the System's existence.

Chapter 903 More Shop Revamps

Of course, that was not all for the new Panda Street Instance. Scrapping the tabletop bar that Jin had been using for what felt like an eternity would have been a shame, so it merely moved elsewhere. (Where it went, was still a mystery to the cultivators and only Jin knew where it was.) The food that the System had provided previously had actually been turned into side stalls manned by the new Animal folks from the Giant World.

The System had chosen the animal folks who excelled in cooking from the various races such as Salamanders, Crocodiles to operate the street-side stalls, each selling one specific item from the System's menu.

From the random onigiris, the tonkatsu curry rice to the triple cheese pizza, each belonged to their new animal folks owners so that the System did not have to waste time creating them. And to the animal folks, they felt it was an honour to have such an important job as they were given full complete knowledge on how to create these dishes.

Thus, the streets were actually slightly wider than most perceived in order to accommodate the street side stalls and their tables. It brought back a little bit of nostalgic feeling especially to the older cultivators, and that was exactly what Jin was aiming for. A sense of familiarity and feeling of closeness among the NPCs, shopkeepers and also the cultivators.

Wouldn't they be in direct competition with the current Shop Instances? Perhaps, but that was not Jin's concern as this happened to coincide Jin's objective to gather data ultimately for his Virtual Reality Network. And their current focus was on the crowd size of his customers and its interaction with his minions and his NPCs.

This is because with the Virtual Reality Network, crowds would be inevitable, and he needs to know whether the System can control the workload without breaking down. While Jin created the Open Island Instances with the System's workload handling in mind, the islands would still be filled with activities once launched. So, this particular Service Instance would serve as the fundamental foundation of the Virtual Reality Network.

As for the other shophouses, Vulcan, the master blacksmith had his very own two shophouses joined together. The services he provided were the same, but because of his metal smelting, Jin made sure his shophouses were soundproofed correctly, and the smoke did not affect the air quality of the instance despite it being strictly handled by the System.

The Panda Muscles had three shophouses joined together, so there was enough place for all the equipment. Jin started to incorporate a few other sporting exercises inside such as Yoga, Dancing and even Kickboxing. As for the pools and running tracks, they were placed further away into the wilderness.

And one would realise, the end of the shophouses was actually a gate to the wilderness where the Restaurant Train would also depart to the various service instances within the Panda Street Instance.

As for the other end, it was actually facing a wide neverending ocean where Jin had placed a seaport and an airport further at the side of the Panda Street Instance. That was how the cultivators would be travelling to their various dungeon instances. This was a gimmick which also allowed Jin to do some events that could take place from the sea or via the aeroplanes.

It would provide enough loading time for subsequent events, especially those emergency 'raid' instances when Jin might need help. But for now, the cultivators who had teleported in along with Jin found out there was already a giant ship with bright festive lights hanging around it.

Pandas in old sailor uniforms were banging their gongs, blowing their trumpets and shooting firecrackers from the ship itself. Evidently, it was the highlight of the current Panda Street Instance despite people being shocked as if they were being teleported into a new world.

Once again, Jin had released a new limited dungeon instance to coincide with the Chinese New Year Festival, and this one was called the Nian Dungeon Instance.

Most if not all the cultivators knew immediately what kind of dungeon instance it was since the monster, Nian had practically been a staple in all dungeon suppliers stores when it came to the New Year because of its significance of ushering the holidays in.

However, most of Jin's customers trusted that Jin's Nian would be different from other dungeon suppliers, especially after what they had seen and experienced from the Christmas Limited Dungeon Instance. The 'Devil Klaus' had been a major hit that even the influential Dungeon Supplier blogs and websites were talking about promising to check out what this promising dungeon supplier shop would come up with.

"Come come! Buy a ticket, and we will send you to the Dungeon where Nian has supposedly fled away to!" Mr Patsu now dressed in all traditional Chinese clothes did his job of advertising their latest dungeon.

But to everyone who had transported into this new fantasy Shop Instance, they were torn between going to the ship to try the new dungeon instance and seeing what kind of secrets the new Panda Street Instance might have to offer.

Obviously to those who wanted to watch the dungeons first before venturing forth, the large screen cinemas were still available, and they were in a major cinema theatre right at the centre of the Panda Street Instance before the road and railways split into two. (Since it was basically a roundabout ride around the entire instance before returning back to the main station.)

With the new revamp, the cultivators started to explore the whole place with much excitement.

Jin also took this time to walk through the streets to make sure his NPC employees were working without any hitches since there were no 'human' workers around because of the Chinese New Year holiday.

He believed he might be one of the few non-essential shops that still remained open, giving rise to the number of customers coming in the morning for their usual routine. (Of course, they would be pleasantly shocked to see the new changes, or that is what Jin hoped.)

Chapter 904 Collection of Seeds

"Apologies for the long wait. I hope your discussion has been going on well." Jin said as he returned to the Instant Lottery Instance. Instead of maintaining the indoor stadium, the System had already reduced the place to several rows of chairs and a half-broken stage to save on resources. The only thing left was the lottery draw machine and the Fortune Panda waving its paw slowly.

"We may have strayed off topic a bit, but we did bring up some points of discussion." Qiu Yue told Jin and decided to jump down the stage when she noticed the stage disappearing.

"Let's go to the conference briefing room since the System seems to be closing this instance down. That way you guys can also have a glimpse of the new Shop Instance I created too." Jin suggested with a hint of pride as he beckoned his minions, bellators and Sub System Users to come to the teleport portal.

When teleported, they found themselves in a meeting room that was vastly different from the one they had gotten used to. The room and furniture looked so old fashioned that there was a little bit of retro-modern feel to the whole conference room.

There were windows attached which could allow the minions to peek through outside without interrupting the air conditioning and the quality of the sound-proofing the System had created the room with.

"Wow, is this why you asked me for permission to edit the Restaurant Train Instance?" Lynn asked, and Jin nodded his head with a wide smile. He opened up a hologram on the conference table and vaguely explained to everyone the new design of his Shop Instance.

"Not bad. This way, you don't have to take care of your shop so closely leaving you with more time to clear all the nonsense you have stuck your nose into." Kraft stated bluntly as if wanting to keep things on track.

"Don't let Yun hear that. She insists that taking care of the dungeon supplier business as my main priority." Jin chuckled as he asked everyone to sit down. The System immediately conjured a few more chairs for the minions to sit at the side of the conference room as it did not expand the conference room any bigger. Jin sat at the end and started to pull a few files out of nowhere, and the people near him noticed the big fat rat head on the file's cover.

"We shall now be discussing a little on the Demon Rats' incursion and how we are going to stop them once and for all. The number of reports that have been constantly sent to the System for evaluation has piled up, from enemy numbers to geological surveys of the place... It is high time we strike back. We have a chance to make it right for the Northerners as well as creating a source of major farming for us if we succeed properly." Jin started as he pulled out a few glass bottles from nowhere once more, but upon closer inspection, Gold noticed that they were seeds from his world. Only he was more concerned about the unique glass bottles they were in.

"When you guys raided the castle, the cleaning team found quite a number of interesting things. Among them were these seeds hidden at the very bottom of the castle. If not for a crack behind a fake wall, the cleaning crew might have overlooked it. There is apparently an entire archive of seeds in those hidden rooms, and it is well preserved. Gold, I assume you should be able to tell us something about this?"

"With pleasure. Each and every royal castle has a safe room that protects the seeds used to produce their items. It's a procedure in case of a catastrophe like a great famine or drought, and these seeds are the salvation of the kingdom in those times. They also act as a library of sorts, and the Northern Regions happens to have the most complete collection. The ones you are currently holding ar-"

"Stop pretending it's the first time you see it when you were the one who helped the Northern Region fill it up." Weslie who came in late with a few other stacks of files via the side door chided her companion.

"Oho, so Gold was merely boasting about his collection to Jin?" Kraft remarked and Gold inadvertently got tongue-tied. He turned a little embarrassed and nodded his head.

"Weslie, why did you tell them about it?!" Gold asked via the System Channel trying to recover his pride.

"Because I know how crazy you can get when talking about it. Or do you want me to believe you were not about to ask for permission to see the library collection since you had 'some knowledge' about it? And then proceed quickly and check if your entire collection is intact." Weslie answered out loud as she placed the files in front Jin.

"That sounds exactly like what Gold would do. He is always too shy to admit his own stuff." Ayse agreed with Weslie as she knew Gold's working style.

"People won't fault you for being in love with seeds and dirt, my friend." Moloch came to his defence, and the minions who knew how difficult farming was who had an in-depth knowledge of the lay of land also believed that such people should be recognised.

"According to the System, we recovered everything they had on there. Gold, if you want to check up on it, you are welcome to do so afterwards. We are lucky that we have an expert of your calibre with us. In fact, after we have defeated the rats, I shall grant you the opportunity to regrow them all and even compile a larger library." Jin found this as a lucky break for the team.

From the System's reports, there were thousands of glass bottles filled to the brink with seeds that needed identifying. With Gold being the one previously in charge of that, it should not pose a problem.

"But if it's so precious, why did you not sound it out and tell us to find them?" Lynn queried Gold who felt relieved to hear such good news.

"I had assumed the rats would have used them to increase their numbers. I did not have much hope when I heard the castle had been mechanised and destroyed rather brutally by our attempts to stop their assault. After all, saving the human slaves and the humans at the town were more important than those seeds. I couldn't exactly ask anyone to hold back for the chance of them still being in there." Gold answered as he took the glass bottles and took a closer look at their condition.

Despite their frail appearance, the glass bottles had actually been enhanced to make sure that they could withstand shocks and earthquakes while also ensuring that the seeds would be kept in a cool condition. However, all those enhancements required magical sources that needed to be replaced after a certain period of time.

Only later did he find out that the System had purposely stored them in optimal conditions upon discovering them. It knew how precious seeds could be when its body of entities also consisted of former farmers.

"With the seeds in such a good condition, Master Jin, I guarantee you that upon retaking our lands, our farms will be one of the best, if not the very best in the multiverse especially with the help of the System!" Gold claimed with such confidence that everyone could feel the money-making vibe coming from him.

The objective to take back the Northern Region from the Demon Rats had just become juicier in the System's eyes (or sensors).

Chapter 905 Demon Rats' Elimination Proposal - Part 1

"Ahem. Master, these are all the files you asked about in regards to the castle remnants. We have yet to compile everything since it's the rats left behind a huge mess. There was literally shit all around the place, and they have no sense of cleanliness at all." Weslie sighed as she wiped her sweat away.

"I cannot possibly read while you guys wait for me to be done with that," Jin said as he took one of the files and flipped through the pages.

"Sure, you can!" Qiu Yue injected. "In fact, I insist you do, so we can get on with the agenda. Especially since you are their masters, it wouldn't be right if you are the only one unaware. But you will definitely piss off your Sub System Users and bellators if you don't hurry it along."

"Qiu Yue!" Lynn frowned her eyebrows as if to stop her incessant remarks.

"Relax, it's fine. He is used to my stark remarks." Qiu Yue pointed at Jin who had already gone back and was seemingly engrossed with the file right in front of him. Weslie had purposely created a summary of the castle's investigations that could enhance his current knowledge and placed it on top of the pile.

"He may not look like it, but when it comes to reading, his mind turns one track, and Jin will absorb whatever he reads. Though I think the process became more pronounced with the powers of the System."

The Red Panda Tactician was spot-on as Jin was using his Inverse Eyes to skim through the entire document and subconsciously picking up the important points. While he was not some boy wonder who merely needed to flip the pages being able to retain all the information, it was considerably fast enough.

"I think I got the gist of it. Weslie, thank you for compiling it. I will read it more in-depth later." Jin said as he closed the file after about five minutes and got to the next agenda. The discussion of their plan to eliminate the Demon Rats.

"We have previously done a series of full deep scans of the Northern Region courtesy of Peppers. While it has yet to be updated with the latest scan since she was busy aiding me, the data had been given to the System and Qiu Yue for analysis. They have come up with a plan that's viable now that we know the devices are working even better than ever. I shall give the stage to our tactician to explain more." Jin told them and took a set, while Qiu Yue came forward.

"First of all, I would like you all to give a round of applause to Weslie. Her completion of the Demon Rat lure device has proven very useful during Wecha's defence, and she has already managed to further improve the lure's range. According to the System's analysis, it should be at least two times more effective now. We have already recycled the older model and replicated a number of the newer ones, so they will prove useful in our elimination plan."

"After going through all the data about their number, their behaviour and their reproduction rate, we can safely say that they are nowhere close to their potential maximum growth. Unfortunately, we believe that with us proving to be quite the nuisance for them, they are likely to come back in even larger numbers."

"Don't they have like one place we can strike to interrupt their growth?" Ixel asked when he heard Qiu Yue's analysis results. He was thinking of using pure brute strength to wipe the Demon Rats away.

"The danger their hideouts pose will increase drastically based on their growth. While we did kill quite a fair bit of rats in the area, we estimate that they have already repopulated that number to continue as it is." Qiu Yue continued.

"Fortunately, what they lack now are resources. The Northern Region was said to be the lushest of all the regions with the most fertile grounds. However, the rats had rampaged to the point where they killed almost every single farmer that had the knowledge on how to cultivate such lands."

"If I may add based on Weslie's reports. They are using technology to grow their food based on the tools and samples they found within the castle. She suspected the North and South Scholars are helping the rats to a certain extent, but their limited knowledge on farming made it an obstacle to their progress rather than a boon. It's almost a miracle that we found the seeds safe room intact since they are desperate to get food supplies up." Jin, who continued to read the reports that interested him, said it out loud.

"Hah! That's great. I guess our raids on their towns' warehouses have been beneficial." Dread Reaper interrupted out.

"Not to mention, we took the human prisoners to safety. Or well, relative safety." Flame Ripper added. "Wouldn't it be better if we just teleport those humans to our instances?"

"The System never liked that. It still preferred talents because of the limited catching space." Jin replied as he shuffled another page of the reports.

"Hahaha! The System having a limited catching space? That sounds almost impossible." Wyrstriker said as he knew how much stronger Jin's army was compared to the first time they met.

"But in any case, I think by cutting their supplies, we might have actually been aggravating their methods to be even more desperate in regards to those they still hold in captivity," Wyrstriker added.

"It's not like it was wrong to raid their warehouses." Jin voiced his opinion out. "After all, if I might be so bold to say, but we gained excellent quality food supplies for our shop and to feed those Farming Humans and the other minions. The gold didn't hurt either, even if we gave out a good portion of it to support the Resistance. However, it is certainly true that in return, they slaved the humans in their capital even harder based on Sebastia's reports. That was also why she was quite concerned about saving the humans from the floating castle. After this major setback, I can't imagine it getting any better. But we couldn't really help it..." Jin had forgotten to thank Sebastia properly for continuing to spy despite the risks she had to go through after the Rats learn of their counterpart's mistake for letting the likes of her into the capital.

"This is a war, Master Jin. No war can be fought without both sides incurring any losses." Nubwort stated while looking at Jin.

"I know that. I have been thinking hard on this issue for some time now, and no matter what I try to come up with, there will be death involved. Nonetheless, I had accepted such a consequence, and while I can't always emotionally and physically mourn their loss, I sometimes wonder if there is a better way to do things." Jin said as he knew there was blood on his hands, be it direct or indirect.

"Still, I can't help but wish it would be different. Reality has proven that there will always be consequences from our actions, and I have been trying too hard to prevent and mitigate these... Deaths and misdeeds that I sometimes lost sight of the bigger picture. And it's because of these occasions that the grumpy old System did give fairly sound advice." Jin emphasised that he was not delusional.

Kill one to save many? Sure, he would love to do it, but the rats had already proven that they did not have any honour and would fight in any way necessary. If it looked bad, they would simply retreat instead of risking extermination.

With some experience and expertise under his belt, Jin would do whatever he could... as long as it was not at the expense of his new 'family' of monsters. As selfish as this statement could be, he was still just one human.

Chapter 906 Demon Rats' Elimination Proposal - Final

"I will do my best to help whenever possible and try to minimise the casualties. I am part summoner, part necromancer so we can at least try to help those who survive by offering them a second chance... even if it is under the System. I can only do so much." Jin said out, and his minions nodded their heads in agreement.

They knew that his control could be even more authoritarian, but he chose not to enforce it. There might still be some subtle influencing and indirect brainwashing from the System, but most of them could see that Jin was doing for the betterment of their lives. His actions spoke enough to allow Rex to regard this new master of his in a better light.

It did remind him when Panda Lord Zhou Lin ruled over the Panda Clan way before his resurrection and subsequent insurrection. But his former master had it easy. The Panda Clan had still been intact, and he had wealth and power to boot.

Unlike Zhou Lin, Jin literally started from scratch. The System he inherited had been in shambles, and yet somehow the dungeon supplier had managed to persuade the old relics to follow him rather than to control him.

While he had received some financial support from it, especially in the form of loans whenever he expanded, it amounted to nothing compared to the almighty trove of wealth that the Panda Conglomerate was famous for. Other Users who had a better System capability squandered it needlessly and subsequently gave up or died because of selfish reasons.

"So what are you going to do?" Rex asked.

"I will do my best... to follow the plan Qiu Yue has designed." Jin apologised for interrupting.

"Ahem, where was I? Oh yes. As I was about to say to counter their explosive growth, my Sub System has built up a multipronged approach to this delicate matter." Qiu Yue continued as she fiddled with her phone a little and a hologram of the Northern Region emerged in the middle of the conference table. Minion Leaders sitting at the side of the room immediately stood up so they could have a view of the hologram while the rest at the table squeezed a little to have a better view of it.

"Based on a predictive analysis of their supposed growth and building patterns of the hideouts, we have determined that there are over a hundred caves and camps that we need to raid." Qiu Yue said.

"Normally, doing that should be impossible. Even if we had enough soldiers to cover the ground, the enemies would suspect something amiss." General Nubwort voiced some concern, and everyone who possessed some experience in military leadership agreed on this point.

"But we aren't some normal army, right?" Wyrstriker smirked, and everyone knew they were going to depend heavily on teleportation and sudden strikes against the camps and caves.

"Yeah, you all got the idea. This plan is a little bit outdated since the Sub System only took into account of our forces prior to the Demon War. With the fresh troops that boosted our numbers by more than half, it will definitely ease up on certain restrictions." Qiu Yue nodded as she quickly amended the numbers, hoping the Sub System could give them a rough overview.

The hologram changed a little, and the percentage of success increased substantially on certain locations because of a blanket increase of numbers.

"Now, this is where I need your help. Although not all the military leaders are here, there is enough expertise in this room to give me some recommendations."

"The Night Foxes and me won't be participating since we have already agreed to help with the Demopolis Raid against the Triads." Kraft raised his hand to speak out his objection. "Though, I don't mind coming in personally to wreak some havoc if Jin asks nicely."

"You have the gall to make demands? The last time you said you would help out, that foxy ass of yours suddenly disappeared." Moloch reminded him not so subtly.

"Hmm? Was I supposed to let our precious Master suicide? Besides, didn't a certain Cotton Butt boasted that it was so easy peasy for him?" Kraft slowly leaned forward over the table and stretched out his arm to grab the unruly plush minotaur.

"Enough you two. We are here to give input. Do not make this meeting a waste of time." Rex chided his brother-in-arms and Kraft tsked before he quietly returned to his chair where he resumed being lackadaisical to the discussion.

Everyone except the Foxes was flabbergasted to witness that there actually was a person around who could hold the crafty fox's leash.

"Are you going to bring cultivators into the fight?" Lynn questioned both her Boss and fellow Sub System User, which caused them to look at each other. However, Qiu Yue let Jin take the stage to answer that question.

"I was planning to do that. However, the 'dungeon' setting will be focused on them attacking the capital instead of the caves and hideouts. I initially wanted them to do the reverse and have our minions attack Rat's city instead... but I realised the coordination would be too much of a hassle for not just me but the overall coordinating group and tacticians handling them." Jin replied.

"I agree with that course of action. To put it frankly, I think we have been holding their hands a bit too much during the Demon War Defence too." Qiu Yue added. "Nevertheless, it is partially our fault since the Pandapolis was at stake, which is why we had to be a little uppity on controlling their battle movements."

"They did put up a manageable fight against the free for all, especially the Pandawans." General Nubwort commented. "Though I do admit that their standard was really terrible if we had not stepped in to help them. Especially in the latter parts."

"Fortunately there were a lot of them, and they are definitely better than the average humans from our world and the Farming World's." Flame Ripper said which annoyed Gold a little.

"Hey, it can't be helped. Most of our humans are not soldiers to begin with. We have been forced to fight because of these rats. Before this infestation started, all the fighting had been handled by the soldiers like the guys from Northern Bulwark. And we only had the showing force to deter and not experience to back it up." Gold spoke with some temper in his words, and Weslie attempted to calm him down.

"Oh, sorry about that." Flame Ripper apologised quickly.

"Alright, calm down people. After this meeting, I will be creating an event to suit the Capital attack. With us now on the offensive, our customer's objective will be to bring down as many rats as possible, wearing them down while we occupy ourselves by freeing the smaller towns that are still under the control of the Demon Rats. This way, the capital should not be able to respond to our skirmishes while we have the chance to cut off supplies to and from their main capital." Jin decided, and everyone agreed that it was a viable plan.

After which, the entire group of minions crowded around the hologram and started to give their input on their monster group's capabilities, and Qiu Yue began assigning the workload based on the All-Out Attack Plan that they were making.

Finally, after multiple counts of defending the Farming World inhabitants, it was really time to get the plan up to go on the offensive so they could make preparations for a swift and impactful strike against the Demon Rats.

Chapter 907 Promoting Pandarens

While the minions continued to discuss what to add onto the current battle plan, Jin had requested the System to place a few large hotpots at the side of the hologram so that the group could continue to enjoy the same perks as their comrades. Although it has been designated a holiday for the monsters and bellators, they did not mind doing work this way too.

Even Rex and the other Foxes shared their own pot with the minions but they left earlier since they still had matters to attend to in the Dungeon World. With their group gone, Jin also used that opportunity to walk away since he would like to check up on how his new limited Nian Dungeon instance had been doing.

"System, how are the people's reaction to the new Panda Street Instance as well as the new dungeon instance?" Jin asked as he brought out a bowl of soup filled with piping hot ingredients he stole from the hotpot before running to the Dungeon Maker.

"As User had expected, there was an increasing number of people coming around 3am to 4am to play the new dungeon instance." The System stated as it was not expecting that many people to come, especially the younger ones.

"Well, I remember using the first night of Chinese New Year as an excuse to stay up as late as possible while younger with Gramps. So I figured that tradition was unlikely to change even now." Jin retorted as he was implying 'Shou Sui' or the tradition to stay awake in the night to be vigilant after the dinner of New Year's Eve.

Chinese folklore had it that people are afraid to sleep during the New Year because of a monster called Sui, which is coincidentally the monster known as Nian too. So, in order to let their parents be at ease, their children would stay awake to keep watch. Nowadays, it was only known as a myth where enforcing Shou Sui would increase their parents' longevity.

Most kids didn't care about the origin of this and were just happy about the convenient excuse to stay up late without any scoldings and accompany their family and friends till early in the morning.

"That must be why the Nian Dungeon theme concept is always so well received in many dungeon suppliers!" Jin noted as he checked on the customers who had already tempted the fights.

"Wow, I guess not only teens but our elders are up early as well." Jin thought to himself as he found Zi Dan, Jing Yu and Xia Mao being part of the few who recently bought the tickets for the limited Nian Instance.

The System had marked them as noteworthy, ever since the Salamander Keep Dungeon Instance where they led a number of cultivators out from a bind. They had also shown up on Jin's radar since they already attempted almost every sort of instance he offered. While their dungeon instance clear rate was not as fabulous as the Pandawans, they were clearly above average.

"System predicts that their main routine is unlikely to change after discovering User's Dungeons and Pandas. The trio has been included in their own set of constant participants. While they separated at times to indulge their friends, they always appear without fail to at least attempt a dungeon instance even if their fellow members are not present. There were only three occasions where they on an individual basis to dine with their friends."

"So, you think they are worthy enough to become new upcoming Pandawans?" Jin asked the System for its opinion.

"User's customer base only includes a few individuals who have received this title so far. Most of them have earned that title, even though some of them just happened to be part of the main clearers for our dungeons. People such as the Tortoise Cultivator who had accompanied the Ape Pandawan and the Swan and Stag Cultivator that had to accompany the Healing Maiden Pandawan." The System answered with a feeble attempt to mask their identity while making its point obvious.

Jin understood that the worthiness seemed to mostly focus about their presence and spendability inside his shop, and he had to agree that those mentioned, their dungeon records were not as stellar. However, he had no intention of revoking that Pandawan status especially since they were among the first few regulars he ever had.

"System feels the need to remind User about the conditions for accepting new Pandawans he himself has set. User had promised to make any team who managed a true first clear into Pandawans or alternatively one could obtain the position by clearing all normal story dungeons not counting whatever

the latest one is. Many customers have launched a complaint that the second option is too hard due to the Deep Ones Dungeon." The System argued.

"Fair point. So let's put it this way. As long as they manage to clear this dungeon, there should be no problem if we grant them such status, right?" Jin concluded, but both the System and Jin were aware that the difficulty of this particular dungeon instance was similar to Demon Santa Claus. Unless they could think outside the box within their first try, they would be annihilated swiftly.

"Hmmm well, I am feeling very VERY generous today, so I shall give them a helping hand this time around. They did spend quite a fair bit on my dungeons, and having a new set of Pandawans will show to customers that getting the Pandawan title is not flawed." Jin decided.

"System is amazed how coveted the title is despite User not offering any tangible benefits." The System remarked.

"Well, that might be the power of bragging rights at work. Also, it's not like they get nothing in return. ...the chance to try my dungeon instances earlier than others? Sometimes some insider tips?" Jin tried to think of something right on the spot, and the System was literally speechless.

Jin was referring to the Phantom Gentlebear Dungeon Instance, something which some have already ridiculed as a joke instance on the forums and the main reason he had secretly handed the tickets out was to appease his Pandawans for being unable to watch him fight after the disaster of being teleported to various parts of Pandapolis.

"Fine, you are right. It might be time to make that a permanent feature from this dungeon instance onwards. We could give them a special 50% discount for the early dungeon instance try. Or...something along the lines. I will try to think of some other perks to make it lucrative for others to join as well." Jin surrendered when he could feel the chills of the System's deafening silence in the air.

"System will review such benefits to ensure that the Pandawans have adequate recognition. Terms and conditions will be applied as well." The System stated as Jin hurried to switch the screen on the console to watch the progress of the Elderly Trio.

Even if he wished to give them a helping hand, he had no intention to make it too obvious, so he had to time it right to make it look like it was an apparent handicap.

"I wonder why the System is so insistent of making more Pandawans...could he be recruiting people to be part of the new Panda Clan?" Jin thought to himself but decided to postpone that thought as he concentrated on his soon-to-be Pandawans.

Chapter 908 Boarding The Ship

"Are you three registered as a group?" A Panda Sailor who was drinking on some bamboo juice asked the trio.

"Yeah. I'm Zi Dan, the Bullet Cheetah Cultivator. This is-" Zi Dan was about to introduce the rest of his team, but before he had a chance Xia Mao and Jing Yu merely pulled their Pandamonium Apps up to show their tickets.

"Well, go right in! We will be departing soon!" The Panda Sailor told them as he ignored Zi Dan's introduction since there was already enough 'proof' that they bought the tickets and registered as a group.

"OIII, didn't we agree that we were going for a more inclusive kind of experience?" Zi Dan complained with his eyes squinted at them with a tinge of despise.

"Showing the ticket is plenty inclusive enough already." Xia Mao retorted as he stepped onto the boat and saw there were many Pandarens all in their groups and waiting for the ship to depart. With the new revamp of the Shop Instance, they all felt that Jin was going for a more authentic and realistic experience of his dungeons.

The waiting time for the ships to depart and arrive on the port was also made quite realistic, and everything was moving like clockwork. Depending on the number of Pandarens in the vicinity wanting to try the dungeon instance, the ships also differed in size.

All three of them had seen how the crowd was when they first came in after dawn. Given the early hours, it wasn't a considerable amount, but Jing Yu figured it had to have been at least a few dozen. Thus when the ship came, there was nothing much to notice about except for the flashiness of the vessels.

However, when they were waiting for their turn, more and more Pandarens had joined them by the bay, enforced by the Panda Sailors and Panda Ticketmasters to keep them in line. (Obviously, a snake line queue was created with the aid of System's queue control.) And when the next ship was seen from the horizon, they did not expect a colossal ship, akin to the size of Titanic docking right next to them.

The blasting of the ship's horns, the seagulls following at the side of the giant vessel and the rushing of the sea waves had physically excited the cultivators. However, the most exceptional part of the ship was the exquisite decoration and the large paintings on the boat's side, which wowed almost every cultivator on the docks.

The docking was fast and swift for a ship that size, and the Panda Sailors who were ushering them in began to allow them to board on. Soon, everyone who had the Nian dungeon instance ticket was able to board while the others who had bought a different set of dungeon tickets had been directed to the avenues of the Great Panda Transport.

"Alright, last call! Last boarding call! The ship will depart in exactly one minute! Anyone not on board will have to wait for the next one!" the Panda Sailor shouted while an announcement was also broadcast through push notifications. Whether they could make it on time or wait for the next ship arrival would be entirely up to the customer's choice.

While it was tempting to let the Pandarens have access to the teleporting system once again, Jin felt that he should slowly phase it out and allow them to get used of the inconvenience.

He was not sure how much it would affect the customers as not everyone had the time in the world to do things, and accessibility would definitely be appreciated. However, he felt that there was a need to cut out certain things so that they could understand the beauty of the shop instance he created. (Of course, the System did help with the environment and pavement settings but it was still quite a bit of effort putting them together.)

Thus, he created a compromise which evidently disadvantaged those who decided to not follow the new set of 'instance behaviour'. He allowed those who were not queuing to have an instant teleport to the dungeon instance of their choice once the timer for the ships was up. However, they would not receive the major incentive for those who did the 'proper' way and waited for their turn.

After all, on the ship, the dungeon groups were not only given a feast spread worthy of praise, they were also allowed to hire Panda Mercenaries of their choice by speaking with the crew to hire. Jin had collected enough data to know how unbalanced the groups in terms of team fights could be.

Most if not everyone in the modern world wanted to go for the most offensive, most stylish way of fighting. This was because the current working model was to use the cultivation as a way to improve their quality of life, and cultivation became a hobby rather than a way of life.

Jin wanted to change that and thus created this Panda Mercenary Board where Panda NPCs could be hired for their expertise. The System had collected the necessary data from the Savants and thousands of fights to create a varied set of basic NPCs worthy to be used for dungeon instances.

As a nice bonus, this would not only block transmission of spiritual power from monsters to Pandarens but also allow the System to gather even more data on how the teams worked with NPCs.

Of course, this could not have been done without the creation of squadmates, the feature that Jin had exclusively allowed the Pandawans to test out. This was basically the third iteration of it where Jin tried to innovate and tweak it so it would be balanced. For the upcoming newer dungeon instances, the dungeon supplier had decided to place more emphasis on the 'holy trinity' party, where it was essential to have a balance of a healer, tank and attackers. That way, Jin would be able to create more fun dungeons and ultimately pave the road for the Virtual Reality Network.

With the exception of the new Spiralling Sewers Instance, the Pandamonium App would recommend for cultivators to hire at least a healer, and a tank for their group (unless their group had those bases covered) and each dungeon group could not exceed more than six people and needed a minimum of four for fights. Naturally, the difficulty of the dungeon would be scaled up as well with the increased number of Pandarens participating in the fight, so it would actually be harder for a bigger group to win.

While this was strictly enforced in the Nian Limited Dungeon Instance, Jin had decided to be more lenient for older dungeon instances and the cultivators, for now, were allowed to choose between 'old-school' and 'new mode'. The rewards for the latter would be more enticing, even if the difficulty was also adjusted.

The Three Elder Pandarens had no idea how the new dungeon instance format would be like since there were no large cinema screens to watch on the fly while waiting for their turn. And with the need to have a dedicated healer and tank also gave them the chills that Jin's dungeon instances might have gone up another notch.

"But let's not think ahead of ourselves and choose a good mercenary before the rest are taken." Xia Mao suggested as they were reading the new set of instructions in their cabins as the ship prepared to depart.

Chapter 909 Personal Rooms

The cabin they were in was something new too. Instead of a single bedroom which they all expected, it actually had split into three different rooms converting to a main common room within the cabin.

Jing Yu happened to see that the other Pandarens' rooms were the same as every single one of them was shouting from their main cabin doors how crazy spacious it looked.

Only through some interaction between the Pandarens did they realise that the cabins were actually split up based on the number of party members one would have, excluding the common room. Only through further inspection, did they all discover that the room was actually meant to be used as their very own personal private room.

The Elder Pandarens found how all their weapons, armour, clothes and miscellaneous items that they had stored previously in a separate locker had been transferred over. There was a little note where it stated that the room they were in would henceforth be their personal locker room.

No one would be able to enter without the owner's permission, and they could decorate the room in any way they liked. There were no fees to it and could always be accessed before a dungeon raid.

The same service was extended to include the plane rides, and in the future train rides too. To top it all off, Jin had already cunningly added an entire shophouse dedicated to customising one's hideout. It was operated solely by Red Pandas instead of the usual Pandas because it fell under the premise of Empire Building.

Qiu Yue initially wanted full customisation options to be available to the customers but Jin rejected the idea vehemently. "If we can monetise something, we should." Jin insisted as this personal room expansion was meant to provide more avenues to 'exploit' the Pandarens even more.

To get the shophouse rolling, Jin and Qiu Yue released the New Year Theme Set, and it would be an exclusive item reward for anyone who participated in his dungeon. To top it off, it would not be sold again in the future. He knew how games and various dungeon supplies companies had given in to removing the exclusivity on time-limited products and released more in the future, but it spoiled the collector's value. That was why he would remain adamant those would be of a limited quantity.

Claire had also created plans for starting an auction house in the future but seeing how Jin was creating the Virtual Reality Network she held back that thought for the future.

"No wonder Jin insisted cultivators to board the ship. From a free meal to hiring dedicated mercenaries in case we do not have the party members present to fulfil a certain role." Zi Dan said as he came out of his room and sat down in the common area.

"But this role thing is eating up quite a fair bit of panda medals and to an extent, real money too." Xia Mao placed his phone on the table, activating an app on the TV in front of them, which allowed them to choose who they wanted their Panda Mercenaries to be.

"Well... We could always go for the free one and increase its stats by feeding him a little more Panda Medals." Jing Yu was rereading everything again as she felt that this whole Panda Street Instance appeared to be a reboot of Jin's dungeons and how he was moving forward.

"Heh! There is also a service where they bring you the weapons and armour we missed to buy from the stores." Xia Mao said as he believed the catalogue was still the same.

"Does it charge more? It must be the case, else the shophouses would be kinda obsolete." Zi Dan came to the conclusion to his own question as he opened their mini-fridge and there were explicit items that said FREE and \$\$\$ on different levels.

"Yeah, roughly another twenty percent but that also includes the delivery charge. It seems to work like a pre-order too, so the price is normal if we do not collect it immediately and head to the store and get it later." Xia Mao vaguely remembered the price of a sword he was looking at and knew that what he was seeing through the screen was more expensive.

And unlike some shops, the app screen showed that there were additional charges on it.

"Welp, looks like Boss has more money traps to his dungeons." Zi Dan sighed, but they all believed there was still a balance in all the options he featured, especially if on budget.

However, they too know that this experience they were having was way too real that no other dungeon suppliers could have replicated such an amazing thing, so it was hard for them to fault Jin entirely given his price point for the ticket itself.

"I feel that if Boss Jin emphasises that there is a need for a Tank and Healer in this dungeon instance, that means the fights should be more intense than previously. We can't just be chugging potions endlessly even though they are more potent than most stuff out there." Jing Yu added as she checked her blades

"Yeah, and too bad those awesome potions are locked out with a spell and turned invalid if we try to bring them outside his dungeon instances. I would love to use it during my fishing trips to revitalize me." Xia Mao was seriously browsing through the mercenaries to see who had better stats and cheapest options.

"I understand that he does so in regards to the weapons but don't you find it kind of funny that he is applying such a powerful seal on simple chi potions? I mean there are dungeon suppliers out there that have their very own blacksmiths and alchemists who create customised stuff. They do not even put such restrictions on their own products as much as Boss Jin does." Zi Dan queried.

"They really must not want people to come and copy their stuff. I mean, come on, the new potions that the young researcher girl was selling are fantastic. We experienced first hand how the wounds closed faster than any other options available." Xia Mao replied while thanking Jing Yu again for demonstrating a wound cut in Yu Xiang's new Alchemist Store.

"Hmm...if that is true, shouldn't he export it out? He could be earning more money." Zi Dan casually commented but later on realised how impractical it would be in the long run.

"OH.. Oh... I see. my bad."

"That actually saves some explaining. And here we thought you had forgotten about your trading roots." Xia Mao sniggered, and Jing Yu shook her head with a smile.

"Yeah but no matter what, people will try to reverse engineer his stuff, after it becomes common knowledge how good it can potentially be." Zi Dan revised his statement, and the other two chuckled.

"All the more reason for him to try and make it as hard as possible to copy and prove that he is able to keep ahead of the competition." Jing Yu said as she heard a loud horn from the ship. The Pandamonium App had also pushed a notification that they had to rendezvous at the ship's basement for their departure to the Nian Dungeon Instance.

Chapter 910 Panda Mercenaries

"Ah, so you are my employers this time around?" A stout looking Panda with armour plates on his chest waved his arm as the three Elder Pandarens came down via the stairs.

"As expected from Boss Jin, his NPCs are truly lively." Xia Mao said as he raised his hand and shook the Panda's paws before the others did the same. The feeling was somewhat extraordinary and Jing Yu being an old lady requested if it was okay to hug the Guardian Panda.

"I don't mind, but you might want to hug my comrade instead, she has less armour on her." The Guardian Panda chuckled upon Jing Yu's request as another Panda came out. Slightly smaller in build but they could obviously see that she was the healer of the team.

"Heala at your service." The Panda Cleric introduced herself with a small bow.

"Ah, my bad. Tanke at your service too. Nice to meet you guys." The Guardian Panda noticed that he forgot to state his name.

"It's funny how the names should be the same throughout the teams, but the experience would be vastly different." Zi Dan had a small smile on his face as he shook Heala's paw too.

"Boss Jin is probably too lazy to make up new and unique names for each one. That or maybe he is truly hoping the names would stick with the cultivators." Xia Mao replied.

"Heh, and he probably does not want people to think these NPCs are useless in a fight. If all the NPCs with the same name are basically clones, then it's probably up to us cultivators to discover how to use the NPCs properly in a pinch. Then again I've read that you can customise the free one and even name him or her once we 'bonded' enough, so maybe he wants us to lead us down that road." Zi Dan added as they saw a Panda Sailor beckoning them.

Upon closer inspection, the Pandarens found out there was a boat awaiting them at the side of the basement. The ship subsequently opened its side hangar door, and water started to flow in. However, the flow was controlled, and there was a barrier that prevented any more seawater from entering.

"Hop on! There is a navigator compass on the motorboat that will point you to your destination. We are not able to move in any closer because of the possible risk of the Nian that has been sighted knowing of our location." The Panda Sailor told them as he passed a flare gun as well as a few firecrackers.

"Take these items. The flare gun should only be used if you clear the dungeon instance. That way, we will be able to come and fetch you back to the ship. As for the firecrackers, take them as a bonus. A part of the ticket fare and they might prove useful."

The Panda Sailor subsequently winked at them and helped them get onto the motorised boat. He also gave a quick crash course on how to operate the boat to Xia Mao before telling his mates to lower the boat.

"Do you really know how to operate that thing?! I do not wish to get stuck in the middle of the sea!" Zi Dan questioned, and Xia Mao shook his head.

"There is always the option of rowing the boat." Xia Mao said as he pointed at the oars. "If you are so scared of me 'commandeering' this boat, then row the damn boat yourself."

"Enough yapping and start the motor already." Jing Yu said as she knocked Xia Mao's head for being so childish despite being so old.

"Argh, yes Mdm..." Xia Mao said as he started the motor, but they had no idea that the motorboat had such high horsepower that the boat nearly flew upon taking off. Tanke immediately held onto Jing Yu and Zi Dan as he could see they got almost blown off by the powerful start of the motorboat.

"I AM SORRRRRRY! I HAVE NO IDEA IT'S THAT STRONG!?" Xia Mao shouted as loud as possible to overcome the overwhelming buzz noises from the motorboat. At the same time, he was freaking out to check if there was a way to control the power of the motor. However, no matter how he tried to pull, push or even turn the handle, the motorboat was not slowing down at all.

Hence, he told the rest to continue to hold tight while he focused on getting them to the shore. Yet, the navigator compass was pointing right, as if blatantly telling Xia Mao that it was wrong to head straight.

"Should I trust the compass?!" Xia Mao asked as he already had trouble manoeuvring the boat with such high speeds and pulling a sharp right might potentially cause the boat to overturn. "Damn it! Screw the compass!" Xia Mao decided as he tried to hold steady as the motorboat sped through the waves.

Yet when they came closer to the island, they saw a beast already waiting for them at the shores. With a ferocious body of an ox, menacing head of a lion, red bloody scales of the dragon, there was no doubt what the creature awaiting them was.

Nian.

"WHAT?! We are fighting the boss straight up?!" Zi Dan asked loudly, but Xia Mao was too much in a panic to do anything else. The only way was to sail straight up because why not? They literally had a speeding battering ram that should be able to do significant damage if that proud beast did not move out of the way. And if it did, they should be able to come to shore.

Yet, Nian roared to welcome its prey, but the Pandarens did not expect the waves to start moving more violently. It was as if the waves were under its commands to the point that the speeding motorboat was slowing down from its speedy advance.

"Since when are Nians able to control the seas?!" Xia Mao complained as he tried to wipe his face from all the seawater splashing at him. "I thought they lived in the mountains or something?!"

"I remembered there was a part of the legend where Nian lived under the sea before it got hungry and ravaged the villages!" Jing Yu answered as she was desperately trying to hold onto the boat with the raging waves. If not for Tanke's help, she might have already been swallowed by the sea itself.

"Then how are we going to reach it if we are getting pulled away by the waves?" Zi Dan asked.

"Maybe that's why the compass was telling me to go right! Just before this beast appeared from nowhere!" Xia Mao admitted as he now tried to look at the compass... only to discover that it was spinning crazily as if it was being affected by Nian's tidal wave powers.

"I will provide a path!" Heala shouted as she had just finished chanting her support spell, Protect. But instead of casting Protect on the Pandarens, she placed it on the boat allowing it to cut through the waves and finally gain some speed once more.

"If we can't go right...then we go straight in!" Xia Mao announced as he held onto the motorboat's engine handle, hoping that it could push them further and straight into the island.

As long as they manage to land safely, there might be a chance to come out of the situation alive without being suppressed by the tidal waves.