Empress 671

Chapter 671 Your Time Is Extremely Precious (3)

After a bout of busyness, he took away all the most valuable knowledge from these ruins, intending to go back and decipher them slowly.

Apart from the knowledge, he only took one souvenir, a tawny brooch he saw when he first entered the ruins. Its style was simple, and its design unremarkable, so Roland dismissed the idea of giving it to Lisa and casually pinned it to his chest.

After all, he'd made a trip to the ruins; it would be unlucky to leave empty-handed. He simply decided to take this seemingly ordinary, yet ancient brown jade brooch as a trophy.

As he walked out of the Earth Court, he happened to see the Rock Elder lying on the ground, bored and catching worms to pass the time.

He hadn't expected the old fellow to actually wait, feeling a bit embarrassed.

"Rock Elder, I'm really sorry. I was busy inside for almost a week, making you wait so long."

Roland greeted the Rock Elder with a smile.

The Rock Elder stared blankly at Roland and finally couldn't help but make a remark, "Northern traveler, you might not have much of a concept of time down there. According to human timekeeping, you only stayed below for about ten hours."

Ten or so hours?

Roland instinctively thought the Rock Elder had misspoken. After all, the Centaur tribe didn't have clocks and might not have a concept of time.

But he quickly thought of another possibility, which was the true mystery of the Earth Court.

Altering the flow of time.

He smiled and brushed off the topic, reaching for his pocket watch.

Just as the pocket watch was about to be taken out, a flash of memory struck Roland's mind.

No, this gold watch was given by Sif, and Sister Lisa had given a silver watch!

Roland, almost causing a blunder, with a flick of his wrist, pulled out the silver watch from another pocket.

This watch not only had the hour and minute hands, but also a date counter that reset every month.

The date displayed when entering the ruins was 2, and now it was 8.

Clearly, it was indeed a week.

A week is 144 hours, whereas the Rock Elder thought the time spent was about 14 hours.

Simply put, every hour outside equates to ten hours inside.

The flow of time altered.

This is a perfect place for time-consuming research.

The Rock Sage didn't dwell on this issue. He saw the brooch on Roland's chest but didn't inquire.

Just a small item, it's fine as a keepsake.

He really wished someone could pick up the three Holy Artifacts, but sadly, no one did.

He led the way in front, with Roland and Lisa following behind.

Earlier, while Roland was busy, Lisa was beside him, eyes closed deep in thought, silently practicing magic manipulation, without disturbing him.

Thinking about his sister accompanying him for a week, Roland couldn't help but hold her hand gently and say, "Spending a whole week with me in this gloomy setting, it must have been hard for you, sister."

"Not hard at all."

Lisa snuggled up to Roland, smiling pleasantly, her voice as soft as a whisper.

"Roland, when I'm meditating I don't have much sense of time, but it doesn't seem more than a day. But that doesn't matter. I never thought you kept that pocket watch all along."

Uh, is that where her attention is at a time like this? Roland was a bit speechless.

She's not concerned about the tenfold time flow, but about whether the pocket watch taken out was a silver one?

Indeed, women's points of interest are quite different.

Roland shrugged, just about to brush off the doubts, when he suddenly thought of something.

Perhaps only his flow of time was different.

Looking down at the tawny brooch, he vaguely felt that this unassuming little thing might actually be the true Holy Artifact.

Chapter 672 - What Is Cruelty

The experience of being a guest at the Tolsen Tribe was very pleasant, but the time spent was rather long, and Roland finally bid farewell to the warm-hearted Tolsen Centaurs.

After repeated attempts to persuade him to stay, the Centaurs realized that Roland was determined to leave, so they could only see him off with a grand ceremony.

When Roland requested the privilege of entering the ruins for practice at any time, they readily agreed.

Compared to what the northern travelers had brought to the Tolsen Tribe, what were mere ruins?

After leaving the Tolsen Tribe, Roland and Lisa continued southward. In the following half month, they passed by three more Centaur Tribes, two Fishman settlements, and several South Continent human settlements.

These settlements weren't as gentle as the Tolsen Centaurs.

The further they got from the Ogaden Line, the lower the level of civilization.

Compared to the Ironhoof who were good at observing and understanding, the Centaurs further south were a bit reckless.

They rushed in to rob without a word, only to be beaten up and left picking their teeth off the ground.

Roland didn't kill anyone, but necessary punishment was indispensable.

Since the highest etiquette for Centaurs was lying prostrate, he made them lie prostrate on the ground, crying out loud.

These Centaurs were indeed tall and strong, but they seemed as immature as kindergarten children in front of Roland.

Because they were so weak, Roland didn't even have the mood for bloody revenge.

A normal person wouldn't kill kindergarten kids for minor offenses, at most, they'd just catch and spank them.

After he left, a legend was left among the Centaur races: do not provoke the northern people sitting in carriages, especially if the horse is white.

Thus, Roland freely toured the South Continent aboard Eden.

He and Lisa appreciated the beauty of Nature, enjoying food, scenery, and each other in every deserted magnificent landscape they fancied.

Roland gradually forgot the purpose of this journey, even abandoning the attempt to spread knowledge and ideas in the South Continent.

When a group doesn't even have its own written language, spreading knowledge is too difficult.

When effort and reward are disproportionate, fools may feel they haven't tried hard enough, but smart people laugh and walk away.

Roland certainly wasn't a fool.

Spreading compulsory education in the South Continent is important, but that's something for the Demon Emperor's subordinates to do.

This is the domain of the Dark Influence, and he wasn't kind enough to help his enemies build their foundations.

Roland's footsteps continued southwards until entering the territory of the South Continent ape-like natives.

These ape-like creatures, with long body hair, had intelligence development between humans and monkeys, could use simple tools, had their own language and writing, could use fire for cooking, and had human traits.

But they also liked living in trees, had long hair on their bodies, did not engage in agricultural production, and relied entirely on hunting and gathering for daily life, even to the extent of cannibalism, making them totally incompatible with mainstream civilization.

The Rodinians didn't want to accept these beings as of the same species as themselves, racking their brains to find the correct term for the southern apes from historical texts.

Yehu.

Yehu is a neutral term, first traced back to the early Age of Gods, when high-level intelligent beings called the newly enlightened humans Yehu.

Originally, this term had no derogatory sense, but as early humans were wild and backwards, high-level intelligent beings' term for them gradually took on a derogatory meaning.

Later on, when high-level intelligent beings referred to humans, they could emphasize the term Yehu, further adding insult.

After humans rose to prominence, the term Yehu was sealed away, becoming an absolute taboo.

Using the insulting term Yehu for a civilized person is akin to a racial slur.

This term was once sealed away, but when the southern apes also called themselves human, the Rodinians were enraged, urgently needing a term more aggressive than Barbarians, thus the ancient name Yehu was reactivated.

In the Second Era, high-level intelligent beings called the then primitive hairy blood-drinking humans Yehu.

In the Sixth Era, the now civilized humans called the equally backward southern apes Yehu.

Perhaps it was a cycle.

During their first encounter with the Yehu, Lisa looked at the long-haired children standing by the road with curious eyes, casting a friendly smile and offering a few slices of bread.

Perhaps they weren't as barbaric as legends said? Lisa silently wondered.

After all, they belonged to the Homo genus, considered distant relatives of northern humans.

They were backwards, they were ignorant, but the goodness of humanity was still interconnected.

Roland didn't stop Lisa's fantasies and actions, he merely smiled, even joining Lisa in feeding the little Yehu, as if visiting a wildlife park.

At night, they found a quiet lake to stay by.

The lake wasn't very large; you could see the opposite shore at a glance, but the water was as clear as transparent glass, with the ripples at the bottom clearly visible.

Reaching out to touch it, the lake water was refreshingly cool, with shimmering waves.

Lisa loved it here.

She set up a protective magic, isolating outsiders, turning the place into a private bathing area for her and Roland.

She enjoyed the gifts of nature to her heart's content, forgetting herself; even when exhausted, she didn't want to return to Eden, preferring to set up a tent by the lakeside to listen to the gentle birdsong.

"Dear brother, I still prefer the real nature; Eden is nice, but it always feels like a delicate and fake little toy, not real."

Eden is a backup of this world, but after all, just a spare, not the real world.

Chapter 673 - What Is Cruelty (Part 2)

Even a Super Divine Artifact pales in comparison to the magnificent world.

Roland fully agrees with Lisa's viewpoint.

He recalls Biosphere One from another world. No matter how much effort is made to replicate it, it remains a clumsy imitation of Nature.

The essence of Eden is a Super Divine Artifact version of Biosphere X.

If it's just about true Nature, this serene small lake casually outshines Eden.

Roland holds his sister, who is dressed in a lace nightgown, admiring her shy expression, thinking about the soul-shaking collision just now, and the fire in his heart reignites.

He is about to kiss her, to continue this dreamlike night, but suddenly stops in his tracks.

Lisa, who has long since closed her eyes, waiting for the night's complete sleep-deprived revelry, notices Roland has stopped.

She opens her eyes in confusion and softly murmurs, "Tired? Then let's rest early."

Rest early?

To say such a thing at four in the morning is indeed quite absurd, but Roland can't bring himself to laugh.

After all, disturbing someone's sleep is a very bad behavior, and these uninvited guests even brought weapons.

"Sister, wait a moment, let me go kill a few people first." Roland's voice is cold, full of rage at being interrupted.

No one can stay calm in such a situation.

Indeed, humans can be cruelest to each other. No, they aren't humans; they're Yehu!

All the way south, the Centaur Tribe, whether savage or more savage, only plots for money, and they don't even plan to steal everything; they just want to collect exorbitant tolls.

But the Yehu are different.

They approach with rough stone spears and poisoned arrows as if they are on a hunt.

They not only want Roland's horse, Roland's car, but they even want Roland's life.

This is the first time Roland has developed a killing intent towards members of a backward race.

Beating up kindergarten kids certainly brings no sense of accomplishment, but if a kid smiles and slips poison into your bowl, any normal person would be bent on killing.

These Yehu really have a death wish.

The first magic alarm device is activated, and Lisa senses the enemy approaching.

Her face turns cold as well.

At four in the morning, maliciously approaching a sleeping camp with weapons in a surrounding formation—this is not just ill-intentioned, it's downright an attempt at robbery and murder, or even...

Courting death!

She bites her lip, her face ashen, thinking that she should be soaring in Roland's embrace, only to be interrupted by a bunch of damn hairy monkeys. The anger in her heart is imaginable.

She grabs it casually, and the Mage's robe is already worn.

Lace lingerie is exclusive to Roland; even a dead man has no right to peek.

She holds Roland's hand and says coldly, "Let me do it."

Listening to her voice filled with killing intent, Roland doesn't plan to persuade her, only softly reminds her, "Don't make a move by the lake."

Lisa exhales a breath, only nodding silently.

This beautiful small lake should indeed not be tainted by the blood of monkeys.

"Teleportation Skill!"

Lisa activates the first magic, triggering the Teleportation Array to send the dozens of surrounding Yehu to a small valley a few kilometers away.

This small valley has only a narrow exit, making it very suitable for killing.

With a tip of her toes, her silhouette disappears into the night.

Although Lisa slaughtering a group of Yehu poses no technical difficulty, Roland still follows.

It's a matter of attitude.

He doesn't plan to help, even thinking that only a few dozen Yehu aren't enough for Lisa to vent her anger. He has to hurry and restore his strength to comfort Lisa's disrupted mood.

The Yehu will never know what a terrifying existence they provoked. They only find themselves teleported to some unfamiliar place, no longer by Yeguo Lake Shore.

The leading Yehu chirps and shouts, as do the other Yehu, as if they're communicating something.

Roland guesses they might be discussing the reason for their action's failure, or praying to their god, if they have one.

But this doesn't matter, because they are already dead people.

The sky suddenly brightens.

The Yehu look up in horror, seeing a massive fireball illuminate the sky, and let out piercing screams.

They are foolish, but not truly stupid, as they obviously understand what a massive fireball brightening the night sky signifies.

Of course, there are the truly stupid ones, even kneeling Yehu who repeatedly bow and pray, as if it signifies the prelude to a divine descent.

The leader Yehu sees Lisa floating in the sky and shouts in broken human language.

"No, don't attack, we don't know each other, there's no grudge!"

Lisa bursts into clear laughter, don't know each other and yet come to kill in the night?

The fireball grows ever larger, like Lisa's anger gradually condensing.

The Yehu leader knows he can't delay any longer and hurriedly calls his people to flee along the illuminated path of the fireball.

He has been to this Nameless Valley before, knowing the only exit is to the west.

The Yehu leader shouts blubbery noises as he speeds towards the mouth of the valley.

Stimulated by the choice between life and death, he hurdles obstacles and sprints, his running speed embarrassing Bolt, astonishing Liu Xiang.

The other Yehu can't run as fast as the leader, but they are also racing against Death.

Creatures' fear of fire is etched in their bones; of course they are afraid.

The Yehu leader charges toward the exit, beating his chest with his hands, even has time to glance back at his lagging fellow tribe members.

He jumps high, wanting to break through with the most dashing move.

He crashes into it!

His agile body is bounced back by an invisible wall.

Condensing air into a wall, that's the principle of Force Field Magic, simply called an air wall.

Lisa didn't create an ordinary air wall, but one heated to a scorching level.

The Yehu leader yelps in agony from the burning, looking at the massive descending fireball, he weighs his options and roars at the sky.

"Northerner, you cannot kill me, I am an official being cultivated by the Dark Demon General, to kill me is to offend the Dark Demon General!"

He's forced to bring up the Dark Race's name, though afterward, he might be dismissed, imprisoned, or even hanged as a warning, but at least he doesn't have to die now.

So long as there's life, there's hope!

The will to survive is a biological instinct; even a Kapibara wants to live, especially the deceitful and vicious Yehu.

Lisa pauses for a moment at the Yehu leader's words, then her anger intensifies.

Oh, you have someone backing you? But I have no one above me!

Lisa's voice is exceptionally authoritative, as if delivering a verdict.

"In the Name of the Magic Empire Empress, I grant you the most painful death, Hellfire!"

With her angry denunciation, the giant fireball descends, exploding into a dazzling blaze.

The fireball bursts in the air, transforming into countless flaming fragments, burning, howling, spinning as they fall.

Embers hit each unfortunate Yehu evenly, clinging to their bodies, starting to burn slowly.

This is a specially adjusted version of Lisa's magic.

It won't burn them to death immediately; it starts at rare and moves on.

The burning affects both body and soul, the pain is fifteen times that of normal fire.

Screams resound continuously; even the strongest person can't endure it.

Lisa's hand trembles slightly, looking at the hellish carnage below in the small valley, her expression freezes.

What is she doing?

Is she still the person she was before?

Of course, murderous robbers must face the death penalty, but civilized people shouldn't take pleasure in torturing prisoners.

The death of the Yehu isn't what bothers her, it's that she was ruled by rage, losing her rationality.

Lisa slightly bows her head, clenching her palm, then as she opens it again, dozens of fiery missiles fly from her palm towards the valley.

With another bout of liberating screams, the flames gradually extinguish, and all the Yehu perish.

"Roland, do you think I'm a bit cruel? I..."

"Cruel? Sister, you are too kind. If it were me, I would show them what true cruelty is!" Roland's expression is somewhat terrifying.

Lisa looks at Roland with some worry, but after a few seconds, she bursts out laughing.

What was she worried about?

Even if the whole world detests her, in Roland's heart she's still the beautiful and gentle girl next door.

He may not agree with cruel slaughter, but he deliberately says these words to lighten her mental burden.

Even as the most authoritative man in the whole Rodinia Continent, or even the world, he's still so gentle.

Lisa's gaze becomes all the more tender, inner anxiety replaced by tranquility and joy.

Tonight, the moonlight is truly beautiful.

Just as she's daydreaming about a 1.3-million-word romance novel, she'll never guess Roland's real thoughts.

"Fuck, these bastards interrupted my good time, damn it!"

Chapter 674 The Enemy’s Descendants

There were truly too many Yehus.

Continuing southward, all Roland saw were these hairy barbarians.

Thinking of how the pioneers of the Sussex Empire had to deal with these uncivilized barbarians while establishing colonies overseas, he momentarily didn't know what to say.

But that era has already ended.

After reaching an agreement with the Dark Race, the major countries of Rodinia would orderly withdraw from the South Continent.

The indigenous people of the South Continent thought the colonizers were bloody and savage, didn't they? Then let them deal with the truly bloody Dark Race.

If we want to be strict about it, the Dark Race are the real natives of the South Continent, whether hairy Yehus or foreign colonizers are all later arrivals.

Thinking about the scene of the Dark Race's iron-blood rule over the Yehus, Roland momentarily didn't know whom to pity.

He didn't consider himself a good person, nor did he want to confront the Dark Race head-on to save the Yehus. At this time, the rule of the Dark Race had not yet fully descended, so it was a good opportunity to travel across the South Continent and see this beautiful yet absurd world.

Just when Roland was about to prematurely judge the South Continent as a land full of barbaric, stupid, and uncivilized apes, he unexpectedly discovered a magical human subspecies.

This human subspecies lived inland, heavily surrounded by the territories of Yehu chiefs.

Their appearance was very close to that of Rodinian humans, with skin tones more akin to Caucasians and Asians, standing out among the brown-black-skinned Yehus around them.

What surprised Roland even more was that the language these people used was a variant of the Earth Spirit language from the Third Era.

Although their beliefs were completely different, and their way of life had drastically changed since the Third Era, Roland was very sure these people were descendants of Earth Spirits.

After all, being former arch-enemies, they knew each other too well.

The Earth Spirits also recognized the damned elf aura on Roland, and they received him distantly yet politely, exchanging goods with him but firmly refusing Roland's request to visit and lecture.

Their reason was simple: the sons of Titans did not wish to engage with the descendants of elves.

Though unwilling to have in-depth exchanges, Roland was, after all, a rare customer in recent years who was both generous and polite, and they maintained at least basic respect for Roland.

Faced with these polite and courteous yet distant and cold individuals, Roland didn't mind much, as Earth Spirits were inherently a proud race.

Though they were on average shorter than humans, they insisted on considering themselves as descendants of Titans.

They were handsome and beautiful, different from the stocky and solid Dwarfs, more like proportionally smaller humans.

Earth Spirits were naturally capable of using special skills of the Earth Element and could build magnificent cities underground, having a way of life completely different from humans.

As the last Great Sage of the Elf Race in the world, Roland represented the elves, and the Earth Spirit Race and the Elf Race were mortal enemies. However, as time has passed and they've both fallen to this state, tangling in matters from countless years ago held no significance.

The reasons for the enmity between Earth Spirits and Elves were somewhat absurd.

Elves revered nature; they enjoyed planting trees, especially super ancient trees, ranging from War Ancient Trees, Wisdom Ancient Trees to Golden Ginkgo Trees capable of creating seas of flowers—they loved these huge towering ancient trees.

Everything about ancient trees was good, except that their roots reached particularly deep, and they absorbed nutrients even from hundreds or thousands of meters underground, to say nothing of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium two meters below.

However, Earth Spirits loved living underground, and their constructed Underground Palaces detested these pervasive-rooted giant trees.

The roots of these giant trees would destroy their meticulously built structures and affect their primary food, Earth Heart Worms, and underground wheat.

Originally, there was a chance for reconciliation, after all, the number of ancient trees was limited. As long as effective communication took place, compromises could be made when planting trees and building houses, avoiding each other's core zones.

But both were proud races. Why would they make peace with despicable tree planters or filthy tree destroyers?

They didn't believe they would lose to their shameless enemies.

War erupted.

During the war, the wise men of both sides proposed reconciliation to the ruling authority of their tribes more than once. But the war had already claimed too many lives of their tribesmen, hatred had already escalated and couldn't be eliminated.

They spared no effort to cause trouble for each other and destroy each other's living environment.

As long as they detected Earth Spirits building cities underground, the Elves would unhesitatingly plant trees with the most developed root systems above.

Elves even cultivated a kind of red eucalyptus tree with loose wood, non-fruit-bearing, with extremely fast-growing roots and a huge destructive impact on the soil.

The sole purpose of this tree's existence was to find trouble for the Earth Spirits.

A forest of red eucalyptus trees could turn an Earth Spirit city from a livable urban area into a place with a terrible living environment.

Earth Spirits, naturally unwilling to concede, bravely emerged from the underground to form logging assault teams to carry out destructive attacks on the meticulously cultivated ancient trees of the Elf Race.

Moreover, they prepared special alchemy potions to systematically destroy the underground root systems.

As long as they could disgust the other party, they were willing to do anything.

The strength of the Earth Spirits and Elves was close, their reproductive abilities weren't considered very strong, and their military standards were also similar, so neither could completely annihilate the other.

Should one side produce an extraordinary military genius, they could gain the upper hand temporarily, and then the other side would also produce a super talent to regain the disadvantage.

Both parties tangled until the Divine Punishment Legion descended.

They both failed.

The potential and strength of the Magic Empire were not necessarily stronger than that of the peak eras of the Elves and Earth Spirits, but they excelled at unity, could integrate various forces internally, and externally could reach alliances with Transcendents, which is why they were able to defeat the Divine Punishment Legion head-on.

Chapter 675 The Enemy’s Descendants_2

Although this is a tragic victory that lost post-war dominance, it at least preserved a spark of hope.

If the Elves and Earth Spirits hadn't antagonized each other but instead developed separately and united against the Divine Punishment Legion, they definitely could have achieved results more glorious than the Magic Empire, possibly even annihilating the Divine Punishment Legion.

But unfortunately, this world doesn't deal in hypotheticals, only results.

The Earth Spirit descendants kept their distance and Roland had no reason to be overly friendly, so he proposed to leave.

The Earth Spirit official responsible for hosting was very courteous in sending him off, offering local specialties to avoid letting Roland leave empty-handed.

The Earth Spirit descendants demonstrated the estranged politeness with their actions.

Just as Roland was about to leave, suddenly someone called his name loudly from behind.

"Great Sage Roland, please wait."

Roland turned around with some curiosity.

This was the first time he heard the rounded tones of Third Era Elven Language in these days.

The Earth Spirits and Elves are arch-enemies, they know each other very well, so it's normal for Earth Spirits to speak Elven, and Elves to be fluent in Earth Spirit Language.

But they were reluctant to use each other's language in communication.

They most enjoyed mastering the other's language proficiently and then finding faults to criticize harshly.

Over time, using the other's language became synonymous with lowering oneself to ask for something.

Roland was very curious to know what the Earth Spirit Race wanted from him.

The Earth Spirit host guiding Roland was even more surprised, hardly believing his eyes.

"Wise Man Kromi, why have you come?"

The sage known as Kromi was relatively short among the Earth Spirits, appearing to be only around one meter forty.

Though his hair and beard were white, he was still spirited and ran like a flash of lightning, clearly showcasing his strength.

Roland never doubted the Earth Spirit descendants had formidable experts.

Given their survival amid the predators of the South Continent, it was natural they had hidden strengths, with their limited population only protected by advanced equipment and outstanding personal abilities.

Roland smiled and greeted Sage Kromi, "Sage Kromi, if I'm not mistaken, your strength should be at Gold Level, what you can't handle, I'm not sure I could either."

Kromi's smile stiffened slightly, and his speed decreased a bit.

He sighed lightly and shook his head with a smile, "Great Sage Roland, you jest. If our tribe still had Gold Level, we wouldn't be besieged by a swarm of monkeys."

"If you don't mind, I have a pot of good tea I'd like to share with you."

Tea-sharing?

The Earth Spirits once had territories on the surface but were consistently suppressed by the Elf Race. As their relations completely deteriorated, the Elves, supported by the War Ancient Tree, treated the Earth Spirits as moles, beating them whenever they showed up.

As surface territories were lost, the Earth Spirits lost their source of tea leaves. Their favorite daily beverage gradually became a luxury only the elite could savor.

Offering tea to guests is the highest hospitality in the Earth Spirit Race.

No matter what Kromi wanted, such a grand welcoming ritual was something Roland would not refuse.

Unless he intended to perpetuate the old animosities.

Currently, it's known there are only a handful of Elves remaining, and they exist in forms nearly identical to humans.

The Earth Spirit population is slightly larger, but they barely maintain their existing territories, surviving by the skin of their teeth.

The former world dominators have ended up in such states, what's left to contest?

Roland displayed a "stunned by the honor" expression, responding in the most standard official Earth Spirit Language, "Thank you for the Sage's hospitality."

Both paused momentarily, simultaneously reminiscing about the early days of interspecies contact.

At that time, the Earth Spirits and Elves were not world dominators, with the world still ruled by the descendants of the Three Goddesses.

The Earth Spirits and Elves, being marginal races, could only reside in unwanted corners.

The Elves lived in forests, the Earth Spirits mainly underground, with neither interfering in the other's affairs, while complementing each other in many domains, maintaining a relatively good relationship.

The races of the two civilizations naturally sought mutual respect during interactions.

Both Elves and Earth Spirits earnestly learned each other's languages, proactively using them in interactions to express respect.

It was an idyllic era.

All of this gradually ended as the progenies of the Three Goddesses lost world domination due to incompetence, with multiple factions contesting until the Earth Spirits and Elves seized the reins.

After a brief period of dividing world domination, new disputes arose.

To whom did the Third Era belong, Elves or Earth Spirits?

It's a good question, one that troubled both major civilizations throughout the Third Era.

Today, Roland and Kromi closely resembled the careful, tentative contacts of their early ancestors.

Roland's voice softened, yet it was filled with undeniable resolve.

"Sage Kromi, regardless of how many hostilities we had during the Third Era, the parties involved have passed, and hatred should not persist; I wish to return to the initial understanding between our races."

Kromi's expression turned complex.

He had wrestled with this decision for three whole days, finally making up his mind to compromise, while Roland made the same decision in an instant.

Kromi, even at compromise, you lost to the Elves; know your shame!

Kromi didn't expect Roland to actively lower himself, offering an exit, freezing momentarily before responding, promptly lowering his stance further, courteously motioning an invitation to Roland.

"Great Sage Roland, you are right, please forgive our recent coldness, I will do my best to make amends for your disappointment."

It's refreshing dealing with civilized people.

Throughout his journey, Roland had met many tribes filled with the wild beauty, initially finding it novel, but eventually longing for Rodinia.

No one could spend their life in a wildlife reserve.

Were it not for the journey continuing, he'd almost want to turn back home.

If arrogance was set aside, the Earth Spirits were indeed the most hospitable hosts.

Kromi not only arranged the finest tea, pastries, and dishes for Roland but also had young men and women perform music and dance for the distinguished guest.

At the climax of the welcoming ceremony, two handsome teenagers, about sixteen, presented olive branches and floral crowns to Roland and Lisa, respectively.

Even Roland felt this was somewhat extravagant this time.

This level of welcoming ceremony, he'd only read about in ancient texts, never witnessed in reality.

In the slightly simplistic reception hall, now left with only him and Kromi, he couldn't help but ask: "Sage Kromi, your enthusiastic welcome gives me some pressure; if I can't fulfill your request, it would be awkward."

"You certainly can. It's a significant matter for my race, but for you presently it's just a matter of lifting a finger."

Since Kromi clearly understood the disparity between their forces, Roland was also at ease.

He smiled, setting down the teacup, and softly said, "Sage Kromi, please speak."

"I've had enough of living next to this bunch of monkeys; I want to relocate. I wish to move my race away from this godforsaken place, and if you're willing to accept us, we'd like to be neighbors with your people again, as initially."

Though stated subtly, Kromi's old face blushed red, repeatedly fiddling with his beard, trying hard not to appear like a beggar.

After all, it's about asking Roland to accept them, he's inevitably embarrassed.

This is all?

Roland, without hesitation, extended his right hand, formally inviting, "Sage Kromi, on behalf of the Sussex Empire, Jin Yuan Republic, Vladimir Empire, Val Free State, Tirol Kingdom, and New Magic

Empire, welcome you and the wise Earth Spirit race. You may choose to reside in any of the aforementioned nations, and I will arrange the best land as an autonomous territory."

"You and your people can enjoy the highest level of autonomy based on compliance with the laws of the respective countries and the Rodinia Alliance, and your people will also have complete citizenship rights. How about that?"

Kromi was so moved that his eyes turned red.

He presently just longed to give his race a chance at survival, never daring to hope for the luxury of autonomy.

Roland offered him an enormous surprise.

He took a deep breath, held Roland's right hand with both hands, just about to touch it with his forehead, when Roland preemptively wrapped his left hand over Kromi's hand, suggesting a gesture of a handshake with close comradeship.

Kromi lifted his head in astonishment.

This signified that Roland was willing to accept the Earth Spirits as allies, even before Kromi was able to touch his hand, Roland had already taken the step to shake his hand warmly.

With evident emotion filling his eyes, Kromi declared with a firm voice.

"Sage Roland, no matter how many hostilities we faced during the Third Era, all those concerned are gone now, and hatred should not be perpetuated, I wish we could return to the state of initial acquaintance between our two races."

Chapter 676 - 382: Fire Wall

Face is something mutually given.

Right now, the Earth Spirit Race is struggling for survival, not at all capable of striving for domination.

All Kromi wanted was space to live, yet Roland gave him so much more, how could he not reciprocate.

His promise was akin to subtly placing the Earth Spirit Race in a subordinate position.

Kromi's informed discretion greatly pleased Roland, making this somewhat shriveled little old man appear quite dignified in his eyes.

Having seen enough barbarians, civilized people appeared especially valuable.

With the agreement reached, Kromi once again enthusiastically invited Roland to stay for a few days, and naturally, Roland couldn't refuse.

Although this run-down place had none of the grandeur from the Earth Spirit Race's heyday, face still had to be given.

The hospitality this time was not as formal as before, with fewer protocols but a bit more closeness.

Kromi, who hadn't drunk in many years, even brought out a jar of white liquor saved from the end of the Sixth Era to share with Roland.

With a few drinks down, Kromi, fueled by alcohol, began to speak words he usually wouldn't.

There are too many Yehus, they cannot be killed off!

Kromi grumbled indignantly.

Perhaps because the Third Era saw them utterly defeated by the Divine Punishment Legion, or because they were cursed for eradicating the Goddess' Favored, the Earth Spirit Race's already unreliable ability to reproduce was further weakened.

Despite the tribe's consistent and strenuous efforts to encourage childbirth, the Earth Spirit Race's population never exceeded a million, and now has dwindled to less than three hundred thousand.

Reflecting on their peak when they shared dominion of the world with the Elf Race, having fallen to such a state, Roland couldn't help but sigh.

But he quickly thought of the Elf Race now reduced to only a handful, and the words of comfort froze on his lips, turning into self-deprecation.

"Kromi the Wise, you at least still have hundreds of thousands of people, with a stable living environment there's still hope, but my people, at best, only number a few now, it should be me envying you."

Kromi widened his eyes at Roland, carefully discerning whether Roland was lying, and after confirming Roland was not joking, he couldn't help but shake his head and quip: "I assumed you came this time to rescue the Southern Elves."

"Southern Elves?!"

This time, it was Roland's turn to widen his eyes; he could hardly believe his ears.

"You truly didn't know?"

Kromi sighed lightly, saying forlornly: "Perhaps not seeing them was indeed wise of you."

He recounted the tragic plight of the Southern Elves.

The Elf Race, too, was a major target of the Divine Punishment Legion, and their end was even worse.

Because of their handsome men and beautiful women, after their complete defeat, the Elf Race became slaves to the Divine Punishment Legion, primarily providing services not aimed at reproduction.

The Divine Punishment Legion of the Third Era was severely damaged in suppressing wars, unable to continue executing tasks, gradually disappearing, and this leftover Elf Race continued living with a blood soul curse in their bodies.

"Now they are unrecognizable, their former splendor lost, do you truly intend to see them?"

Kromi looked at Roland with some unease.

Roland picked up his glass, downed the strong liquor in one gulp, and said word by word, "No matter what they've become now, I will bring them home."

"I am the only current Wise Man of the Elf Race, I have the duty to take care of each member. Kromi the Wise, please tell me the current situation of the Elf Race descendants."

Kromi hesitated for a moment, then took out a crystal ball from his pocket, holding it with both hands, and handed it to Roland.

Roland knew this was the Elf Race's last ember, not daring to slack off, he quickly stretched out both hands to solemnly receive it.

Lisa, knowing Roland was emotionally stirred, placed her hand on the crystal ball first, giving Roland a reassuring look not to panic before infusing it with magic power.

Roland took a deep breath, striving to calm his emotions.

Though all were memories from long ago, the fact that he was a Wise Man of the Elf Race would never change.

The final return was drawing ever closer, and past grievances through several eras would come to an end.

As he observed more, Roland began to realize that many inter-clan grievances stemmed from those three demigods unworthy of ascending to the Divine Domain.

He wanted to uncover the truth behind it, to find out why they, and not Frosty Winter, the Sea Emperor, and the Demon Emperor, ascended to divinity back then.

In terms of strength, realm, and the mindset of a strong person, clearly it was the three from the defeated group who deserved it more.

Previously he boldly speculated that the ascended trio were chosen for being weaker in ambition and strength, planning the future based on this point, but after all, it was just speculation.

The surviving descendants of the Elf Race, once enslaved by the Divine Punishment Legion, perhaps held more clues.

Roland felt more grateful to Kromi, as he had the well-being of his clansmen on his mind, he didn't linger for a moment and quickly took his leave.

Kromi understood Roland's feelings, knowing well the conduct style of Roland, who was the current Wise Man.

Toward enemies, he was ruthless and unfeeling, yet toward friends and family, he still retained warmth.

Fortunately, he finally settled the stubborn old ones in the clan, turning enemies into friends with Roland, securing a ticket.

The Earth Spirit Race had long declined, and pride in a fallen clan meant nothing, yet the old ones in the clan stubbornly clung to ancestral customs.

News of Roland's southward journey had spread long ago, and the Earth Spirit Race had convened many meetings to discuss how to respond.

Kromi was the youngest Wise Man in the Hall of Sages, far younger than the old ones who were often over five hundred to a thousand years old, being only two hundred and fifty himself was still considered young and tender.

Initially, the old folks had decided on intercepting and killing Roland.

Kromi was nearly amused by these old fogies' sudden whim.

He directly asked, "Between Roland and the Yehu Commanders, who is stronger?"

Though filled with animosity towards the Elf Race, the Sages couldn't lie blatantly that Yehu was stronger, and had to speak truthfully.

Chapter 677 - 382: Fire Wall Fire Wall_2

Kromi didn't spell it out in the following words, but everyone understood.

Even Yehu Commanders couldn't get past the Earth Spirit Race, so what could they use to intercept Roland?

In fact, Kromi knew, as did these old fogeys, that they understood the comparison of strength, they were just being stubborn.

Even if their strength was lacking, they had to act as if they were still capable of fighting, otherwise, they'd lose face.

When Roland personally came to visit, these old fogeys still displayed a lukewarm attitude, nearly causing Kromi to faint from anger.

If it were the era when Earth Spirits and Elves contended for dominance in the Third Era, he wouldn't bother with the affectation and wouldn't show any favorable expression to the Elf Race Wise Men.

But the era had changed.

The Elf Race, though in decline, produced two exceptional talents.

Whether it was Roland or Sylph, as long as they appeared in the South Continent, they could easily save their people.

The Earth Spirit Race had no such young talents, and they had declined.

Whether willing or not, this was the truth.

Kromi decided to bow to reality; even enemies were a type of relationship. After Earth Spirits and Elves finished their love-hate journey in the Third Era, they both started declining. Even if Earth Spirits lived gallantly, Roland might even lend them a hand.

Yet, the old grunts in the race couldn't let go of their ridiculous pride, driving Kromi to utter fury.

Seeing Roland about to leave, he couldn't afford to waste time and acted directly.

He decisively initiated a coup, making several old Wise Men "step down for the good of the people."

There was even one old Wise Man who refused to step down gracefully, died of a "cold," and had a passive graceful exit.

Kromi acted quickly, barely managing to seize control before Roland left, thus having the opportunity to rush out urgently and swallow his pride to secure a future for the race.

Though compromising with the Elf Race was somewhat humiliating, Kromi believed that in the future history of the race, he would have a heavy and colorful chapter.

He was not young; he needed to consider his historical position and the race's future.

Those old folks who prioritized pride over the race's future must be swept into the rubbish of history.

Thinking about having to preserve the big picture and cover for these old grunts in historical records made Kromi feel his blood rush to his head.

Fortunately, everything was on time. Next, he still had to persuade the conservatives to take care of the big picture, head north together, and prepare for a great migration. This would be the migration of three hundred thousand clansmen, even with Roland escorting them, meticulous preparation was a must.

May everything go smoothly.

"May everything go smoothly."

Approaching the location of the Elf Race descendants, Roland felt a subtle anxiety, whispering quietly.

He was not making a wish, merely soothing his inner unease.

For some reason, he always felt the situation would be worse than Kromi described.

Lisa sensed Roland's nervous mood, held his hand, and comforted him softly: "Don't worry, as long as we are here, everything will get better."

Hopefully.

Roland took a deep breath, urged the unicorn to speed up, and continued forward.

The unicorn charged toward the Elf Race territory at maximum speed.

Entering the dense forest, Roland imagined countless ways of meeting, like an arrow piercing the clouds, a cold and stiff Elf Forest Ranger blocking the path, or a valiant Female Hunter riding a Moon Blade Beast to obstruct.

However, there was nothing.

No people, no War Ancient Tree, no Moon Blade Beast, nor any piercing arrow.

It felt like a completely unguarded empty city.

Just as Roland felt increasingly uneasy, the forest finally stirred.

What greeted him was not Elf Archers, Female Hunters, nor Elf Mages, but a group of furious ancient trees.

They uprooted themselves, attacking the enemy!

The forest erupted, countless giant trees turned into War Ancient Trees, surrounding Eden.

"Invaders, lay down your weapons, surrender immediately!"

A booming voice echoed from the forest.

Roland breathed a sigh of relief; fortunately, there was still defense, indicating that the Elf Race was merely downcast, not entirely doomed.

He willingly stepped out of Eden, quickly recognizing the leading ancient tree.

Identifying the ancient tree was not difficult—the blue barked trees were War Ancient Trees, green barked trees were Guardian Ancient Trees, and the closer the bark was to gold in color, the higher the tree's status.

The golden ginkgo tree at the highest position among the ancient trees was the core of the Flower Sea.

Roland's gaze locked onto the central golden tree, solemnly stating, "Respectfully, forest partners, I am the contemporary Wise Man of the Elf Race, ordered by the Empress to bring you home."

Contemporary Wise Man, Empress, going home?

These words left the ancient trees bewildered; they had no clue when the Elf Race had an Empress, nor recognized the so-called contemporary Wise Man.

A young ancient tree, full of doubt, inquired of the leading golden ginkgo tree, "Elder Ruder, those elves are already our servants, so where did this Empress come from?"

Roland's expression instantly changed.

No wonder Kromi said the state of the Elf Race was indescribably bad.

It was unclear whether that guy was unaware or unwilling to say too much, skipping the most critical part.

The golden ginkgo tree was also annoyed; the young forest partner, with no shrewdness, revealed everything in front of the crafty outsiders, exposing themselves on the spot.

Before he could explain, Roland on the other side had already taken action.

Elf Sylph had once detailed the history of the Elf Race's decline to him.

At that time, the Elf Race was indeed declining, but not at a rapid pace. The Ancient Tree Disaster severely accelerated the downfall of the declining Elf Race chariot.

Ancient trees with independent thoughts were extremely dangerous, history had long proved this point.

This wasn't some revival match; it was clearly a nostalgia server, and it came with a full replica, including the Ancient Tree Disaster.

Since these ancient trees had already overturned the heavens, enslaving the Elf Race, Roland didn't bother wasting words with them.

"Lisa, act!"

He shouted loudly, while simultaneously raising the Holy Light Shield to protect Lisa, who was about to unleash a massacre.

No one understands forest destruction better than a Fire Mage.

At the moment Roland issued the command, Lisa, who had been prepared for a long time, had already taken action.

"Fire Wall!"

For cumbersome and flammable explosive units, the fire wall is the best choice.

The fear of fire in trees is a memory ingrained in their marrow, even if they become intelligent ancient trees.

The golden ginkgo tree, watching the instantly ignited flames, was forced to retreat by the scorching heat waves.

Of course, it was unwilling to wait for death, calling for surrounding partners to scatter while summoning distant Elf servants for protection.

The sound of footsteps arose, countless members of the Elf Race appeared swiftly.

Despite Roland wielding the Sage's Staff to prove his identity, the elves still launched their attacks regardless.

Seeing their empty eyes, Roland knew they were already controlled, unable to act independently.

He didn't want to harm any tribe members; after all, they were controlled.

But he also didn't want himself or Lisa to get hurt.

Watching the ignited forest and the smoke and flames rising skyward, Roland knew Lisa was going all out to burn the trees.

He didn't urge Lisa nor wield his sword against the tribe members, instead, he raised the shield again.

Even though he acquired the [Vanguard of the March] tier at Tier Five, gaining strong attack power, the essence of a Holy Knight is still a hexagonal profession with defense surpassing offense.

Unmoving like a mountain, he blocked between the Elf Race members and the fiery field.

Arrows rained down on him, with the Holy Light Shield raised high, the clinking sounds resembled raindrops hitting a window, yet penetrable they were not.

Swords and daggers shone, he inserted the shield into the ground; a shield wall appeared out of thin air, forcibly blocking the charging Elf Race warriors on the other side of the wall.

The Female Hunter riding the Moon Blade Beast appeared.

Roland's long-cherished Elf Race ace unit was dispatched.

The spinning Moon Blade flew toward him, producing a piercing screech, fiercely striking Roland's shield.

No less than an ace unit, their strikes were harsher than Elf Archers; the shock caused by the Moon Blade absorbed mostly by the shield, yet still, a portion was conducted to Roland.

Looking at the Female Hunter leader's cold eyes, Roland's lips curled slightly, even in a smile.

The Female Hunter leader was slightly taken aback, a thought flickered in her chaotic consciousness.

"What is this foolish human smiling at?"

If Roland could hear her doubt, he would surely laugh heartily and reply that he was happy his tribe's strength was still intact.

But his smile lasted only half a second before it vanished.

Those damned ancient trees, after four eras, still plaguing the tribe.

Burn them all, burn!

Chapter 678 - Victory!

Lisa flawlessly executed Roland's decisions.

Her Fire Wall completely encircled the Ancient Trees, followed by the descent of the Inferno.

After segmenting the battlefield and turning the slow-moving target into a semi-fixed one that could only circle in a small area, Lisa finally showcased her hard power with ease.

As a Flame Mage of Tier Five extraordinary position [Scorching Flame], she represented the pinnacle of same-level flame magic power and the ceiling of flame control precision.

To burn a forest doesn't require high temperatures, but the flames must cover a wide area and ignite quickly.

Lisa flew into mid-air, unfurling fiery wings, her body curling up and enveloped in flames, which from afar, resembled a gigantic firebird spewing flames in the sky.

This was her method of setting the forest ablaze.

Flames, more flames, swifter flames.

With a clear long cry, Firebird Lisa flew over the forest, leaving behind only blazing woods.

"This forest will burn in the wrath of my flames, and you shall burn in your own fat!"

Lisa taunted as she flew by.

Although these Ancient Trees were on the verge of destruction and taunting them seemed pointless, it made her feel good, and that was enough.

Passion belongs to the Flame Manipulator, to the child of flame soaring in the sky.

Amid the wailing screams and the crackling of burning wood filling the air, the inferno consumed these once-arrogant Ancient Trees.

The Ancient Trees possess extremely resilient lifeforce; as long as the core remains, they can regenerate even if shredded into pieces.

The core fears no blades, no pressure, no freezing, but it's vulnerable to high temperatures.

Before the Fire Mage, Ancient Trees are nothing more than a pile of talking firewood.

Since when do Chefs fear firewood?

Lisa is the finest Chef, the best Fire Mage, and seeing firewood only delights her.

As the cores of the Ancient Trees burned away, the Elf Race individuals controlled by them gradually regained their senses.

A Female Hunter, who was about to throw a Moon Blade at Roland, suddenly halted. She stared blankly at the smiling Great Sage, terror and anxiety engulfing her calm.

She quickly knelt down on one knee, trembling, apologizing to Roland, "Great Sage, I..."

"I understand, you were deceived. Gather over there. I will save the other tribesmen!"

The Elf Race possesses a unique method of identification, capable of discerning identity and status through each other's aura. The Great Sage must possess tribal leader certification, the Sage's Staff's blessing, and the Philosopher's Stone recognition.

Having all three means exuding the aura of a Wise Man from within.

The Empress is the same.

Before Sif and Roland awakened their memories, identity was hard to discern; now there would be no mistakes.

High-level identities in the Elf Race are impossible to impersonate; they either are or aren't, with no room for deceit.

The Female Hunter, awakened from the Ancient Trees' control, followed Roland's order to retreat, but she didn't stop right away. Instead, she coated a special agent on the Moon Blade and then threw it towards the forest.

Thinking of being mentally controlled by the Ancient Trees and wielding a weapon against the tribe's last Great Sage, the Female Hunter's anger and fear were uncontrollable.

She must do something to calm her heart.

Those damned Ancient Trees were the perfect targets to prove her loyalty.

Since these Ancient Trees bore no innocence, the Female Hunter showed no mercy. The thought of the noble Elf Race being controlled by those damned trees fueled her anger.

She shouted, leaping from the Moon Blade Beast, slashing at the Ancient Trees from the closest point not engulfed by flames with a blade of vengeance.

As the Ancient Trees kept falling, more and more of the Elf Race awakened from the nightmare.

They raised their weapons and manically launched vengeful attacks against the Ancient Trees—venting anger, avenging grievances, and proving loyalty to the Great Sage.

The Ancient Trees fell one after another, their resistance insignificant, unable to change the situation.

After all, they were just Ancient Trees, not a World Tree beyond the scope of Ancient Trees.

Ordinary flames, lethal to Ancient Trees, couldn't harm the World Tree at all.

However, even the last World Tree was destroyed in the Elf Race's civil war, unable to offer shelter.

As more Elves awakened, the battle finally turned in their favor.

Although the magic-depleted Lisa could no longer maintain the Firebird form and was forced to return to the ground, unable to launch Flame Magic in the short term, the Elves' awakening filled the gap in offensive power.

The Elf Race doesn't favor flames, but they have their methods for dealing with trees.

Nature Magic includes vibrant Healing Magic and Withering Magic that brings all things to a standstill.

Withering Magic stripped the Ancient Trees of their last mobility and defenses, sapping their thoughts and consciousness, turning their final struggles into jokes.

With the core of the Golden Ancient Trees turned to ashes, the last of the Elf Race awakened from the nightmare.

The Elves controlled by the Golden Ancient Trees included the Speaker, the Grand General, and the High Priestess.

The political structure of the Elf Race has remained almost unchanged for countless ages.

The highest power is held by the Elf King/Emperor. The chief ministers directly accountable to the Emperor are the High Priestess, responsible for divine and internal affairs, the Speaker, responsible for legislative and judicial powers, and the Grand General, responsible for the military.

Among these three, one is chosen as the Chief Minister based on the situation, while the other two hold equal status with the Chief Minister but must fully support their work.

In small groups without an Emperor or Elf King, the High Priestess typically manages overall affairs.

However, as the Elf Race's faith in the Moon God received no miracles for a long time and the Moon Well gradually dried up, the High Priestess's status declined, with the Speaker usually assuming the role of Chief Minister, and during war, it was the Grand General.

Chapter 679 - Victory! (Part 2)

The last Elf race on the South Continent has long been at war with various Yehu around them, so the ruler is the Grand General.

Because the population of the race has been reduced to only three hundred thousand, many positions are dual roles, and the Grand General is also the leader of the Female Hunter Unit.

As the individual with the highest status and the strongest combat power, the Grand General is naturally controlled by the Golden Ancient Tree through the most stringent means.

In the battle just now, she continuously attacked, causing the greatest damage to Roland.

Looking at the blood seeping from the corner of Roland's lips, the Grand General was silent for a long time, then suddenly raised the Moon Blade and slashed at her own neck.

Her movement was so fast that if Roland had not been constantly observing her unstable mental state, it would have been too late to stop her foolish action.

Roland's thrown sword precisely deflected the Grand General's Moon Blade, preventing her suicide but not completely stopping her self-harm.

The bloodstain on her neck was clearly visible, sharply contrasting with her fair skin.

Roland rushed forward without hesitation and slapped her hard across her charming face.

"Fool! If I wanted you dead, I would have acted just now!"

"I do not allow anyone to harm my kin, not even you!"

Roland sternly reprimanded.

His voice was extremely severe, with a hint of painful regret in his words for unfulfilled expectations.

The Grand General paused, picked up the Moon Blade, and swung it towards her face again.

This time Roland did not stop her, intuition told him that a smart person would not do foolish things twice in a row.

He was just a bit curious about what she was up to.

The Moon Blade flashed like electricity, passing before her nose, strands of green hair falling like snowflakes.

Sure enough, it was the old move of cutting hair as a substitute for a vow, Roland breathed a sigh of relief, secretly giving the Grand General a thumbs-up.

He hadn't expected her to even know how to do this.

Just as Roland was thinking about what words would both reprimand the Grand General and reassure her submission, the Moon Blade rose again, blood spraying onto Roland's face like scattered red plum blossoms.

The upper half of her pointed ear was precisely cut off by the Moon Blade, even forming a beautiful arc similar to the contour of Roland's ears.

Elves' ears are sensitive, with dense nerves and exceptionally acute sensation, this cut felt several times more painful than any other place.

The Grand General furrowed her brows slightly but endured without making much noise, only letting out a restrained hum from her nose.

"Sinner Aivir pleads guilty to the Great Sage."

Looking at Aivir's ear, which was still bleeding, Roland couldn't help but sigh: "You need not do this, protecting the kin is indeed the duty of the Great Sage, you and the kin were all controlled by the trees, helpless, there's no need to overly blame yourself."

As he spoke, a milky white Holy Light surged from the palm of his hand, drifting towards Aivir.

He was a Holy Knight, with great control over Holy Light.

He simply did not worship the Goddess of Light, but not lacking belief in Light itself, thus he could still skillfully use Holy Light.

He did not acknowledge the so-called Goddess of Light Tiya, the fact that such a person could ascend to a Light Divine Position spoke volumes of its low gold content.

After separating the Goddess of Light from Light Attribute Power, Roland's command over Holy Light became increasingly skilled.

He knew this was the power of Divine Cutting, but Christine did not think so, she was delighted, believing it to be the reward of Roland's increasingly devout faith.

In this regard, Roland remained silent.

If Christine knew he gained power by cutting ties with the Goddess of Light, she would most likely explode mentally.

The power of belief is always so obstinate.

Roland wanted to heal Aivir, yet she instinctively stepped back, even wanting to evade.

She was a pure Elf, how could she accept treatment other than through the Moon Well and Natural Magic?

But she was guilty for offending Roland, and grateful for his forgiveness, though internally conflicted, she had to grit her teeth and pinch her nose to accept.

Seeing her conflicted expression, Roland of course knew what she was thinking.

After completing the treatment, he raised his right hand solemnly and declared: "Companions, our kin are now few in number, henceforth, no self-harming acts shall be permitted. Aivir, you are the last one."

"As you command!" Even the proudest Elves dared not meddle in front of the Great Sage, everyone responded in unison, including the singled-out Aivir.

The Elves secretly eyed Roland, silently speculating about his thoughts.

Roland surely wouldn't let them overthink, briskly issuing orders while they were emotionally unstable.

"Everyone listen, I'm giving you half a month to gather your things, and follow me north, to return home!"

The word 'return home' carries an indescribable powerful appeal for the wandering and homeless.

The emotional surge triggered by these words even surpassed the shock of the Great Sage's appearance.

From now on, they would be people with a home.

After the Elves cheered without regard for their image, Roland raised his right hand again, seriously adding: "This time I not only want to bring you home, but also bring back the Earth Spirit descendants to the north."

The Elves fell silent.

Earth Spirits are enemies of Elves, this is a memory engraved in their bones.

Even though both Elves and Earth Spirits have declined over time, this deeply rooted memory over millions of years remains unerasable.

The Elves looked at each other, at a loss for words.

If not for the Ancient Tree Disaster being resolved by Roland beforehand, they would surely have jumped up to oppose, but this time the entire Elf race had been saved by Roland.

Without the Great Sage, the Elves would've ended the final era as mere tree slaves in disgrace.

Elves are stubborn and proud, yet they also know how to repay kindness, they would never oppose the savior and the current sage of their race.

Tradition versus reality, yes or no?

The answer in the Elves' hearts is no, but they understand that Roland needs a yes, so they chose or.

Silence can sometimes serve as a voiceless protest.

An unspeakable awkwardness spread among the crowd.

Seeing the situation heading towards an irrecoverable direction, Grand General Aivir had no choice but to step out to represent the kin and remind Roland.

"Great Sage, are you referring to the Earth Spirit Race of the Third Era that has been at odds with our race for countless millennia, with blood debts aplenty?"

"Yes." Roland calmly replied.

Aivir fell into deeper silence.

She had given Roland a chance to provide explanations or even deceive, but Roland rejected it without hesitation.

Roland knew what she was thinking, but once a lie starts, it cascades limitlessly.

To cover lie A, one must create lies B and C, then more lies to cover lies BC, and so on. Eventually, the lies will be uncovered.

Why tell lies when they will eventually be exposed?

Roland understood the Elf race, as long as their pride is satisfied, everything is negotiable.

He smiled as he introduced the current dire situation of the Earth Spirit Race to the Elves.

"Their current plight is lamentable. As once mortal enemies, I do not wish that we fought against incompetents throughout the era."

Roland was shifting the concept, some perceptive Elves noticed this, but some were convinced by Roland's words.

The Elf's historical status is likely to be linked with the Earth Spirit.

If the Earth Spirit was a bunch of losers, then what does it make the Elves, who were evenly matched with them?

Even those determined that Roland was shifting the concept found this point irrefutable.

Though they were aware Roland replaced "the Earth Spirit of the past were world rulers" with "the Earth Spirit of now are losers" to create a fixed impression, they had no grounds to dispute it.

The public does not wish to trace back history and provide a fair evaluation of the Earth Spirit.

They merely continue to disparage the Earth Spirit while attacking Elves along the way.

Seeing everyone fall into silence, Roland quickly seized the momentum, continuing to state the benefits of taking in the Earth Spirit.

Firstly, the Earth Spirit Race and the goddess and her lackey Divine Punishment Legion are mortal enemies, irreconcilable.

Secondly, taking in the Earth Spirit Race confirms the outcome of the Third Era's duel of the twin spirits.

The Elves won.

The majority of Elves accepted Roland's statement.

They may not fully agree, but they had no choice but to accept it.

Only Aivir felt a sense of melancholy, softly sighing: "We too were rescued by you, it's not really a win."

"Who said so? You were saved by the sage of your own race, am I not an Elf?"

The Elves' spirits were lifted.

Indeed, Roland was their sage, not the sage of the Earth Spirit.

They indeed won, and they won brilliantly.

Chapter 680 - Stay Out of Big Shots’ Business

Within the Elf Race, there are still disagreements about migrating northward.

The true elders hold power within the race and do not want to lose it by moving north.

They intended to use the opportunity to negotiate with Roland to consolidate their power, but Roland saw through their schemes clearly.

Roland couldn't be bothered to waste words with them and directly contacted Aivir, asking her to relay a message to these opportunists who couldn't distinguish occasions.

"Migrate within half a month; whoever doesn't will miss their chance."

Roland didn't even plan to accompany them on the migration.

He entrusted the heavy responsibility of organizing the migration to Aivir, which also meant he was entrusting important power of the race to her.

After all, she is extreme, but her loyalty is beyond doubt. Whereas some of the old elders are only loyal to personal interests.

He didn't want to comment on these shortsighted elders, nor did he want to compromise with them.

Faced with Roland's trust, Aivir was stunned for a while, her eyes reddened slightly, and solemnly accepted.

In her view, as the temporary leader of the race, not only did she lead the group into a ditch, but she was also controlled by the Ancient Tree Demon, turning against the Great Sage, an unforgivable crime.

Even if her crimes were forgiven, the ultimate outcome would be removal from office and possibly lifelong imprisonment.

However, Roland not only pardoned her crimes but also continued to use her heavily, how could she not be exceedingly moved?

"Great Sage, I..."

"You have erred, but your loyalty is evident. This is your chance to atone."

Roland's voice was gentle yet carried an undeniable firmness.

"Remember, you only have this one chance."

Although he valued Aivir's loyalty, Roland was equally skeptical of her ability. Indeed, she had led the Elf Race down a wrong path, even a dead end.

Though the Ancient Tree Disaster was vaguely mentioned in the Elf Scriptures, granting intelligence to the Ancients Trees was explicitly forbidden by clan rules; she surely knew this.

Roland had no desire to question her, as he could completely predict what Aivir would say.

She would claim that she was forced into it, that the race had reached a dead end, and so on.

Excuses for failure belong to the weak; the strong fear nothing.

Aivir was indeed loyal, but she was also weak.

He had some concerns about letting her lead the team north alone, so he asked sternly:

"What if Yehu blocks the road during the migration?"

"Take down the first person blocking the road with thunderous means to deter other eager fools; eliminate anyone who dares to stop us!"

Aivir's answer was resolute and powerful.

Roland nodded, indicating his satisfaction with the straightforward response.

He continued to ask, "What if Centaurs block the way?"

"Same strategy as with Yehu, hit the first batch of provocateurs hard." Aivir's eyes shone with a fierce glow of a desire to kill.

"What if they ally and attack from both sides?"

"Then split our forces and take them out!"

Aivir answered decisively.

Just after speaking, she seemed to feel this answer was somewhat blunt, and quickly added:

"The race's armed forces are relatively weak, splitting up would dilute strength. It's better to unite, first defeating those closest before attacking the farther group."

To prove she wasn't talking nonsense, Aivir elaborated confidently to Roland, "Respected Great Sage, there are conflicts between the Centaurs and Yehu, I don't believe they can coordinate well."

"Simultaneous offense from south and north, requiring intricate coordination for a pincer attack necessitates high-level command skills and perfectly trained troops."

"They cannot achieve this!"

Aivir said confidently.

Roland was somewhat surprised, quietly adjusting his assessment of Aivir.

Though she might have been rash and done foolish things while acting as the interim leader of the race, she indeed had some expertise in her professional domain.

At least in the field of military know-how, she wasn't useless.

Roland nodded, then began shaking his head.

Aivir's smile froze on her face; this was a lifetime's learning and experience accumulated from long struggles to deal with Yehu and Centaurs, how could it be wrong?

Despite the reluctance in her heart, she maintained a humble posture.

In the presence of the Great Sage, one must maintain humility.

She lowered her head and said softly: "Respected Great Sage, my abilities are limited, please grant me wisdom."

Roland smiled and asked, "I fully trust your abilities and believe your tactics are sound, but what about the cost?"

Aivir fell silent.

She could understand Roland's concerns; the race now only has a few hundred thousand people left, including a good number of the elderly, women, and children.

Although the battle strength per Elf is decent, even among the elderly, women, and minors, their combat capability may not compare with the prime-aged adults.

If too much non-combat population is lost, it would affect the race's revival.

She couldn't figure it out, then suddenly realized Roland mentioned having the Earth Spirit join them on the northward journey, and she suddenly understood.

"Great Sage, I understand."

"Speak your thoughts?" Seeing Aivir's eyes filled with confident wisdom, he felt relieved.

He somewhat had a preconceived notion about Aivir. Perhaps she had abilities, but due to the decline of the race, she couldn't change much.

However, Aivir's next words froze his smile and made him want to retract his praise.

"Respected Great Sage, are you suggesting I utilize your authority to order the Earth Spirit Race and make them cannon fodder?"

Roland: "..."

He couldn't help but ask, "How does sage Kromi's political acumen and strategy compare to yours?"

Although reluctant to admit, Elves pay close attention to their nemesis, the Earth Spirit Race, and are very familiar with the young talents and strong figures among them.

Kromi's level of strategy far surpasses hers.

Despite disliking the Earth Spirit, Aivir did not want to lie.