# Chapter 24 - Chapter 24: Chapter 24, Spoils of War

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“That matter isn’t so important.”

On the return journey, Gu Hang replied to Yan Fangxu’s question.

Captain Yan had sought him out and voiced the doubts in his heart, to which Gu Hang had given an answer:

“What difference does it make if it’s a sham? The Navy needs merits, I need a target, and a cult that does not believe in the Divine Emperor is one of the long-standing causes preventing Rage Owl Star from recovering. This merit will satisfy Colonel Yelisia and will also provide me with ample benefits, as well as unite the people of this world. Therefore, the cult should be real, and that Wohan should be a true cultist.”

After a pause, seeing hesitation still lingering on Yan Fangxu’s face, Gu Hang smiled and patted the captain’s shoulder, “Besides, it is real. The Primal Owlbeast Sect is a cult, and that person named Wohan is indeed connected to the Primordial Owl Beasts.”

“How did you determine that he is a heretic and not just an ordinary psychic?”

Gu Hang pointed to his head and explained, “The power of a psychic comes from within, from our spirits. We have enough talent, enough spirituality, to borrow spiritual energy from the omnipresent yet imperceptible Spirit Realm and manifest psychic spells. The power of heretics, on the other hand, comes from the filthy Evil Gods they worship, not from themselves. These two types of power are completely different, and clearly distinguishable to my senses.”

As he spoke, Gu Hang silently added that the divine magic wielded by the priests of the Imperial State Religion was roughly the same idea, but he did not say this aloud.

Upon hearing this, Yan Fangxu rubbed his head, “I really hadn’t understood all this before. But since he is indeed a true heretic cultist, then there’s no problem.”

“Don’t worry,” Gu Hang said, “we are on the right path.”

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Gu Hang was quite serious about reassuring Captain Yan.

This man was one of the few capable subordinates under his command.

He had come alone to Rage Owl Star without taking over the powers of the Alliance Government and had no support base to speak of. The only person he could rely on was Captain Yan.

The people of the Abandoned Cave Society seemed to have settled down for now, but they were a bunch of illiterates, unreliable for significant matters; his little attendant Zhang Chao was trustworthy enough, but lacked sophistication. Perhaps with enough training over time, he might become talented, but he was far from it right now.

The rest was up to Yan Fangxu.

He was, after all, an Imperial Navy Captain, a legitimate officer of the Imperial Navy.

He didn't care that Yan Fangxu was still part of the Navy and not his man, and that he was under his command only by order of Yelisia.

It made no difference, as long as he was serving him for the time being, was capable, and trustworthy; that was enough.

Gu Hang turned his head, looked past Yan Fangxu, and observed the entire battalion.

The entire troop, nearly three hundred men strong, were pulling ox carts along the road back to the Governor's Camp.

The bounty from this mission was plentiful.

He left twenty soldiers from the Abandoned Cave Company at Mantan River Valley Manor to ensure the safety of the manor while also making sure the tenant farmers worked hard. A man named Si Lamu was chosen from among the tenant farmers to manage them.

The rest of the soldiers, about two hundred in total, along with roughly a hundred tenant farmers, set off on the return journey together. Those tenant farmers were responsible for transporting the reloaded supplies to the Governor's Camp.

The so-called 'carts' were ox carts, pulled by a type of livestock known as 'barbaric oxen.'

These barbaric oxen presumably were not native to Rage Owl Star, but rather a species introduced from another planet long ago. After surviving the apocalyptic wars, they not only avoided extinction but even underwent further mutations while still retaining traits that made them tamable.

In today's Wasteland World, barbaric oxen are a vital source of draft power.

The supplies that had been transported from Revival City had come by ox carts, and now all of them had fallen into Gu Hang's hands.

After inventory, the supplies matched what Gu Hang had requested from Revival City.

The materials could be considered returned to their original owner.

In addition, Gu Hang had seized nearly two hundred sets of individual weapons and equipment, primarily rifles.

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The variety of rifles was quite diverse, and the overall production level couldn't compare to the 'Striker' Rifle. At least the latter was the standard rifle for the Imperial Army and the Navy Marine Corps. Although it was used by cannon fodder, the minimum manufacturing standard and technical level were up to par.

As for the weapons used by these mercenaries, which were locally produced on Rage Owl Star, it's hard to say. Not only was the quality inconsistent, but even the best among them wasn't as good as the 'Striker'.

But at least they were more reliable than the metal pipe rifles that pirate bandits carried, which Gu Hang wouldn't even bother accepting as scrap metal. They could at least be considered military-grade products.

Gu Hang planned to make use of this batch of equipment as well.

With this batch included, he now had around a hundred sets of 'Strikers', along with two hundred sets of locally made equipment. He could arm another three hundred soldiers.

Having the weapons and equipment was one thing, but sourcing soldiers wasn't too big of an issue.

Abandoned Cave Society could provide some more people, and some of the three thousand slaves he had brought down from the starship could also be allocated.

Those slaves were not originally suitable soldier material, their physical condition couldn't even match that of the mechanized infantry. However, they surely wouldn't be worse than those malnourished people from Abandoned Cave Society. Under Gu Hang's system, people from the Abandoned Cave could undergo a metamorphosis, turning into soldiers with acceptable training standards. Not to mention the former slaves.

The quality of the soldier source wasn't high, limiting their ability to upgrade further, but with the capabilities of the system, getting them trained up to T5 level, to achieve regular army capabilities, was not an issue.

Besides the materials he was entitled to, as well as the captured weapons, equipment, and ammunition, a larger gain was the bounty awarded after the victory in battle.

[Complete Victory, 33 points of grace received]

[Losses: 20, Killed: 116, Captured: 42]

[1st Automaton Light Infantry Battalion (Partial): Losses: 16, Killed: 43]

[Abandoned Cave Company: Losses: 4, Killed: 21]

[Navy Marine Corps (Partial): Losses: 0, Killed: 52]

In this battle, a total of 158 people were killed or captured, with a total loss of 20 on his side.

A T5-level army with an additional thirty T4-level marine corps members combined was much stronger than those second-rate mercenaries. Even though the defenders had more advantages and, under Gu Hang's orders, the soldiers went on the offensive, the final exchange ratio was still an impressive 1:8.

Of course, if not for the walkers operated by marine corps members and the participation of Gu Hang, the psychic, the exchange ratio would have been less favorable.

Most of the losses on his side came from machine guns and rocket launchers. Heavy machine gun fire hit major arteries in the thighs causing severe blood loss, or soldiers were killed directly by rocket explosions at close range. Among these 20 people lost, aside from a few who were immediately killed, many were severely injured and unable to return to the battlefield.

This level of loss was still within the bounds of what Gu Hang could accept, as one could not expect to go to war without casualties.

However, replenishing the forces was something that Gu Hang also had to consider.

The losses to Abandoned Cave Company weren't significant; he could easily replace the four soldiers from Abandoned Cave Society.

In contrast, there was nowhere to replenish mechanized infantry soldiers.

In the future, Gu Hang could not rely on mechanized infantry as the main force of his troops. Instead, he would have to conscript soldiers from the local population.

These are matters for another time.

What he had to consider now was how to use the newly gained 33 points of grace.

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The order of the chapters was posted incorrectly yesterday; chapter 23 was posted before chapter 22, and actually, both chapters were meant for today. The schedule was set to the wrong date...

Consider it an extra update for yesterday!

Those who only saw chapter 23 and missed chapter 22 yesterday can go back and read it.

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