

Lord of Winter: Beginning with Daily Intelligence

Chapter 16: Chapter 16: The Little Seed Prince

Jack was originally just a small seed merchant in the South, barely making a living by selling grain and fruit seeds.

Although life wasn't wealthy, at least there was enough to eat and drink.

Until a few months ago, he overheard fellow merchants boasting at the tavern:

Since the "Northern Territory Pioneer Order" was issued, many nobles have flocked to the Northern Territory to open up land, creating a huge demand for seeds, far exceeding supply!

This piece of gossip set his heart racing.

In the South, seed merchants were as plentiful as horse manure on the roadside, with hundreds scrambling for a piece of the pie, making it almost impossible to make a fortune.

But the North was different, he'd heard it was barren and seeds were hard to come by; once supplies arrived, they were sure to sell!

"This is an opportunity for wealth!"

Excited, Jack converted all the savings he'd accumulated over the years into seeds.

He filled his small cart and rushed to the North, dreaming of getting rich overnight.

However, when he stepped into Frost Halberd City, he was dumbfounded.

"Isn't this the largest city in the Northern Territory?"

The city was rundown, the streets muddy, the passersby in tattered clothes all looking weary, with not a sign of prosperous business opportunity.

Jack's heart skipped a beat, a premonition of doom washed over him.

"I'm doomed, I won't lose everything, will I?"

But since he was already there, he couldn't just leave empty-handed.

So, with determination, he set up his small stall on an empty lot on the east side of the market.

"Are you the seed seller, Jack?"

He hadn't even set up his goods, when three knights rode over, bringing with them the dust of travel, their armor splattered with mud, their expressions somewhat anxious.

Jack was stunned for a moment, his heart pounding.

How did they know his name?

Could it be that the fame of the little seed king had spread from the Central Province to the Northern Province?

But, a visitor is a guest, so he quickly straightened his back, cleared his throat, and was just about to introduce his products.

"What would you gentlemen like? We have potatoes, rye, oats, wheat..."

The lead knight interrupted him directly: "We'll take everything."

"Wh- what?" Jack looked shocked, wondering if he'd misheard.

"We want everything, how much?"

Jack was truly dumbfounded this time.

Are all Northern Territory people this extravagant?!

Jack's mind raced, calculating how much he could sell this batch of goods for...

Finally, he pretended to hesitate, then held out five fingers: "Since you want it all, I'll give you a discount, five gold coins."

Five gold coins!

In the South, a bag of potato seeds only cost two iron coins; the cost of all his seeds didn't even add up to one gold coin!

Jack was ready to be haggled down, even considering lowering the price if they didn't agree.

"Alright."

To his surprise, the lead knight didn't even listen, just pulled out five gold coins from his purse and tossed them to him.

Then, he and the other two knights quickly packed up all his seeds and blazed off in a hurry.

Leaving Jack standing there, clutching five heavy gold coins, dumbstruck.

As the cold wind blew, he only then realized his stall had been swept clean.

He hastily checked the gold coins, inspecting them one by one to confirm they were all real.

They were real... all real!

The next moment, a surge of ecstatic emotion overwhelmed him, Jack nearly jumped up.

"I'm rich!"

The cost of his seeds plus the travel expenses to the Northern Territory was less than one gold coin; now he'd made a clear profit of four gold coins!

And practically did nothing!

Was business in the Northern Territory really this easy?!

Jack clutched the gold coins, his mind already racing to map out his next steps.

This was just the beginning.

If he went back and wholesaled a few hundred more bags of seeds, wouldn't he earn hundreds of gold coins?!

Thinking of this, Jack's smile stretched to ninety degrees.

The Northern Territory was simply a gold mine!

He wanted to go back and take a loan, to become the number one seed merchant in the Northern Territory!

Of course, what he didn't know was that the seeds he had just sold included those of Frost Blood Redberry, which could be sold for thousands of gold coins.

Otherwise, he would have regretted it bitterly.

As for the story of him losing everything later, that's a tale for another time.

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Just as Lambert was hastily returning to Red Tide Territory with the seeds, Louis was riding his horse, inspecting the condition of the seed sowing in the fields.

In the fields, farmers were busily sowing seeds, the sound of hoes turning the earth echoing constantly.

Wherever Louis went, the farmers would stop their work and respectfully salute.

But unlike in other noble territories, the eyes of the farmers here didn't show servile fear but rather a kind of genuine respect.

Especially those workers of slave origin, their eyes held a fiery glow when they looked at Louis.

They longed for their efforts to be noticed by the Lord, and thus gain a chance at freedom!

Louis saw all of this, but didn't show much emotion.

After all, in his view, there was no difference between slaves and freemen; both were cattle and horses of the Red Tide Territory.

Furthermore, the current system allowed these people to work harder, and he wasn't in a hurry to change it.

When the time was ripe, perhaps he would consider more stable measures to release the slaves, but for now, they needed to prove their worth.

At this moment, Mike walked over, leaning on a hoe, his face beaming with unconcealed joy.

"My Lord!" Mike wiped the sweat off his forehead, his smile squeezing into wrinkles, "These fertilizers are working wonders! This year is sure to yield a good harvest!"

Louis glanced over the tilled fields, noticing that the soil was indeed moist and soft, a deep color indicating it had fully absorbed nutrients.

He nodded slightly: "What's the first crop?"

"Rye, turnips, potatoes." Mike answered immediately, "These crops are hardy and mature quickly; if all goes well, we can expect the first harvest in three months!"

Louis agreed with a nod.

Rye could be ground into coarse grain, turnips served both as vegetables and livestock feed.

Meanwhile, potatoes were easy to plant and harvest, with long storage life, making them the most suitable for emergency food.

Although some parts of Red Tide Territory were enhanced by geothermal heat, making it better than other Northern lands, not all land was suited to intensive agriculture.

To play it safe, prioritizing the planting of these hardy crops was the most sensible choice.

But it was far from enough to satisfy Louis's ambitions.

Once greenhouse planting technology was perfected, he planned to grow a wider variety of crops to completely resolve the food issues in Red Tide Territory.

Louis stood silently on the ridge, his gaze sweeping over the land before him.

The fertile black soil shimmered faintly under the sunlight, the busy figures of farmers intertwined, sowing the seeds of Red Tide Territory's future hope.

This land, originally a barren permafrost, was being revitalized little by little under his plan.

Louis felt an indescribable sense of accomplishment in his heart.

Chapter 17: Chapter 17: Blood-Stained Cold Moon

Dead, all dead.

Sif's heart pounded fiercely.

She squeezed the horse's belly with all her might, and the warhorse galloped wildly across the icy snowfield, hooves kicking up a white mist.

The cries of battle behind her echoed in the night, the howl of hounds mingling with the warriors' screams.

Why? Why did it turn out this way?!

Just days ago, she sat in a warm tent, listening to her father recounting the tribe's glory, her brothers laughing and playing, her mother gently tidying her hair.

She thought she would lead her people across the snowfield like her father in the future.

But that banquet destroyed everything completely.

Her father, Harold Frostmane, suddenly collapsed at the banquet, convulsing all over, letting out a painful howl, and died in front of everyone's eyes.

In the following days, her mother, brothers, and sisters died one after another.

Either executed or died from mysterious "accidents."

Their heads were hung on stone pillars, blood dripped onto the white snow, strikingly red.

The words of her brother Sigal still echoed in her mind.

"Sif, listen." Sigal gripped her shoulders, speaking urgently, "Run south, never come back."

She shook her head desperately, eyes filled with tears, "No! Brother, I..."

Sigal suddenly seized her neck, forcing her to look up at him, "Listen! Run south! Don't come back! Never think about revenge!"

Then without further words, Sigal whipped the horse with all his might, drew his war axe, and turned to face the pursuing soldiers.

"Ha!" He roared lowly, blood boiling.

His eyes turned red, the totems on his body suddenly lit up, muscles swelling like rocks, he became a raging god of war.

Blood Boiling Berserker!

Using life as the price, burning their blood to gain temporary invincible power!

"Come on, bastards! Let's go to hell together!"

He laughed loudly, raising the giant axe to face the enemies surging from the darkness.

Sif's heart felt as if it were being torn apart, she wanted to rush up and fight alongside her brother, but the warhorse had already bolted south with her.

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The chill had not yet completely faded, and the river on the west side of Red Tide Territory still carried the cold remnants of winter.

Each spring and autumn, this river would welcome migrating fish.

They swam upstream to spawn on the upstream shoals, and when the fry hatched, they returned to the deep water areas with the flow.

The locals had known this natural law since ancient times, but their fishing methods still remained at the stage of stabbing fish with wooden spears and scooping them with bamboo baskets.

While they could barely fill their bellies, compared to the river's true potential, it was like a drop in the bucket.

So under Louis's order, a hundred fishermen set out for the riverbank, organized to begin a fishery construction plan.

They used wooden stakes and stones to simply build temporary docks.

Carpenters were also called together to lead fishermen in day and night work to build fishing boats.

They worked tirelessly and finally built ten fishing boats capable of operating in the water within two weeks, preparing for the future fish tides.

The fishery here experienced earth-shattering changes in these two weeks.

But no one expected their first large-scale fishing would come so quickly.

The cause was that Louis received an important piece of intelligence from the Daily Intelligence System yesterday:

[1: Tomorrow, the river on the west side of Red Tide Territory will see a large number of fish.]

This news excited him greatly, and he immediately ordered, "All fishermen gather at the riverbank dock, prepare for a full-scale fishing."

So the next day, the riverbank was crowded, a hundred fishermen lined up waiting for the Lord's command.

On the modest but already forming wooden docks, Lord Louis stood high and surveyed everyone:

"Ladies and gentlemen! Today, we will have our first large-scale fishing operation in Red Tide Territory!

Do you remember a month ago how desolate this place looked? But look now, we have boats, we have nets, we have docks, all are results of your effort.

We no longer simply wait for fate's handout, but use our own hands to grasp the future!

And today, everything is ready; we only need to reach for it, and we will let everyone in Red Tide Territory know that the days of hunger are over!

May we return fully loaded!"

The fishermen, fired up by Louis's words, raised their nets and spears, shouting in unison, "Return fully loaded!"

But Luke, the Fishery Official beside Louis, showed a trace of indescribable anxiety in his eyes.

"Will there really be fish?"

In the past month, Louis's judgment had been proven right time and again, forcing Luke and others to believe.

But the problem is, this is fishing!

Fishing relies heavily on luck; even the most experienced fishermen can hardly predict which day will be a big catch or where they might return empty-netted.

He was a bit shocked when Louis notified him yesterday.

Why was the Lord so sure there would be a large catch today?

What if there wasn't?

If the river yields little today, the inspiring speech just given would become a joke.

And if the fishermen, having prepared for half a month, gain nothing.

It's a small thing if the fishermen's morale is hit, but the most important thing is, would the Lord react angrily?

Then what should he do?

Would he be stripped naked and thrown into the river for bait by the Lord?

Luke secretly glanced at Louis, finding that he didn't panic at all.

He stood there with a faint smile on his face, like he already saw the river churning with fish.

"This is the Lord's poise..." Luke was a bit lost in thought.

Just then, Louis interrupted Luke's daydream, "Is everything ready?"

"Ready." Luke quickly replied.

Louis nodded, "Then let's begin."

Luke took a deep breath, stood on the platform, and loudly gave the command, "Brothers, go according to plan!"

The fishermen, long waiting, began to collaborate.

According to Louis's plan, today's fishing operation will be divided into three groups to ensure maximum efficiency.

The first group is the main force, made up of ten fishing boats.

The fishermen skillfully maneuvered the boats and positioned the nets in the middle of the river, creating a vast net barrier.

The second group is the small-scale fishing team.

With relatively fewer people, they are responsible for casting nets in the shallow water areas along the shore, catching fish near the bank.

Fishermen skilfully deployed nets into the water, the mesh gaps just right for catching smaller fish.

The third group uses traditional fishing tools.

They hold spears, rapidly probing the water, and once they spot fish, they strike quickly to capture the escaping fish.

Some fishermen also set traps along the shore.

These simple yet effective tools can effectively capture some fish unwilling to approach the nets, further supplementing the catch.

Chapter 18: Chapter 18: Fishery Bumper Harvest

"Brothers, on with the original plan!" Luke shouted at the top of his voice, and the shore instantly bustled with activity.

Ten fishing boats lined up with a clatter, the paddles churning up the water into a froth.

Then the fishermen sank giant seine nets into the river.

These nets had been meticulously improved; as soon as they sank into the water, they instantly tightened.

"Hold the formation! Don't let the fish escape!" Reg, the old captain, had veins bulging on his arms with the tension of a bowstring in his hands.

Shadows darted chaotically underwater, surging like a tide.

"They're in the net! They're in the net!"

Someone shouted first, and the whole river seemed to explode in excitement.

Fat-headed river fish slammed against the nets, but the iron-clad formation of ten boats left them no escape route.

The fishermen deftly pulled on the ropes, trapping the fish securely.

The surface of the water erupted with countless splashes, fish leaping into the air, their silvery scales gleaming under the sunlight, looking very pleasing.

"Quick, pull! Don't let the net slacken!"

"Haha, this is the most fish I've seen in my life!"

The fishermen braced their arms, working together to pull up the full load.

The seine net kept contracting, so heavy it even caused the boat to tilt slightly.

When the last net was finally raised, the boat was piled high with lively fish flopping about.

Each fish was much larger than typical river fish, glistening with an enticing sheen, their plump bodies constantly twisting.

This time, their harvest exceeded everyone's expectations!

More than two thousand fish, enough to feed the entire Red Tide Territory for several days!

On the other side of the river, the net-casting fishermen were also giving it their all.

"Get the angle right when casting, or you'll miss the shoal!" The seasoned old fisherman instructed his young apprentice.

The inexperienced young man took a deep breath, gripping the net steadily in his hands before throwing it with force.

The net drew a perfect arc in the air, enveloping a group of fish that hadn't escaped yet.

"Got them!"

He excitedly tightened the rope, and the water surface immediately churned with large splashes, snaring several two-foot-long fat fish struggling mightily.

"This one is huge!" He excitedly lifted a fish as long as his arm, drawing envious glances from his companions.

"If we cook this one into soup, imagine how delicious it'd be!"

The group grinned widely, their hands working even faster.

Although their catch wasn't as big as the seiners', they successfully caught hundreds of fresh fish, each person's wooden bucket packed to the brim.

On another section of the shoreline, the traditional fishing group composed of locals was engaged in another form of hunt.

Each held a polished fish spear, their eyes almost glued to the river.

"Here it comes!"

An experienced fisherman suddenly swung his arm, the spear piercing the water.

"Splash!"

Blood-tinged froth surfaced, and a three-pound fish was securely speared, struggling desperately but ultimately unable to escape fate.

In that short time, their buckets were already stacked with seven or eight big fish, tails flapping outside the bucket rims.

Meanwhile, further away on the shallow shores, some fishermen quietly placed fish traps in pre-set traps, waiting for fish to wander in.

"Wait a bit longer...a bit longer..."

Suddenly, a fisherman brightened up, quickly lifting the fish trap.

"Caught them! Over a dozen!"

They cheered excitedly, these fish weren't large, but their tender meat made them the most popular delicacies.

The entire fishing operation lasted for several hours before the fishermen gradually put away their nets.

Every boat was piled high with fresh fish.

They slapped their scales and wagged their tails with a "slap-slap" sound, splashing water all around.

"More than three thousand fish! Over three thousand!"

When the final count came out, the entire dock erupted in excitement.

"Lord is indeed wise as God, he said there'd be fish, and indeed there were!"

"We've never seen such fishing methods before, catching so much in one go!"

"Lord not only knows how to govern the territory, but he's also amazing at fishing!"

The fishermen clapped and celebrated, patting each other's shoulders, joy reflected on their faces as they praised Louis.

Even those who doubted today's catch were completely convinced by the facts.

Luke stood by, looking at the scene with indescribable amazement.

His initial anxiety had long been replaced by surprise.

He really hadn't expected Louis's predictions to be so accurate, even incredibly so.

He couldn't help but look up at the Lord standing high on the dock.

Louis wore a faint smile on his face.

Seeing the satisfaction on the fishermen's faces filled him with joy.

He knew that he had just taken the first step for Red Tide Territory to emerge from adversity.

The food crisis in Red Tide Territory could finally ease a bit.

And today's catch was just the beginning; it marked the start of a long-term industry.

As a transmigrator, Louis certainly understood the importance of sustainability, so he devised a meticulous fishing strategy early on:

Firstly, to ensure the ongoing reproduction of fish stocks, Louis required all nets have larger mesh sizes.

This would allow immature fish to escape easily, continue growing, and wait for the next breeding season.

Moreover, fishing was only allowed at fixed times each day, with at least one day a week designated as a closed season to give the river and fish a breather.

Only by doing so would future catches remain abundant, instead of suddenly drying up one day.

Not only wild fishing, Louis also planned to establish dedicated breeding areas.

Selecting quality fish as broodstock to raise in designated waters.

This would make the fishery more stable, not completely reliant on nature's rewards.

As Louis gazed at the mountain of fish on the dock, he wondered how to manage them.

No matter how much food there is, if not properly managed, it would just turn into waste.

How about hosting a celebration feast, Louis thought.

In just a few days, it would mark exactly a month since he arrived at Red Tide Territory.

A day worth commemorating.

In this month, Red Tide Territory had transformed from a barren land with scarce resources and low spirit.

Gradually restoring order, building fisheries, agriculture, and the lives of the people began to show hope.

Louis knew this wasn't entirely his doing.

Therefore, this feast was not only to celebrate the bountiful catch, but also to honor those fishermen, craftsmen, and soldiers who contributed to Red Tide Territory.

However, the feast could only consume part of the fish, a large amount still needed proper handling.

Though it would only feed a thousand people for a few days, fishery was a long-term industry.

The caught fish couldn't be wasted, they ultimately needed to be preserved, preparing for the food shortage of winter.

Louis suddenly thought of a method to preserve fish long-term, and he wanted to try it out.

Chapter 19: Chapter 19: Smoked Fish

The evening glow showered the Red Tide Territory.

Inside the smoking shed near the hot springs, several smoked fish hung on wooden racks, their golden skins slightly wrinkled, exuding a rich smoky aroma.

Louis stood by, scrutinizing these fish smoked for hours.

He then lightly pressed the surface with his finger, the dry, resilient texture satisfied him, and he nodded approvingly.

"L-Lord..." Sally stood beside him, speaking cautiously, her hands unconsciously twisting together.

Her eyes carried nervousness, afraid that her smoked fish was not good enough.

Upon hearing her, Louis lifted his head and praised, "Well smoked, the texture and color of the fish are great."

Sally let out a sudden sigh of relief, a hint of a nervous smile appearing on her face, "All- all according to your method, without- without your guidance, we wouldn't have managed."

"You have deft hands." Louis casually tore off a piece of fish meat and tossed it into his mouth.

Though the fish meat was dry and hard, its rich smoky fragrance slowly spread in his mouth as he chewed, and the taste was not bad.

Standing nearby, Hillco yawned tiredly, his dark circles almost falling to the ground.

It wasn't that Louis deliberately overworked him, just that they were the only two literate people in the entire territory.

So he had to reluctantly have him work 996.

Today, to comfort him, he brought him here to eat fish.

"Here, have a taste." Louis casually handed over a smoked fish.

Hillco's weary eyes sparked with some interest, and he took a bite, "Tastes better than I expected."

"This is Sally's hard-earned result," Louis praised.

Hearing her name, Sally was suddenly a bit flustered, quickly waving her hands, "No, no, no, being able to smoke these fish is all thanks to your guidance, I don't know this..."

Louis quietly listened to Sally's words, but his gaze lingered on the smoked fish.

The Red Tide Territory was located in the cold Northern Territory, where food resources were limited.

Though fishery was an important supply source, every winter and early spring, the rivers nearly froze over, leaving almost no catch.

To avoid falling into famine, he had to find an effective way to preserve food through the long, harsh winter.

So Louis came up with an innovative method—using geothermal heat to smoke fish.

"Hot spring smoked fish? Can it really work?" Hillco was full of disbelief when he first heard of this plan.

"Compared to simply air drying, this method removes more moisture, extending preservation time," explained Louis.

Regardless, this method was worth trying.

So he selected the meticulous Sally to lead the women in an initial attempt.

Step one, process the fish body.

First, they had to open the fish belly and remove the innards, but keep the fish skin intact.

Fish skin not only prevents the fish meat from falling apart during smoking but also locks in the fragrance, making the smoked fish taste better.

Next, they cured it with coarse salt, for varying durations from several hours to a day, depending on weather and humidity.

This not only removed the fishy smell and enhanced flavor but also removed a portion of the moisture, preparing it for subsequent smoking.

Step two, build the smoking rack.

In the hot spring area, they wove a row of smoking racks using branches, bamboo strips, and vines.

They also installed simple windproof and insulating facilities on both sides of the rack, maximizing the penetration of hot spring steam into the fish while preventing heat loss.

Step three, the smoking process.

Geothermal resources were not stable, so the smoking time was split into 2 to 3 days over multiple rounds.

If the temperature was too high, the fish meat would harden, too low, and preservation would be difficult, so each batch of smoked fish required careful adjustments in time and temperature.

All these seemed tedious, but after some time and Sally's continuous attempts, they had achieved small-scale success.

The fish hanging on the smoking racks had become one of the hopes for surviving the winter in the Red Tide Territory.

Louis nodded slightly, "We can increase the scale now."

A hint of delight flashed in Sally's eyes; she and the women under her had worked hard for several days for this.

In a world dominated by force, women's status was always low.

If they could take on the responsibility of smoking fish, their status in the Red Tide Territory could improve considerably.

She pressed her lips together, cautiously asking, "Lord, are you saying you want us to take charge of smoking fish?"

"You've already done well, haven't you?" Louis gave her a light glance, his gaze sweeping across the smoking rack, "If the scale expands, naturally experienced people should be in charge."

Sally's heart raced, and she couldn't help but grasp her apron tightly, feeling an unprecedented sense of certainty.

"Thank you, Lord!" She instinctively bent down to bow, her voice carrying a slight tremor.

Louis chuckled, "It's I who should thank you all."

Just then, a knight came over and whispered in Louis's ear, "Lord Lambert has returned."

Louis's eyes lit up, this was indeed a double blessing.

He immediately strode toward the residential area, heading to meet the three who had just entered the area.

Lambert knelt on one knee, murmuring, "Mission accomplished."

Louis nodded slightly, a hint of comfort flashing through his eyes.

The dependable Lambert always brought a sense of reassurance.

"You've worked hard," he said solemnly, then glanced at the two elite knights behind Lambert.

Though they seemed slightly more fatigued than Lambert, not one of them complained about the hardships of the journey.

"We'll discuss the detailed report tomorrow," Louis said with a gentle smile, "Tonight, rest well. At tomorrow's award ceremony, you'll receive your deserved rewards."

The three saluted in unison, an attitude of respectful acknowledgment, "Yes!"

"Leave the seeds behind, then you can go rest."

The three knights handed the packages over to the attendant without hesitation and left with their travel fatigue.

Using fighting energy for long-distance journeys, even elite knights couldn't avoid physical and mental exhaustion.

Louis watched them leave until their figures disappeared before turning and heading to his office, the attendant following with lots of seed packages in hand.

One package after another was neatly stacked on the office desk, all results of this procurement.

Louis waved his hand, signaling the attendant to withdraw.

When the door softly closed, he stepped to the desk and, following the intelligence system's tips, found the seeds he was looking for.

He gently picked up one, examined it in his palm.

The seed was reddish-brown, smooth-skinned, indistinguishable from ordinary cranberry seeds at first glance.

If not for the intelligence system, he might have mistaken it for a common seed.

But it was anything but ordinary.

This was the Frost Blood Redberry, a magical fruit from the extreme cold of the Northern Territory.

Consuming it not only strengthened the body but had peculiar effects on a knight's fighting energy refinement.

This meant, once successfully cultivated, it not only could become a unique specialty of the Red Tide Territory.

It could also become a strategic resource coveted by all major nobility.

Louis looked at the seed, as if seeing mountains of gold and silver beckoning.

Chapter 20: Chapter 20: Commendation Ceremony

It has been a full month since Louis arrived at the Red Tide Territory.

At this moment, he stands on a temporarily constructed wooden platform, overlooking the crowd gathered below.

Twelve knights clad in iron armor are lined up on both sides, deliberately maintaining a uniform stance, making the Lord's figure appear even more imposing in the firelight.

"Woo!"

The sound of a horn cuts through the night sky, officially commencing the commendation ceremony of the Red Tide Territory.

Over thirty knights of the Red Tide Territory kneel on one knee.

They press their left fists to their chests, grip their knight's swords with their right hands, and recite the oath Louis had written in advance:

"We believe in the Dragon Ancestor, follow the Lord of the Red Tide!

Loyal to Louis Calvin, we pledge to defend the honor of the Red Tide with blood and sweat!"

The resounding oath echoes across the square.

Then the entire square erupts with deafening cheers, soldiers bang their shields, farmers raise hoes and wooden staffs, and even children shout excitedly.

Louis slightly raises his hand, signaling for everyone to be quiet.

The clamor gradually subsides, and all eyes focus on the young lord.

Only then does Louis slowly speak: "We have been in the Red Tide Territory for a month now. A month ago, this place was still desolate and barren.

We faced challenges like poverty, hunger, snowstorms, and wild beast attacks."

He pauses, his gaze sweeping over the gathered citizens.

"But now, we have passed the first phase of the crisis, thanks to you.

It was you who built the first shelter from the cold, ensuring children and the elderly no longer slept outdoors in the snow.

It was you who caught the first river fish, filling the stomachs of brothers and sisters.

It was you who cultivated the first piece of farmland and sowed the first seeds, bringing hope to this barren land."

"All of this is because of you!" Louis declares passionately, "Your sweat has begun to rejuvenate this permafrost!"

In the crowd, most people clench their fists, eyes reddened with emotion.

They had never heard a lord credit the achievements to the common people; in the past, just not getting whipped was considered fortunate.

Louis' gaze sweeps across the square: "Of course, effort deserves reward. In the Red Tide Territory, no matter who you are, if you work hard enough and are loyal enough, you will get your due reward.

Next, I want to commend the heroes who have made outstanding contributions to the Red Tide Territory."

As his words fall, the entire square instantly becomes quiet, everyone holds their breath, eyes locked on the figure atop the platform.

"Agricultural Official Mike."

The stooped middle-aged man stumbles forward, his old mud-stained boots slipping on the wooden steps.

Yet when he looks up at the lord, his spine, unstraightened for decades, becomes erect.

"Mike, you have optimized the farming methods, rejuvenating this barren land."

Louis points to the farmland in the distance that is beginning to take shape.

"Therefore, I officially promote you to the position of Agricultural Director, granting you greater jurisdiction over farmland and awarding you an additional plot for experimental planting."

Tears slide down Mike's face: "Thank you, sir."

Excited applause bursts from the crowd, with many farmers cheering enthusiastically.

"Craftsman representative Mike."

An old man with skin darkened by the sun strides onto the stage, his face full of pride.

"Your talent in architectural design has made the houses in the Red Tide Territory more sturdy and better insulated, laying the foundation for the territory's development."

Louis points to the row of semi-subterranean collective dwellings surrounding the square.

"Therefore, I have decided to grant you the authority to lead the craftsman team and provide more financial support."

Mike trembles with excitement: "I will not disappoint your expectations!"

"Fishery Official Luke."

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Next, more than a dozen people are called to the stage, with identities ranging from knights and craftsmen to hunters and farmers...

Most of these people come from humble origins, some even being slaves.

Louis steps forward and personally places special labor medals on each awardee.

Due to limited conditions, it's merely a wooden medal intricately carved by a carpenter at Louis' request.

Nonetheless, the awardees carefully hold them, fearing they might drop.

After the awards are presented, Louis shouts to the people below: "These individuals have contributed sweat and blood to the prosperity of the Red Tide Territory, making significant contributions. Let's thank them with applause!"

"Clap clap clap!"

Thunderous applause suddenly erupts, resounding throughout the square.

These honorees straighten their backs, their eyes filled with emotion and tears, their chest medals reflecting dazzling light from the bonfire.

They are just ordinary fishermen, hunters, craftsmen, and even lowly slaves.

Yet at this moment, they stand in the spotlight, receiving the highest commendation from the Red Tide Territory.

It's a feeling they've never experienced in their lifetime.

If Louis were to ask them to traverse a mountain of knives and a sea of flames now, they wouldn't hesitate.

"Of course, we also applaud those who have similarly made efforts."

As soon as his words fall, applause rises again, this time not just for those on the stage, but for everyone present.

Because each person is using their own way to make the Red Tide Territory stronger.

Then Louis' gaze gradually sweeps over the square, focusing on those wearing tattered clothes, still marked by the brand of slavery.

They lower their heads, eyes flickering with light, hearts filled with anxiety and anticipation.

"Today I will fulfill another promise."

The slaves' hearts suddenly quicken, the air seeming to freeze for an instant.

"Below individuals..."

Louis begins to announce a series of names, all slaves who have excelled in labor, construction, and development over the past month.

Those whose names are called display expressions of disbelief.

It wasn't until someone beside them nudged them that they realized and trembled as they walked onto the stage.

"Today, you officially gain your freedom."

Louis waves, and knights step forward to burn their slave certificates with a single fire.

They burst into tears, kneeling and kowtowing, thanking Louis' kindness in this way.

Meanwhile, the eyes of those not freed shone with complex emotions.

There is envy, regret, but most of all hope.

As long as they perform a little better, next time will surely be their turn.

"Loyalty and talent are more important than bloodline." Louis' voice resonates throughout the square.

"From today, the Red Tide Territory will establish a regular reward system, whereby anyone who contributes to the territory can receive appropriate rewards!"

This statement makes the square boil, every face glowing with the light of hope.

Changing classes is no longer an unattainable dream but a reality achievable through hard work!

"For the prosperity of the Red Tide Territory, cheers!" Louis raises his glass.

The strong liquor reflects the bonfire, catching a layer of firelight.

"Cheers!"

Everyone raises their glasses and erupts into deafening cheers.