

Ocean Lord 711

Chapter 711: Harvest in the Abyssal Layers of Darkness, Arrogant at First, Humble Afterwards

The Mystic Realm of the Great Luminescent Sea.

A figure suddenly appeared at the gate of the mystic realm.

The marine soldiers guarding on both sides became alert, but their faces turned into awe and reverence upon seeing the newcomer.

“Lord Ji Chen!”

Ji Chen nodded slightly, surveying the surroundings.

It had been several months since his last visit to the Great Luminescent Sea.

The two native hero units of this realm, Sonia and Diago, had already submitted to him, and this place had become the backyard of the Crown of the Ocean.

The ruins where the gate of the mystic realm was located had been utilized and refurbished into a camp and a goods transit station. After a period of investment, the Great Luminescent Sea had begun to thrive. Its products were gathered here from all over and then sent through the portal to the Crown of the Ocean.

Sonia’s figure appeared at the entrance of the ruins. The legendary hero gracefully swam in the water.

“Lord Ji Chen, greetings.”

“Sonia, the development of the Great Luminescent Sea seems promising.”

“Thanks to your trust and support.” Sonia stood before him, bowing respectfully. “If it weren’t for you unifying and bringing peace to this ocean, the Great Luminescent Sea wouldn’t have flourished like this.”

Ji Chen smiled and didn’t dwell on it, saying slowly, “I want to know about the recent exploration of the Abyssal Layers of Darkness.”

“Of course, my lord. Please follow me.”

Ji Chen followed Sonia to a coral building on the right side of the camp, which seemed to be her usual residence. A clamshell bed, a coral table, and a few stone stools constituted all the furniture here. Compared to Sonia’s luxurious residence in the Coral Palace, this place was undoubtedly very simple.

Seeing him looking around, Sonia said somewhat embarrassedly, “My lord, in order to monitor the goods input and output, I have been living here. Please forgive the simplicity of this place.” Ji Chen waved his hand indifferently, sitting on one of the stone stools, saying, “No worries. When I first established the territory, the houses I lived in were much simpler than here.”

When he first arrived in this world, the entire territory was only about 50 meters long and wide, with only a few simple houses. The Lord's Manor was just a slightly larger dilapidated wooden house, fearing leaks during the next heavy rain.

How could it compare to the towering Lord's Castle and the continuous buildings now?

Transforming a dilapidated territory into such a prosperous town, whenever he recalled those difficult times, Ji Chen always felt a sense of pride.

Sonia quickly began to recount the exploration of the Abyssal Layers of Darkness.

Twenty exploration teams had been dispatched to the Abyssal Layers of Darkness, and they had achieved considerable results. They found three ruins storing a large number of resources, an ancient military camp, totaling three million units of rare resources, and ten blank recruitment camps.

In addition, six rare resource veins were discovered – two each of crystals, mithril, and adamantite, all of which were large veins, producing 42,000 units per week each, totaling 252,000 units of rare resources.

With approximately 250,000 units per week, it amounted to 1 million units a month, and this was a relatively stable income, akin to rent.

But what surprised Ji Chen the most was that the exploration teams had also found a giant crystal vein. Although half of it had been mined, the remaining crystal deposits were still a significant wealth.

The remaining half of the deposit was approximately 2.44 million units, producing 250,000 units of crystal per week.

Now Ji Chen finally experienced the joy of those players who owned large resource points on the mainland. The resources owned by the Crown of the Ocean were not many. It wasn't until the discovery of the underground lizardmen world that they had stable channels for producing basic resources such as stone and ore.

However, high-level resource points like crystals were always scarce, totaling only about a dozen, and they were all small and medium-sized. This became the driving force for him to constantly explore and seek resources.

—If you don't go out, you'll starve to death!

Coupled with the acquisition of 3 million rare resources, the Crown of the Ocean now had a reserve of 7.1 million units of rare resources. It was estimated that in the future, they would steadily receive tens of millions of units of rare resources and hundreds of thousands of units of crystals. This figure would also increase as the exploration deepened.

Of course, behind these gains, there were also damages.

The marine monsters that survived in the Abyssal Layers of Darkness evolved cruel and bloody ways of fighting. Even though they lacked intelligence, they relied on primitive instincts and evolved powerful bodies to kill many marine creatures exploring the Great Luminescent Sea, resulting in thousands of deaths.

But the rich harvest overshadowed these bloodshed and deaths.

Ji Chen then asked, “How has the Starshine Islands been recovering during this time?”

“It has already recovered to the prosperity level before the Sea Beast Tide. It will soon be able to contribute to the Crown of the Ocean.”

It had been a considerable amount of time since the Sea Beast Tide ravaged the Starshine Islands. The damage was severe, so he used a large amount of gold coins obtained there as recovery funds, even hiring players to help repair facilities and clean up sea beasts. After these few months, it had evidently recovered.

Sonia continued, “When you returned to the Crown of the Ocean earlier, I had already informed Xhakas and the others to enter a state of readiness, accelerate the production of escort ships equipped with cannons, large alchemical cannons, ammunition, and output goods to exchange for resources to support the Crown of the Ocean.”

Chapter 712: Harvest in the Abyssal Layers of Darkness, Arrogant at First, Humble Afterwards (2)

“If their speed is fast enough, they should be able to arrive at the New Moon Archipelago for their duties in the next two days.”

Xhakas was one of the indigenous noble elites who had been subdued by Ji Chen when he pacified the Starshine Islands. Under his long-term indulgence, he had actually become the de facto administrator of the Starshine Islands, or “Colonial Governor,” so to speak.

Because of the master-servant contract and the presence of a large luminescent sea tribe army, he didn’t have to worry too much about rebellion. However, he did hear some unfavorable rumors about Xhakas from players in the chat channel, so it was necessary to give him a little reminder during this opportunity to prevent him from becoming too arrogant.

Western Mid-Ocean, route from the Starshine Islands to the New Moon Archipelago.

Since the Starshine Islands submitted to the Crown of the Ocean, this route had been developed to facilitate communication between the two regions. Because the Crown of the Ocean had been included on the elves’ friendly list, over time, many merchant ships from the Western Continent had passed through this route to the New Moon Archipelago, resupplied, and then turned towards countries around the Maple Forest Duchy.

At this moment, a medium-sized steel merchant ship was sailing on this route. Xhakas stood at the bow of the ship, watching as the steel prow broke through layer after layer of waves, advancing bravely. His face was filled with confidence and vigor.

Since the Starshine Islands had been ravaged by the sea beast horde several months ago and then, by a coincidence, submitted to that Lord of Glory, his career had reached an unprecedented peak.

Back when he first submitted, he felt like there was no hope, but now he thought the sea beast tide was actually a blessing. If those damned sea beasts hadn’t come, how could the other nobles and councilors have been so foolish as to rebel against that lord and then be shot to death by random arrows?

If they hadn’t been shot to death, how would the Starshine Islands have ended that endless cycle of bickering among the detestable nobles and council?

It was precisely because of the sea beast tide and the arrival of that Lord of Glory that the rigid structure of the Starshine Islands, which had been maintained for a thousand years, was destroyed, giving Xhakas the opportunity to flourish.

Thinking back on his past few months, where his words were law on the Starshine Islands, Xhakas couldn't help but curl his lips into a slight arc.

The taste of power was so wonderful, so exhilarating that it made his soul tremble, like a king sitting on a high platform, looking down at the masses below, every word and sentence determining the fate of the people.

"What do you think, how should I ask for rewards from that lord after I arrive at the New Moon Archipelago? After all, under my leadership, the Starshine Islands have recovered so quickly. My contributions cannot be underestimated."

His servant stood respectfully behind him and hesitated for a moment upon hearing this. "Master, I think we should be more cautious and let that lord evaluate it."

Not hearing the answer he wanted, Xhakas's face showed a trace of displeasure. "Are you saying my contributions are not significant?"

The servant quickly shook his head. "No, that's not what I meant. After all, the Starshine Islands belong to that lord..."

"I know, but without me, how could the Starshine Islands have recovered so quickly? Compared to the era when those nobles and councilors were constantly bickering, it's now more vibrant and prosperous!

Isn't all of this because of my contributions!?"

Watching Xhakas grow increasingly excited as he spoke, the servant looked down, trembling, and said, "Yes, everything can't be separated from your contributions."

With that, Xhakas snorted coldly and fell silent, just watching the distant sea surface, where the area of raging winds and storms several tens of kilometers away gradually came into view.

As the merchant ship from the Starshine Islands hadn't yet approached the stormy sea area, a silver-white steel warship sliced through the waves and came riding the swells. Cannons stood tall on its deck, and the thick barrels gleamed dazzlingly in the sunlight.

Xhakas's eyes showed a hint of envy and admiration. The Starshine Islands didn't have the capability to produce such large steel main battleships; only kingdoms and duchies had the ability to manufacture them. The warship before them, with its sharp angles exuding a sense of sharpness, was indeed the armed force of that Lord of Glory's territory.

Whether it was an illusion or not, Xhakas always felt that this warship made entirely of metal was like a living being, with a pair of eyes silently watching them.

"The ship ahead! This area already belongs to the jurisdiction of the Crown of the Ocean. State your intentions, or I have the right to open fire!"

A voice came through the horn on the ship.

The servant looked at Xhakas. "Master..."

A hint of displeasure flashed across Xhakas's face. After all, he was the administrator of the Starshine Islands and an important vassal under that Lord of Glory. These naval soldiers spoke so impolitely. Didn't they see the flag of the Starshine Islands flying on their ship?

"Tell them we are important guests from the Starshine Islands, here to report to Lord Ji Chen, and ask them to make way."

The servant nodded quickly and ran back to the cockpit to convey the message. The merchant ship soon responded, and the steel warship ahead paused for a moment.

"Disarm all weapons and follow my ship into the independent harbor, or you will be attacked by the Crown of the Ocean's forces."

After the broadcast, the steel warship immediately accelerated, leading the way ahead.

The servant timely flattered, "Master, you are indeed an important vassal of that lord. They value you so much that even the warship is leading the way for you!"

"You flatterer!"

Xhakas laughed and scolded, but the smug look in his eyes revealed that the flattery had worked on him.

The warship left after escorting them to the outskirts of the New Moon Archipelago. Following the guidance of the shuttle boat near the shore, they sailed into a water fortress and slowly docked at the pier.

Xhakas looked at the servant peering around, and couldn't help but curse, "You are my servant, representing my dignity. How can you behave like an uncultured bumpkin?!"

The servant quickly withdrew his gaze and showed a flattering smile, "Master is right. I can't allow you to get humiliated!"

Xhakas snorted lightly, adjusting his collar, but his eyes couldn't help but glance at the shore.

There were continuous buildings, bustling streets with people coming and going, and at the center of the town stood a towering castle, with a gigantic building under construction further away.

Is this the territory of that noble lord?

Just as Xhakas was sizing it up, he suddenly saw several residents on the shore looking at them, as if whispering something.

"What are these commoners talking about? How dare they stare at a noble directly, truly lacking in manners..."

Xhakas frowned, cursing inwardly, but he didn't say anything out loud. After all, this was the domain of that noble lord, and he couldn't afford to cause trouble. He simply regarded these residents as ants on the roadside.

With his head held high like a rooster, he disembarked and walked towards the soldiers patrolling the port with his hands behind his back.

Khakas directly intercepted a patrol of lizardman warriors and arrogantly said, "I am from the Starshine Islands. Take me to see Lord Ji Chen."

The lizardman soldiers looked at each other, somewhat puzzled, but fortunately, the leader of the lizardman warrior squad said, "If you wish to see the lord, please go to the town hall and find Sir Wilus."

"Wilus? Who is that?" Khakas frowned without hesitation. "I have important matters to discuss with Lord Ji Chen. If you delay me, can you bear the responsibility?"

Seeing his impoliteness, the lizardman warrior leader also froze his expression, "If you want to cause trouble, be prepared to be arrested by us!"

After saying this, he left with the other lizardman warriors without looking back. Khakas gritted his teeth in anger.

These despicable lizardmen dared to treat him like this.

Once he met with the lord, he would surely speak ill of these filthy lizardmen and let them know the consequences of offending him.

Although angered, Khakas didn't stir up trouble again. Following the lizardman warrior leader's instructions, he first went to the town hall to find this person named Wilus, only then did he realize that Wilus was actually the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Crown of the Ocean, an important figure who had been working closely with that noble lord.

He immediately broke out in a cold sweat.

He felt fortunate that he hadn't uttered any offensive words just now, or else there would have been trouble.

Wilus looked at Khakas's unnatural expression and asked, "Sir Khakas, are you feeling unwell?"

Khakas forced a smile and respectfully replied, "Thank you for your concern, Sir Wilus. I'm just feeling a bit uncomfortable from sitting on the ship for too long."

Wilus nodded without suspicion and said, "The lord has not returned yet. You may wait here for him."

Khakas quickly nodded and bowed. "Yes, yes, I'll wait here for the lord's return."

This scene was observed by the servant who had been following him, and a hint of strange expression flashed in his eyes.

Chapter 713: Two Months

It was already dusk by the time Khakas had the chance to meet Ji Chen. The orange glow of the setting sun slanted through the arched windows of the castle, casting its light on Khakas's anxious face.

Feeling the silent gaze of Ji Chen while sitting on the throne, Khakas couldn't help but break out in a cold sweat, his hands and feet trembling uncontrollably.

On the way to the New Moon Islands, he had been thinking about how to present his achievements to the lord in order to showcase his contributions to the Starlight Islands. But now, under the scrutinizing gaze that felt almost divine, his mind was blank, overwhelmed by a fear he couldn't suppress, like a mouse facing a cat.

Xhakas shouted inwardly, wondering why he was afraid when he hadn't done anything against the interests of this lord!?

But for some reason, he felt a sense of guilt, as if those eyes could see right through him.

Ji Chen leaned his cheek on his hand and spoke casually.

"Xhakas, how has the development of the Starlight Islands been recently?"

Xhakas wiped the cold sweat from his forehead and replied in as ordinary a tone as possible, "Everything is fine. The Starlight Archipelago has now recovered its prosperity from before the sea beast tide. There are also more merchants coming from the Western Continent.

The various repair and reconstruction plans you ordered have also been completed with the help of those honored lords. The slums of Starlight City have been replaced by clean houses as per your instructions, and land has been allocated to residents..."

"How come I heard that you seem to have withheld some of the rewards for the Lords of Glory and secretly seized a lot of land originally allocated to the poor, even secretly taking funds that should have been used for engineering repairs?"

Xhakas's heart skipped a beat, and his back felt cold. How did he know about these things? He had hidden them so well!

Seeing the subtle changes in Xhakas's expression, Ji Chen sneered, "Do you think that just because I am thousands of miles away, I wouldn't know what happened in the Starlight Islands?"

I know about everything you've done!"

Xhakas's legs went weak, and he knelt on the ground, crying out for mercy, "Lord, it was a moment of foolishness on my part, blinded by those riches. Please forgive me and give me a chance to redeem myself!"

Ji Chen's face darkened, and he felt some anger in his heart.

When he subdued Xhakas before, he still had some doubts, so he sent Sonia over to supervise him in the name of protection, secretly observing whether Xhakas and his men still harbored rebellious thoughts.

However, she never uncovered any wrongdoing on Xhakas's part, as he diligently followed through with his tasks. Eventually, due to the Lord of the Waves' affair, Ji Chen allowed Sonia to return.

Then, shortly after Sonia left, Xhakas revealed his true colors. According to the complaints and criticisms of players on chat channels and forums, and after sending people to investigate, it was discovered that a leopard couldn't change its spots.

In the past, with many nobles and parliamentarians restraining and checking each other, although the development of the Starlight Islands was not rapid, it was relatively stable, barely maintaining a balance of interests.

But since Ji Chen broke this situation, Xhakas, who surrendered first, became like a wild dog without a leash after there was no supervision, maintaining a facade of loyalty on the surface but secretly engaging in plunder and exploitation once again.

Damn it, he even dared to use his name to secretly withhold the rewards meant for players!

The players of the Starlight Islands feared his identity and could only quietly swallow this loss, but recently, some players posted accusations about this matter.

As Xhakas begged for mercy on his knees, Ji Chen's eyes grew colder and colder. The master-servant contract could only ensure non-rebellion but couldn't guarantee integrity and effectiveness.

The human heart is always hard to control.

"Lord, even if I haven't contributed, I've certainly toiled. I promise there won't be such incidents again. After I return, I will give all those rewards to the Lords of Glory and return the land to the residents!"

Xhakas seemed to realize his fate, pleading with snot and tears streaming down his face, far from his previous dignified appearance.

Ji Chen remained indifferent, saying in a flat tone, "I already gave you a chance back then."

"Herman, Kieran, come out."

"Yes!"

From the side door, Herman and Kieran, the only two nobles and parliamentarians who survived besides Xhakas, walked out.

Xhakas, kneeling on the ground, turned his head in disbelief, showing an incredulous expression. How could these two appear here?

But he quickly realized.

Damn it! They're here to replace me!

Sure enough, Ji Chen spoke slowly.

"You two will take over Xhakas's work from now on. Don't disappoint me."

"Yes!"

The two of them saluted with utmost respect, feeling extremely excited.

This was like a pie falling from the sky. They never thought they would have the opportunity to climb to the pinnacle of power in the Starlight Islands.

Back then, when Xhakas pleaded for them, they thought he was a clever person. Who would have known that as soon as Lady Sonia left, Xhakas instantly showed his true colors, thinking he could secretly seize benefits and rapidly expand his ambitions?

Little did they know that Lord Ji Chen had long been aware of all this transpiring in the shadows, watching him gradually descend into the abyss.

Seeing Xhakas in his current miserable state, Kieran and Herman also felt relieved that they had always stayed out of trouble, diligently and honestly doing their work. Otherwise, they might have been kneeling on the ground now, repenting for their sins as well.

Chapter 714: Two Months (2)

However, what made them feel somewhat uneasy was that compared to the last time, the Lord of Glory now exuded even more authority and superiority, leaving them feeling as if their every thought was laid bare.

As Ji Chen's strength and insight grew, he found his eyes becoming sharper and more perceptive. It was easy for him to discern the thoughts and intentions of others, quickly understanding the minds of Herman and Kieran.

With a commanding tone, he tapped his index finger on the armrest.

"I will send someone to assist in managing the affairs of the Starshine Islands. You must cooperate fully in carrying out your work. If I find incidents like Xhakas's happening again, you should be aware of the consequences.

Herman and Kieran were immediately shaken, responding with trepidation.

Ji Chen nodded slightly. He didn't mind having ambitious subordinates, as long as they fully implemented his will. Otherwise, having the ability alone was futile.

Amidst cries and pleas, Xhakas was dragged away by soldiers, awaiting the dark fate of a life spent in the lightless mines, alongside those who had once violated the Ocean Crown.

"You must have heard about the demonic invasion, right? Herman and Kieran nodded, with Kieran hesitantly asking, "My lord, is it true?

Are those ghastly things really about to sweep in?"

"Of course it's true. I'm one of the discoverers."

Ji Chen gave a definite answer, his tone becoming more serious. "Once the demons invade, the Ocean Crown will become their primary point of attack in the Western Mid-Ocean. If the Ocean Crown falls, there will be no islands or forces in the Western Mid-Ocean capable of stopping the demons, including the Starshine Islands. Do you understand?"

Herman and Kieran's spirits lifted, exchanging glances and promptly saluting, "Please command as you wish. We will fully execute your orders."

Leaving aside other matters, these indigenous nobles had quite sensitive instincts, knowing exactly what he meant.

"I want you to output resources to the Ocean Crown as much as possible in the coming time."

Ji Chen paused before continuing. "In addition, I want you to quickly send a fleet to the Western Continent and dispatch people to the KKels Mountain Range to persuade the dwarven tribes living there to come to the Ocean Crown."

They were puzzled. Dwarves?

Ji Chen glanced at them and continued, "Tell them it's the dwarven blacksmith Thotmudo who sent them."

Though they didn't quite understand these instructions, Herman and Kieran still remembered his instruction, nodding in agreement. "We will arrange this as soon as we return."

With Ji Chen's orders, Herman and Kieran returned to the Starshine Islands the next morning, accompanied by Raymond, who had returned from the Maple Principality a few days earlier.

As one of the early members of the Ocean Crown, Raymond's loyalty and abilities had already been recognized over time, making him capable of managing the affairs of the Starshine Islands.

Once the engineering repair plan was announced, the entire New Moon Islands began bustling with activity. Large quantities of resources were transported from the warehouses to various locations on the islands. The construction scope of the island's circular wall was planned, starting from the cliffs in the southeast of the main island, extending along the southern beaches and stretching northwest towards the giant tree forest.

This was currently the largest construction project, and once completed, the main island would have a continuous wall tens of kilometers long and ten meters thick.

In addition to the main wall, a batch of defense-building blueprints purchased from the merchant Lain were also put into use. The positions for arrow towers, spell towers, and cannon platforms had been cleared behind the wall. The residents of the Ocean Crown were all enthusiastically constructing these defensive structures.

Perhaps due to the news of the demonic invasion, the residents united in solidarity, their hearts unknowingly rising a few points again, reaching a high of 99 points, just 1 point away from fullness.

Such high morale brought about explosive work efficiency and enthusiasm.

Even if they weren't given anything to eat, the residents of the Ocean Crown could work tirelessly for ten days straight, swinging their hammers until they smoked.

He was very curious about what would happen if the morale reached 100 points.

Now, he already had the people's support.

When the city walls and other defensive structures were completed, they would also have the advantage of terrain. At that time, it would depend on whether the timing would be favorable.

"Ding' Your elven hero, Elisya, has been promoted in tier due to her epic-tier talent and long-term training (Legacy Tier – Legendary Tier)." Ji Chen was stunned, a look of astonishment flashing across his face.

Elisya... had she advanced on her own!?

At the same time, in the jungle to the northwest of the main island, an extremely dazzling orange beam pierced through the clouds and soared into the sky, carrying with it the majestic ancient power that swept across the entire island.

Countless trees and vegetation bent and fell, animals in the jungle cowered on the ground, and even Thotmudo, who was toiling away in the underground world, lifted his head.

Everyone was stunned.

It took a while for them to react, cursing.

“Damn, this kid must have received the blessing of the gods, another damn legendary tier!”

He considered himself worldly-wise, but he had never seen anything so exaggerated. In less than three days, the Ocean Crown had unexpectedly promoted two legendary tiers.

Although legendary tier might not be as prestigious as epic tier, it was not something that could easily appear. A powerful legendary figure was enough to be treated as an esteemed guest by the kingdom, feasting and enjoying the best hospitality.

But here, it was like cabbage on the street. If he remembered correctly, Ji Chen already had five legendary tier individuals under his command!?

This was even more than the previous Black Iron Fortress!

Comparison truly is the thief of joy!

It took a while for the beam and the imposing aura to dissipate, but it was enough to shock the foreigners who remained on the island, while the residents of the Ocean Crown cheered. They had another powerful protector.

Following the trail of energy, Ji Chen quickly found Elisya in a clearing in the woods.

At this moment, the elven girl was staring blankly at her own palm, as if contemplating something.

“Elisya.”

The elf turned her head, the confusion on her face turning into joy in less than half a second as she excitedly ran over.

“Lord, I’ve broken through to the legendary tier!”

Ji Chen opened his arms to catch Elisya as she ran towards him, steadying her and letting her down, smiling. “You caused quite a stir, the whole island knows.”

Elisya scratched her head sheepishly. “Hehe, I didn’t control my power for a moment, and it turned out like this.”

Ji Chen didn’t mind. The Ocean Crown no longer needed to hide. The more powerful they appeared, the more fearful those with ill intentions would become, shifting from strategic deception to strategic intimidation.

“How did you break through?”

Elisya looked a bit puzzled, gesturing with her fingers. “I was practicing shooting just now, suddenly felt a strong energy surging from deep within me, heard a popping sound, and then I broke through.”

Ji Chen was slightly astonished, then chuckled and shook his head. My goodness, while others need resources to advance, you just naturally did it. Is this the bloodline of the ancient elves?

Regardless, the Ocean Crown has gained another legendary hero, surely adding strength to resist the demonic invasion.

Demon Transfer Station.

“Lord Balzarna, we need at most two more months. We’ll completely break through the barrier and infiltrate the main world!

“Very good!” Balzarna’s eyes flashed with a hint of menace. “Once the passage is opened, the vanguard will immediately move into the main world, annihilating the enemies nearby and creating an environment for the subsequent army to advance!”

“Yes!”

Balzarna remembered the human lord who had disrupted his plans and exposed everything. A look of indignation flashed across his face.

“That damn human lord, once I descend into the main world, I will surely imprison him and use the flames of hell to burn him for millennia to quench my hatred!”

Chapter 715: Domain City

The council chamber on King Kong Island was abuzz with discussion among the guild’s top brass regarding recent developments.

“Boss, the prices on the mainland are skyrocketing, and our procurement plan can only achieve a maximum of 50% completion.”

Seated nonchalantly at the head of the table, I_Love_Black_Sockings, with her legs crossed, furrowed her brow. “Only half? Have you inquired about other islands and archipelagos aside from the mainland and the Western Continent?”

“We’ve checked everywhere, but it’s no use. The news of demon invasions has had a significant impact. Everyone is on edge. Not only are the indigenous human nations and the Elven Empire affected, even places like the Silver Islands have tightened their resource exports. Most critical resources are now under strict control.”

The guild’s executives sighed collectively. “If we hadn’t procured a batch of resources earlier, we might not even achieve half of our plans now.”

The mood among the guild’s top brass was grim. King Kong Island, isolated in the ocean, relied heavily on imports for many resources. With other regions now restricting exports, their situation seemed dire.

Without resources, recruitment of military units would be impossible, and the construction of defensive structures would stall. Without troops and defenses, how would they withstand the impending invasion by the demon army?

All their resources and efforts were invested in King Kong Island. They couldn't just abandon it and flee.

Suddenly, one executive suggested, "Why don't we seek help from the Islander?"

At this suggestion, the others brightened up. "That's a good idea. After all, our boss has a good relationship with the Islander. We should be able to secure some resources through this."

I_Love_Black_Sockings shook her head. "The Islander's territory is closer to the south than ours. He is bound to be among the first to be attacked by the demons. Even if our relationship is good, they won't be able to spare any resources for us at such a critical moment."

Someone chuckled and whistled, "If only you, Boss, could use your black stockings to seduce the Islander. Who knows, it might actually work."

I_Love_Black_Sockings' face darkened, and she retorted, "If it were that easy, I would have done it already. Do I really need you to tell me?"

Besides, with the Islander's status and power, how could he possibly lack women? Forget about my black stockings, I'm sure even elves are willing to spend a night with him!"

The others nodded in agreement, having heard of the events in the Elven Empire. They were aware of the true identity of Ji Chen, also known as the Islander who possessed epic-tier power.

Epic-tier was the pinnacle of power in this world, a rarity. Yet, they couldn't fathom how the Islander had reached an epic tier so quickly.

Among the guild's executives, the strongest was I_Love_Black_Sockings, who only had a legacy-tier profession and had barely reached level 45-

They had all arrived in this world on the same day, starting with nothing but a plot of land and a few dilapidated houses. Yet, why had Ji Chen managed to establish a territory comparable to a kingdom's influence and reach the pinnacle of epic tier in less than a year?"

Comparison is the thief of joy.

I_Love_Black_Sockings looked at the troubled faces of the crowd and suddenly had a flash of inspiration, slamming the table abruptly.

Thud—

"I've got an idea!"

The other guild executives, deep in thought, were startled, their hearts racing, and their eyes filled with resentment.

Why did you have to be so loud?

I_Love_Black_Sockings coughed awkwardly, pretending as if nothing had happened, and said, "Why are we working so hard to gather resources?"

The others were puzzled by the question but still answered honestly, "To resist the demon invasion, of course."

"So here's the problem: Where will the demons initially target in the Western Mid-Ocean?"

“According to the current situation, it’s highly probable they’ll attack the Islander’s Ocean Crown first.”

“Exactly!” I_Love_Black_Sockings exclaimed excitedly, slamming the table again.

“Look at it from a different angle. Since the demons will likely attack the Ocean Crown first, why don’t we send resources over or even deploy troops to support the Ocean Crown, helping them fend off the demon invasion? That way, King Kong Island won’t be threatened!”

“In doing so, we’ll save ourselves a lot of trouble, and we can even curry favor. Isn’t this killing two birds with one stone!?”

The other guild executives were stunned, feeling a wave of shock.

Wow, can you actually play it like this?!

Because they lacked the means to secure victory and were short on resources, they opted to dispatch troops and resources to the frontline. This strategy aimed to ensure the safety of those in the rear.

Wait a minute, thinking about it, this approach seemed somewhat reasonable.

These guild executives had begun to ponder its feasibility.

I_Love_Black_Sockings did as she pleased, abruptly slamming the table again. However, this time it seemed she hit it too hard, and she winced in pain, muttering, “That’s settled! I’ll inform the Big Boss Islander right away!”

Meanwhile, Ji Chen, accompanied by Wilus, was inspecting the progress of various projects in the territory when he suddenly received a private message. He stopped in his tracks and casually opened it.

A few minutes later, he closed the chat interface with a strange expression on his face.

Wilus was puzzled. “Sir, what’s wrong?”

“I think someone wants to give us a batch of resources and troops for free.”

Wilus: ???

Although he didn’t understand what had happened, having more resources and troops was undoubtedly a good thing.

Wilus didn’t dwell on it. He organized his thoughts and deliberated, “If the current construction speed continues, all buildings except for the city walls can be completed within two months. However, the construction of the island-wide city walls is too massive. Even with tens of thousands of lizardmen laborers, it will still take at least four months to complete.”

Chapter 716: Domain City (2)

Ji Chen rubbed his chin. “Four months is too long. I have a feeling that demons will soon break through the rule barriers and enter the main world. The island ring wall is an important facility for defending against demon attacks and must be completed as soon as possible.”

“What suggestions do you have to speed up the progress?”

Wilus pondered, his face showing a pensive expression. After a moment of contemplation, he said, “My Lord, I remember that the Lord of Glory has a kind of power bestowed by the gods, which can plan and control the construction of the entire territory. Perhaps we can find a solution there.

Ji Chen suddenly realized, which was something he hadn’t thought of. He opened the long-sealed construction panel under the territory panel page, and the perspective suddenly soared upwards, revealing the appearance of the entire territory.

Compared to several months ago, the changes in the Crown of the Ocean were significant. The buildings that originally only occupied a small piece of land on the southeast of the island had now extended from the southeast to the west, north, and east, except for the dense jungle as the residence of the elves in the northwest, the other jungle areas had been extensively developed. Buildings and roads, like a spider web, surrounded the Lord’s castle, the “heart” of the entire island.

The streets were bustling, and people flowed like water.

Even the northeastern sub-island was connected by a road for access to the

Skull Mystic Realm.

On the left side of the Lord’s castle lay the port area. Dozens of steel warships were anchored there, along with numerous merchant ships docked in the civilian port below. Additionally, a second port was being built on the southern mudflat.

Adjacent to the coastline on the left were residential areas, currently separated from the southern sea breeze by a wall that was still under construction.

To the north were neatly planned warehouses and workshops. In addition to the neat roads, there were also connecting railways. Several alchemy locomotives were pulling carts of goods, resources, and ore to various parts of the island.

On the mountaintops in the northeast, the featherfolk were using their building talents to build their homes.

If one could penetrate underground, they would see many kobolds and lizardmen working hard to mine ore and plant fluorescent mushrooms in the underground world.

However, the Crown of the Ocean was still only a level 1 Borough City. The size of the territory barely encompassed the existing buildings. If it continued to expand westward, it would definitely exceed the range. Although buildings could still be constructed, they would not enjoy the accelerated construction effect of the territory.

After staying at level 1 for several months, the Crown of the Ocean had long disappeared from the territory rankings. Now, the first place on the rankings was a territory with a level 3 giant city, but Ji Chen didn’t know the player lord.

Ji Chen returned to the territory panel and saw that the prosperity of the Crown of the Ocean had reached over five million, almost six million. This value was enough to upgrade to a domain city.

Domain city, as the name suggests, is the central city of a region, with good economic, military, cultural, industrial, agricultural, and even political influence. To upgrade to a domain city, there are many requirements and restrictions.

Chapter 717: Territory Policy

Ever since they knew that the Islander was already an Epic-tier powerhouse, they felt that everything was just as it should be. After all, he was an Epic-tier. What's the big deal about upgrading his territory to a Domain City?

Even if he were to upgrade to a capital or even a royal city now, they wouldn't be surprised.

An Epic-tier powerhouse was enough to serve as the foundation of a kingdom.

Ji Chen naturally had no time to care about the ups and downs on the chat channels. At this moment, he was quite curious about the changes happening in his territory.

Apart from the expansion of the territory and the enlargement of the lord's castle, upgrading to a Domain City brought about many additional things.

Part of it was the ability to construct more advanced buildings. Now, without the need for building blueprints, three-star buildings could be constructed, such as larger residences, advanced port docks, and large workshops.

In addition to this, a brand-new page appeared on the panel.

It was labeled "Policies."

Ji Chen's interest soared, and he clicked on it.

[Territorial Policies]

[Domain-level territories can enact up to one policy per domain, each of which will directly affect the development trend of the territory. Please choose carefully according to your needs.]

[Once a policy is confirmed, it cannot be changed for one month.]

[Military Policies]:

- 1. Militarization (100% faster cooldown for recruiting troops, but 100% increase in resource consumption for troop recruitment)
- 2. Full Preparedness (50% increase in production speed of war-related military equipment, 50% increase in construction speed of territorial defense buildings)
- 3. Universal Conscription (All residents are transformed into militia, with their level and tier determined by race and military equipment level. The territory will stop producing any resources.)
- 4. Maritime Dominion [Activated when the territory has a shipyard] (100% increase in shipbuilding speed, 100% increase in training speed for sailors and marines)

[Economic Policies]:

- 1. Commercial Circulation (50% increase in construction speed of economic buildings, 15% increase in commercial tax)
- 2. Colonial Exploitation (30% increase in gold and resource acquisition from colonies, sustainable for up to two months)
- 3. Age of Discovery (Easier development of new maritime trade routes, 30% increase in attractiveness of maritime trade routes)

- 4. Population Growth (50% increase in attraction of refugees, easier attraction of high-quality population)

[Agricultural Policies]:

- 1. Self-Sufficiency (40% increase in food crop yield, 40% increase in clearing and planting speed of food crop farmland)
- 2. Natural Economic Collapse (40% increase in economic crop yield, 40% increase in clearing and planting speed of economic crop farmland)
- 3. Infrastructure Expansion (100% increase in construction speed of agricultural infrastructure)

[Industrial Policies]:

- Emergency Production (100% increase in workshop product production speed, gradual decrease in worker morale)
- 2. Quality Upgrade [Activated when having buildings like a blacksmith shop, research institute] (30% increase in technology research and development speed, 30% increase in industrial product quality)
- 3. Industrial Talent (Accelerates the training speed of craftsmen, increases the speed and probability of craftsman advancement)

[Heroic Policies]:

- Talent Recruitment (Consumes gold and resources to increase the attractiveness of heroes to the territory to a certain extent)
- 2. Meritocracy (Increases the probability of hero birth within the territory)
- 3. Road to Heroism (Increases the probability of advancement for territorial heroes)

Five different domain policies were displayed on the panel.

Economic, agricultural, military, industrial, heroic... Ji Chen carefully examined them one by one, quickly understanding this new feature.

Overall, these policies had different effects in different situations. By using the appropriate policies that match the Lord's current priorities, things could be accomplished with much less effort.

For example, the Military Policy "Militarization" was obviously used when war was imminent and there was an urgent need for troops.

Of course, such extreme policies were not always beneficial. With "Militarization," the cooldown for recruiting troops was increased by 100%, meaning that it only takes 3.5 days to recruit a wave of troops, but it required twice the resources as the cost.

However, there were also some policies that did not require a cost but had relatively weaker effects, which were suitable choices during peaceful times.

"Each domain can choose one policy, with a total of five choices."

After some thought, Ji Chen decided to select "Militarization," "Colonial Exploitation," "Self-Sufficiency," "Emergency Production," and "Road to Heroism."

“Militarization” needed no explanation. It aimed to recruit as many troops as possible in a short period to resist demon attacks.

“Colonial Exploitation” increased the gold and resource acquisition from colonies by 30% within two months. Currently, under the Ocean Crown, there are three colonies: the Great Luminescent Sea, the Starshine Islands, and Fish Tail Island located in Lienhardt. However, only the former two could generate income, while Fish Tail Island still requires resources from the Ocean Crown for development.

During the two-month duration of this policy, it could provide the Ocean Crown with hundreds of thousands to millions of rare resources.

“Self-Sufficiency” increased food production. Ji Chen considered that if demons attacked, they would likely block the Stormy Sea and even the New Moon Islands, cutting off internal and external channels, including food supply routes. Therefore, it was necessary to prepare for long-term defense.

It was important to be self-sufficient. Regardless of how demons were to attack from outside the island, as long as crops could grow normally on the island, there would be a continuous supply of food.

“Emergency Production” was about producing goods as much as possible within a limited time, selling them to exchange for resources. The concept was similar to the previous policies, all aimed at preparing for the upcoming war.

The effect of the Hero Policy was similar to a hero fountain. Ji Chen chose the “Road to Heroism.” If he could advance the tiers of several heroes during this period, it would be a huge gain.

After clicking the confirmation button, a mysterious force immediately descended upon the territory. The residents of the Ocean Crown all lifted their heads, feeling that something had changed, but they couldn’t quite pinpoint what it was.

They could only vaguely sense that their beloved Lord had made a decision.

Ji Chen closed the panel and said slowly, “In the next period of time, the growth speed of food crops and the production speed of workshops will increase significantly. The resources brought from the Great Luminescent Sea and the Starshine Islands will also increase.”

Wilus, who hadn’t spoken, witnessed everything by Ji Chen’s side, and he was not surprised. Upon hearing this, he nodded immediately.

“I understand.”

He nodded slightly. “You go about your business.”

Wilus immediately responded, saluted, and left.

Ji Chen watched Wilus leave, then walked towards the northeast mountain area with his hands behind his back.

Since returning from the Northern Continent, Lainekel had been living alone in a small cabin in the northeast of the main island. Ji Chen had suggested that he live in the town together, but Lainekel refused for fear of causing panic and trouble.

This hero who had fought against demons for tens of thousands of years, endured countless tortures after being captured, and even after being transformed into a half-demon, half-human, still harbored great kindness towards humans and orderly civilizations.

Even though he longed to reintegrate into civilized society, he forcefully suppressed such desires.

His will was the most tenacious Ji Chen had ever seen. Perhaps there were many who were stronger than him, but Ji Chen believed that this extreme level of resilience in willpower was possessed by few.

Walking out of the densely populated area, through the industrial zone to the north, and following a winding mountain path, Ji Chen arrived at a gentle slope by the river, leaning against the mountain. Crossing the small stone bridge over the creek, a white-walled, blue-tiled mountain cabin appeared before him. A wisp of smoke lazily rose from the chimney, slowly merging into the sky, blending with the white clouds.

Flowing water, a small bridge, a cottage, and smoke.

It felt like a place where a hermit would reside.

However, what surprised Ji Chen was that not only Lainekel was there, but the Dragon Whale Hero Solidas was also present. The two of them sat in front of the house as if discussing something.

“How have the both of you been during this period?”

Lainekel and Solidas suddenly became aware of someone approaching nearby. Their hearts skipped a beat. They hadn’t noticed anyone approaching moments ago, and the voice they heard now felt like a ghost whispering right into their ears.

Subconsciously, their bodies tensed up.

But when they turned their heads and saw Ji Chen, they relaxed.

“Very well, thank you for providing me with such a place to stay.” Lainekel stood up, somewhat grateful. “Lord Ji Chen, why did you come here?”

Ji Chen walked up to them. “I wanted to ask some questions and also to see you. But why is Sir Solidas here too?”

Solidas, with exaggerated muscles all over his body, like a small giant, crossed his arms and grinned. “I was just bored and had nothing to do. Anina is busy again, so I came to chat with Lainekel.”

“Solidas, you have recovered from your injuries and extended your lifespan. Do you have any other plans?”

Solidas shook his head. “Not for now. After running around for hundreds of years, I plan to stay here and rest for a while. Moreover, demons are preparing to attack, and I thought I could stay and contribute. I wonder if you would allow...”

Ji Chen felt pleasantly surprised and smiled. "Of course, I appreciate your decision to stay and help the Ocean Crown."

Having a legendary powerhouse voluntarily stay behind to help was naturally a great thing. He was more than happy about it.

Lainekel also seemed quite pleased. With one more like-minded companion who didn't mind his friend staying behind, he wouldn't feel too lonely.

Although the world was vast, there weren't many places where he could find solace. If possible, he wanted to preserve this small piece of paradise, which, though not large, brought him some peace and tranquility.

Ji Chen quickly got to the main point of his visit.

"Lainekel, will the demons be restrained by the power of light?"

"Of course. Demons belong to chaos and evil. Their composition is made up of the most evil flesh energy in the world, a combination of many negative emotions," Lainekel said. "For them, the power of light is like the most poisonous toxin, causing them great harm upon contact."

Tens of thousands of years ago, during the Divine War, the followers of light under the command of the Goddess of Light were extremely proficient in light magic and made great contributions to combating demons. This has evolved into... what is now the Light Church in the Eastern Continent.

Lord Ji Chen, is this what you want?"

"I want to see if we can cultivate one or two units with the power of light to deal with demons."

Lainekel hesitated and said, "This may be a bit too late. Perhaps there isn't much time left to cultivate a new unit."

Cultivating units was possible; all major powers had the ability to do so.

But the problem was that creating a new unit wasn't something that could be done on a whim. It required a significant investment of resources and time to possibly develop a practical new unit, rather than some useless unit.

Facing Lainekel's persuasion, Ji Chen smiled nonchalantly.

"You don't need to worry about this. I have my ways."

Lainekel opened his mouth to speak but thought about Ji Chen being a Glory Lord, perhaps possessing special powers that he didn't know about, so he didn't say anything more.

Just now, he had witnessed the tremendous changes that had occurred in the Ocean Crown. How could such a large castle group appear out of nowhere? This kind of power couldn't possibly be possessed by ordinary people.

But what shocked him even more was that this power seemed to be possessed by all Glory Lords as easily as picking cabbages.

Was this reasonable?

Chapter 718 - Lainekel's Request: Demon Special Forces New Unit

Lainekel's Request: Demon Special Forces New Unit

Lainekel shook his head, realizing that the world had changed beyond his knowledge and imagination.

He felt like an old man of a bygone era, with the new world no longer able to accommodate his ship.

After a moment of silence, Lainekel spoke with solemnity, "Lord Jichen, I would like to ask for a favor."

"Please, go ahead."

"If one day you defeat the demonic army, I ask for the opportunity to seek revenge against the Dreadlord Balzama."

Ji Chen looked at Lainekel, whose eyes were filled with determination, his expression slightly surprised.

After a moment of silence, he nodded.

"I promise you."

A faint smile, barely noticeable, appeared on Lainekel's stiff face, but it was a smile of genuine happiness.

The tormented hero, even after escaping the abyss, still sought to wield the blade of revenge against the mastermind of his nightmares, to end the centuries of suffering.

Even if it was an impossible feat against an unbeatable foe.

Solidus's expression softened, determination growing within him.

He slowly realized that no race could stand alone in this war. If that was the case, then the Deep Sea Dragon Whales should not stand idly by.

"Lord Jichen."

Both Lainekel and Ji Chen turned to look at the humanoid dragon-whale.

"I believe the Deep Sea Dragon Whales can contribute to this war. I will do my best to rally my people and help you drive those evil demons back to where they belong, ensuring our ocean, our home, remains untainted by darkness."

"Just like the Dragon Whale Hero, who has forever slumbered in the void, didn't hesitate for a moment to sacrifice his life to stop the demons."

Lainekel clenched his fist with determination. "Yes, let's drive those demons back, no, exterminate them all!"

Jichen solemnly replied, "That is excellent. Thank you for contributing to this defensive war. The Ocean Crown will forever remember your contributions."

With the addition of the Deep Sea Dragon Whales, along with the Elven Empire, Dragon Island, and now the Deep Sea Dragon Whales, there were now four forces assisting the Ocean Crown.

Whether for self-interest or for justice and the greater good, having more allies was always beneficial.

Leaving Lainekele's place, Ji Chen returned to the Lord's Castle, or rather, the Lord's Castle Complex. Passing through the lowered drawbridge and three successive city gates, he finally entered the residential area.

Underneath the towering walls and towers were vast living spaces, filled with grasslands, private gardens, reception halls, swimming pools, and various other facilities, epitomizing the extravagant lifestyle of a lord.

Wilus had already arranged for many servants to settle in. Dozens of beautiful maids dressed in black and white stood on either side of the path to welcome him. Without exception, they looked upon him with reverence, their eyes filled with the fervor of meeting a deity.

For them, the gods resided high above in the heavens, too distant to reach. But here before them was a living deity they could touch.

They harbored no doubts about whether the Lord would ascend to godhood. As long as they faithfully served, they believed that one day, when the Lord ascended to his divine kingdom, they too would become citizens of that heavenly realm.

This trend of fervent belief was something Ji Chen found difficult to curb, yet there was no need to. He didn't need to do anything special. As long as he continued to grow stronger and occasionally bestowed favors, his subjects would regard him as a deity on earth, offering their unwavering loyalty and support.

The gods were all the same in this regard; in the process of becoming stronger, they amassed followers, naturally gaining loyal supporters and believers upon ascension to godhood.

Nightfall descended.

Under the care of the maids, Ji Chen finished his dinner, took a bath, and declined their implied offers to accompany him to bed. Instead, he draped himself in a coat made of deep-sea merfabric and sat on the castle terrace.

He opened the Military Talent Tree.

The strategy for cultivating units with the power of light was to utilize the fusion function of the talent tree.

In theory, as long as they fused with units of the light element, they could cultivate units with the power of light. In Ji Chen's vision, this new unit should possess the ability to combat demons with light power while also being capable of fighting in oceanic environments.

At the same time, their tier couldn't be too low; otherwise, no matter how they countered, it would be futile.

Currently, Jichen didn't have any light-based units, but fortunately, there were many merchants on New Moon Islands who specialized in selling core units for recruitment camps. They naturally had some resources on hand.

At his command, the maids quickly went to purchase several core units for light-based recruitment camps. When those merchants heard it was for Ji Chen, they all offered discounts without hesitation. In the end, a total of one million five hundred thousand gold coins were spent to purchase cores for four different light-based units.

None of the four units were fifth or even sixth tier; the highest was only a four-tier, ninth-star unit.

However, Jichen wasn't disappointed. A fourth-tier unit was probably the highest-grade unit commonly circulated in the market. Fifth-tier units were only available through special channels, and sixth-tier units were almost never circulated, as they were the main units of various major forces.

Ji Chen examined the four light-based units one by one.

- Light Attendant: Fourth Tier, 5 Stars.
- Radiant Falcon: Fourth Tier, 3 Stars.
- Light Controller: Fourth Tier, 6 Stars.
- Sacred Priest: Fourth Tier, 9 Stars.

As expected of light-based units, the names of the units were more or less related to light, radiance, and holiness. Without wasting any time, he opened the unit fusion page and matched these four units with the existing Ocean Crown units.

[Compatibility between Light Attendant and Tyrant Azure Dragon]: 21%.

[Compatibility between Sacred Priest and Sea Crystal Wurm]: 9%-

[Compatibility between Radiant Falcon and Ocean Blood Dragon]: 33%.

[Compatibility between Light Controller and Heavy Armor Toothfish Knight]: 15%.

To Ji Chen's great disappointment, the compatibility between these four light-based units and most of the Ocean Crown units was extremely low, with some even in single digits, indicating just how mismatched they were.

With a mindset of giving it a try, he also included other non-main force units for matching.

The panel refreshed.

As Jichen's gaze shifted downward, his eyes lit up when he saw the second-to-last row.

[Compatibility between Light Controller and Tidal Sea Spirit: Darkness]: 99%.

Goodness, a combination with a whopping 99% compatibility appeared!?

What surprised him the most was that the Tidal Sea Spirit was not a combat unit; it could only possess ships to replace human control of vessels. He hadn't expected such a high compatibility with it.

As for the Light Controller, it was a type of spellcasting unit, primarily attacking by casting area-of-effect light damage spells. It didn't have any outstanding features.

Was there any connection between the two? At least Ji Chen couldn't think of one, but as a pragmatist, whether they were connected or not didn't matter as long as they were effective.

Based on his experience from the previous fusion, the Military Talent Tree rarely produced mediocre units through fusion; without exception, they were all more powerful units.

To ensure that the new unit possessed the power of light, Ji Chen primarily used the Light Controller, supplemented by the Tidal Sea Spirit, without hesitation. He directly spent one million units of rare resources on fusion.

The inventory of rare resources decreased by one million, leaving over 3.6 million units now.

“The fusion of Light Controller and Tidal Sea Spirit succeeded, creating the new unit: Light Sea Spirit.”

[Light Sea Spirit]

[Race]: Sea Spirit

[Tier]: Fourth Tier, 7 Stars

[Skills]: Light Realm (Purple skill, embodies light to continuously damage enemies within a certain range [15 meters], deals extra damage to demonic and other evil units)

Light Resonance (Purple skill, can link together to jointly build a large area Light Realm, enhancing sustained damage, can unite up to 50 units, maximum range is 200 meters in diameter)

Spirit Form (Purple skill, enters complete spiritual form, immune to 90% physical and magical damage, lasts for up to 1 minute)

Spiritual Gathering (Purple skill, Light Sea Spirits can merge with each other, condensing into more powerful collective fusion, the more units merged, the stronger the power, can merge up to 50 units)

Spiritual Attachment (Purple skill, can attach to the weapons of other units, enabling them to inflict light damage, deals additional damage to evil units) [Unit Characteristics]: Light Spirit Form (a form between physical and spiritual, immune to 75% physical damage and 75% light magic damage)

[The fused unit of Light Controller and Tidal Sea Spirit, possesses the characteristics and abilities of both units]

Ji Chen's eyes showed some interest.

This unit was quite intriguing.

The skills possessed by the Light Sea Spirit are all excellent, with wide-ranging damage and decent survivability. Not only can it construct more powerful skill effects through “resonance,” but it also has the ability to buff allies similarly. Overall, it was quite a powerful unit.

However, the drawback lay in its tier not being particularly high, perhaps being dragged down by the Tidal Sea Spirit, which was only at the fourth tier, 1 star.

But this was hardly a concern in the face of the military talent tree; levels could be raised in no time.

With the confirmation that the Light Sea Spirit was the unit he desired, Ji Chen didn't hesitate. He confirmed the fusion and then took out ten blank imprint recruit camps obtained from exploring the dark waters of the Great Luminescent Sea, imprinting this new unit into them.

In this way, he wouldn't need to occupy the only Tidal Sea Spirit recruit camp. The ability of the Tidal Sea Spirit to possess ships was of great help in enhancing naval combat capabilities.

Ji Chen arrived at the location where the recruit camps were placed, tapping them to recruit the ten Light Sea Spirit camps. First, the fourth-tier Light Sea Spirits were recruited, followed by immediate reinforcement using the military talent tree.

The goal: sixth tier!

“Consuming 1.5 million units of rare resources, 210,000 units of spirit crystals, Light Sea Spirit (fourth tier, 7 stars) —? Light Sea Sovereign (sixth tier, 5 stars).”

First, advancing to the fifth tier with 1.5 million units of rare resources, then advancing to the sixth tier with 210,000 units of spirit crystals.

With just a gentle click twice, a fourth-tier unit instantly transformed into a sixth-tier unit, requiring only some resources.

The resources needed to cultivate such a unit by the indigenous people would have been a hundredfold or even a thousandfold higher, not to mention the incalculable time.

This was enough to show the power of the military talent tree.

Each recruit camp could recruit 10 Light Sea Sovereigns per week, each requiring 60 units of spirit crystals. With ten camps, he could recruit as many as 100 per week, totaling 6,000 units of spirit crystals per week.

This was still considered relatively low; for example, recruiting a sixth-tier, 8- star Ocean Blood Dragon required 150 units of spirit crystals, totaling a whopping 21,000 units of spirit crystals per week

Without exaggeration, just this one unit was enough to crush an ordinary territory.

Ji Chen once again checked the panel of the Light Sea Sovereign, now enhanced to a sixth-tier unit.

[Light Sea Sovereign]

[Race]: Sea Spirit

[Tier]: Sixth tier, 5 stars

[Skills]: Light Sea (Orange skill, incarnates light to continuously damage enemies within a certain range [fifty meters], dealing extra damage to demon-type and other evil units)

Light Sea Resonance (Orange skill, can mutually link and build a large-scale light domain, increasing sustained damage, can link up to 500 units, with a maximum range of one thousand meters)

Spiritualization (Orange skill, enters complete spiritualization, immune to 99% physical and magical damage, lasting up to thirty minutes)

Fusion of Spirits (Orange skill, Light Sea Sovereigns can merge with each other, condensing into a more powerful individual fusion body, the more units merged, the stronger the power, can merge up to 500 units)

Spirit Attachment (Orange skill, can attach to the weapons of other units, making their attacks possess light damage, causing an additional 300% light damage to evil units)

[Unit Characteristics]: Light Spirit Body (Form between physical and spiritual, immune to 99% physical damage and 99% light-based magical damage)

[Fusion unit of Light Controller and Tidal Sea Spirit, possessing the characteristics and abilities of both units]

Chapter 719 - Spy and Counter-Spy

Spy and Counter-Spy

After reading the information panel of the Light Sea Sovereign, Ji Chen was pleasantly surprised.

From Tier 4 to Tier 6, wouldn't the combat power of this unit increase by more than tenfold?

Perhaps individually their strength might be just that, but thanks to their fusion skills, the upper limit of this unit has been raised to an extremely high level.

From the outside, the Guardian of the Light Sea Sovereign looked like clusters of golden lights about half the height of a person, emitting golden light that resembled sunlight in the dark night, extremely dazzling.

As their master, Ji Chen could see through the light and discern within each cluster, transparent floating humanoid ghosts with blurred faces. From them, he could feel a sense of submissive affinity.

One hundred Light Sea Sovereigns floating around resembled large fireflies or light bulbs, giving off a peculiar sensation.

He was very satisfied with this new unit specialized in demon assaults and had high expectations for them, instructing the Light Sea Sovereigns not to expose themselves to the outside world to avoid alerting demons.

He hoped to give the demons a big surprise later!

Feeling quite pleased, Ji Chen returned to the Lord's Castle, only to find Wilus waiting at the city gate, his honest face illuminated by the light, showing a hint of anxiety, evidently something urgent.

"Wilus, is there something you need to report?"

Upon hearing Ji Chen's voice, Wilus nodded, speaking hurriedly, "My Lord, Miss Monica has sent a message. The Deep Sea Church has become active again in Lienhardt."

Ji Chen furrowed his brows. Ever since the last time they besieged the followers of the Deep Sea Church, those human-hybridized beings who sought to infiltrate human society had hidden away like rats in the sewer.

He hadn't expected them to start causing trouble again at this time.

"In addition, news has just arrived from the Maple Principality and the Elven Empire. The Deceiver has once again appeared on a large scale in the Northern Continent, disrupting war workshops and launching terror attacks on military camps and important facilities.

Mountain trolls, troll warlords, and other troll groups have also shown signs of activity almost simultaneously, beginning large-scale mobilization of soldiers and assembling armies toward the border.

Coincidentally, goblins, gnomes, and even dungeon races are also stirring, intending to attack other human kingdoms and orderly races.

Ji Chen's expression finally turned serious as he said in a deep voice, "This doesn't sound like a coincidence."

"Yes," Wilus said with a solemn expression, "They seem to have received some kind of instruction, agreeing on a specific time to launch simultaneous attacks, and the targets of the attacks are all forces of the orderly fraction."

At this point, Ji Chen had already formed an answer in his mind.

—Demons.

This was obviously the work of demons, and the purpose was also clear, to distract the attention of the orderly fraction, weaken the war potential, and create favorable conditions for their attack.

But what surprised him a bit was that the Sea Heirs and the Deceivers turned out to be on the side of the demons, or rather, on the side of the evil fraction.

The former gave the impression of a bunch of twisted tentacle monsters with distorted thoughts, clamoring about glorious evolution and blessings from their master, making people feel spiritually contaminated.

The latter was just a group of fanatics who, though not as neurotic as the Sea Heirs, were no better, talking about hating gods and wanting to slay gods, but at first, Ji Chen thought they were some formidable organization, but after a single encounter, their true colors were revealed instantly. Oh well, they're just a bunch of paranoid lunatics and noobs.

Aren't you supposed to be hostile to gods and their believers? How come you're in cahoots with demons who worship dark gods? Where's your professional ethics?

Ji Chen secretly expressed disdain for them.

After pondering for a moment, Ji Chen said in a serious tone, "Since the demons' minions and accomplices are no longer concealing their evil deeds, we, as their archenemies, may perhaps be their next target for attack. Spread my orders, increase patrols immediately, especially to guard against deceivers like those who have hidden hearts of demons infiltrating the New Moon Islands!"

The enemies weren't frightening; what was truly terrifying were those who looked just like ordinary people but harbored dark intentions, for they caused the greatest harm from within.

This incident served as a reminder to Ji Chen that it wasn't only the evil forces that needed to be guarded against, but also certain humans and races, because no one knew if demons had already begun corrupting them in secret.

just like Lainekele being transformed, if the Dreadlord Balzama could alter a human into a half-demon, half-human creature obedient to it, there was a possibility that humans could be turned into puppets with hearts as dark as demons, outwardly indistinguishable from humans but completely under the demons' control.

Ji Chen lightly patted Wilus on the shoulder, speaking with gravity. "Wilus, make good use of the residents of the Crown of the Ocean. The power of the masses is formidable."

A look of confusion flashed in Wilus's eyes, but then he seemed to realize something, his eyes brightening.

"My lord, I understand."

Ji Chen nodded approvingly, pleased that his teachings had not been in vain. Although Wilus was a native of the region, under Ji Chen's guidance and influence, his thinking had progressed towards higher levels and directions. Such high levels of public support were also undoubtedly due to his efforts. With the condition of high public morale and a solid mass base in the territory, the Crown of the Ocean could easily establish an intelligence-gathering and counter-spy system akin to that of the morning sun aunty. Those troublemakers, no matter how much they wanted to cause trouble, wouldn't be able to do so without leaving a trace.

Thus, launching a "people's war" was also in line with the specific circumstances and conditions.

The so-called specific circumstances called for a specific analysis, nothing more than being truthful.

The next morning, Wilus began this work, and by the afternoon, several residents had used a specially set-up reporting channel to expose the suspicious activities of certain merchants and servants who had arrived from the outside world, behaving in a furtive manner.

-- In fact, to outsiders, there seemed to be nothing unusual, but in the eyes of the residents of the Crown of the Ocean, the behavior of these individuals appeared extremely suspicious and abnormal.

After understanding the situation and collecting reliable evidence, Wilus, upon consulting with Ji Chen, immediately issued the order for their arrest.

In an inn, an ordinary-looking merchant was enjoying his meal in the lobby when suddenly, a dozen soldiers from the Crown of the Ocean burst in and arrested him in front of everyone.

A bare-armed sailor was walking down the street, appearing to be leisurely strolling, but his eyes never stopped observing the surroundings. Suddenly, he stopped in his tracks, his face turning pale, as a squad of lizardmen soldiers surrounded him.

The lead lizardmen captain, with crimson eyes, coldly stated, "We are guards of the New Moon Islands. Based on reliable evidence, you are suspected of engaging in espionage. You are under arrest. Please cooperate with us." A merchant ship about to depart was intercepted. Soldiers on

alchemy airships boarded the deck and rushed into the cabins to drag out a well-dressed merchant, escorting him onto the deck

Before leaving, the soldier captain in charge of the arrest loudly explained to the bewildered passengers on board, “This individual is a spy infiltrating the New Moon Islands, gathering intelligence for the Crown of the Ocean. We are acting on orders from Lord Ji Chen to apprehend him. You need not worry! The Crown of the Ocean welcomes all who abide by the law, but will not tolerate those with malicious intentions seeking to spy and sabotage!

With that said, the captain waved his hand, instructing the team to escort the pale-faced merchant onto the airship, ascending into the sky towards the mainland.

Similar scenes unfolded across various parts of the New Moon Islands. Those apprehended included merchants, sailors from merchant ships, craftsmen aboard ships, or ship guards.

Some chose to surrender when surrounded by soldiers, while others attempted to resist, only to be subdued by the dozens of heroes in the green elite tier, blue excellent tier, and even purple rare tier who were already on standby, forcefully apprehending them.

Dealing with them didn’t require the involvement of high-ranking heroes. Regardless of their identities, at this moment, they all became prisoners under the Crown of the Ocean.

In the Lord’s castle.

Ji Chen sat at the head of the conference table, leaning back in a soft chair, listening to Wilus report on the situation regarding the spy captures. “According to the clues provided by residents and our investigations, a total of thirty-eight spies have been discovered and successfully apprehended.” Wilus reported, “With the assistance of Lady Alice, we quickly extracted important information from them. Through preliminary interrogation, these captured spies are mainly from different nations or hired by various races. There are spies from the three countries along the northwest coast, Maplewood Principality, as well as other races and factions.

The three countries along the northwest coast refer to Lienhardt, the Thorey Kingdom, and the Pelan Kingdom. Originally, there were four countries, but since the Kingdom of Bass was annihilated, it naturally became three.

While he could understand why spies from the Thorey Kingdom and the Pelan Kingdom were sent, why would Lienhardt also dispatch spies?

Addressing this issue, Wilus’s expression was somewhat subtle as he explained, “According to the interrogation results, the spies from Lienhardt are not sent by the underlings of Duke Julius or Monica Valencia, but by other nobles of Lienhardt. Their purpose in sending these spies is not to gather military intelligence, but rather to ascertain Your Excellency’s preferences... urn, regarding your preferences in the opposite sex, to send over suitable young heirs in the hopes of gaining your favor.”

Ji Chen was momentarily stunned, feeling a mix of amusement and exasperation. Wilus had phrased it quite tactfully. These indigenous nobles were quite shrewd in their calculations. However, using family descendants for marriage alliances was a conventional tactic for them.

He had seen some indigenous nobles on the chat channels employing marriage alliances, sending young descendants from collateral branches to players with decent power, and continuously providing resources for investment.

While decadent in some aspects, these indigenous nobles were not stingy when it came to investments, discerning the potential of players to some extent.

Of course, it could also be that they simply had too much money to spend. Nevertheless, experiencing such a situation himself felt somewhat surreal. “..After confirming their true intentions, if they are indeed only seeking such favors, detain them for a few days and then release these relatively harmless spies.”

“Understood.”

“Continue.”

Wilus nodded. “Apart from the aforementioned countries, we also discovered spies hired by the Light Church.”

Ji Chen raised an eyebrow. What was this about now?

He recalled that the Crown of the Ocean had absolutely no dealings with this faction. So why would they send spies to infiltrate the New Moon Islands?

Chapter 720 The Threat of the Holy Light Sect

The Light Church was an empire-level force entrenched in the Eastern Continent. As its name suggested, it was a divine sect, worshipping one of the main gods, the Goddess of Light.

Different from the light religious tint of the Elven Empire’s beliefs, the Light Church was more akin to the religions found on Earth, possessing a strong religious hue. From top to bottom, the Pope, bishops, priests, deacons, and others had distinct religious characteristics.

Lainekel also mentioned that after the Divine War, perhaps because the orderly gods, including the Goddess of Light, no longer walked the earth, the Light Church, composed purely of divine faith, quickly fragmented due to dissent among several high-ranking members.

Today’s Light Church was not the same as it once was, resisting the vanguard of demons, possessing a pure faith-based organization. It had been through several splits, destructions, reconstructions, and revivals.

“Lord, the spy sent by the Light Church is a fanatic believer, with extremely firm faith and will. Even Lady Alice can only obtain partial information with her intervention.”

Speaking of the Light Church, Wilus’s face shows a hint of seriousness, speaking with a heavy tone, “The Light Church intends to attack the Ocean Crown!”

“What’s the reason?”

“It seems to be related to your power.”

Ji Chen squints, showing some interest on his face, and gestures with his chin

to continue.

Wilus takes a deep breath and continues, “According to the investigation of that fanatic believer’s memories, he was sent by one of the factions within the Light Church, the Holy Light Sect.”

“The Holy Light Sect?”

“Yes, my Lord. The Holy Light Sect is the most radical, fanatical, and extreme faction within the Light Church, and they are the most thorough in implementing the divine oracle. They often crusade against other churches in the Eastern Continent in the name of eradicating heretics and upholding the divine oracle. Sometimes, they even go mad enough to attack other factions within the Light Church. Its followers are all extremely militant and fervent warriors.

And the Light Church is no longer the force it once was, guided by unified church ideology. Although it appears unified on the surface, many people know that it has long disintegrated internally, with various factions unrelated to each other, only gathering together when the interests of the entire church are at stake.

So this time, the Holy Light Sect sends a spy to gather intelligence, intending to attack the Ocean Crown, a plan unknown to other factions within the church.

And according to the memories, the explanation given by the high-level members of the Holy Light Sect is roughly that the gods have descended the divine oracle, stating that you, my Lord, have long been bewitched by demons, turned into a puppet. Not only have you harbored a demon-remodeled person in your territory, but you have also deceived major powers to trust you, acting as an insider for demons, ready to strike back when war breaks out.”

After Wilus finished speaking, he sighed and said, “This sounds ridiculous, but those fanatical believers of the Holy Light Sect seem to believe it completely. Their reasoning is, how could you become so powerful in such a short time without the help of demons?”

Ji Chen’s mouth twitched, a look of speechlessness on her face. There were even such miraculous reasons...

Was it his fault that he became powerful so quickly?

From the conversation, it was easy to hear that this matter originated from the upper echelons of the Light Church.

These charlatans must have lost their minds to claim that there was an oracle saying he was bewitched by demons. This was obviously absurd. The orderly gods were restrained by the dark gods, and even the Elven Mother Goddess, Eluvita, could not deliver an oracle. How could the Goddess of Light manage to do so?

Furthermore, it was clear that the demon-remodeled person referred to Lainekel. So the question arose: only Ji Chen, Miligas, the Elven Queen Laphia, Elin, and a handful of elves knew of Lainekel’s existence.

Moreover, how did the Holy Light Sect know that the Ocean Crown sided with a demon-remodeled person?

Excluding their side leaking information, apart from them, demons also knew about this.

So the answer was already very clear.

—This was probably the handiwork of some demon lord.

Somehow, demons had managed to make the upper echelons of the Holy Light Sect mistakenly believe they had received an oracle, or perhaps they had already secretly bewitched the upper echelons, manipulating them into starting a war.

Otherwise, no matter how crazy they were, they wouldn't strike at the Ocean Crown at such a critical juncture, damaging their own power for no reason. After figuring this out, Ji Chen quickly made a decision and said in a deep voice, "This is most likely the work of some demon lord... Regardless, since the Light Church wants to attack the Ocean Crown, we naturally cannot sit idly by. Now immediately dispatch reconnaissance teams to patrol the waters east of the New Moon Islands, and be sure to spot the fleet of the Light Church in time!"

The Light Church was a force in the Eastern Continent. To reach the New Moon islands, they would have to cross half of the Western-Mid Ocean. Considering that this was a plan manipulated by some demon lord, the fleet of the Light Church might have already set sail.

Ji Chen didn't want the enemy fleet to arrive at their doorstep tomorrow without their knowledge.

At this moment, in a sea area of the East Pacific, a large fleet composed of hundreds of ships was sailing steadily.

On the deck, believers wearing white robes were kneeling, their eyes closed tightly, their hands clasped together in prayer.

"Great, supreme, eternal Goddess of Light tells us, in the distant Western-Mid Ocean, the puppet manipulated by evil has gained the trust of the world through deceitful words, and darkness shrouds the heavens and the earth!" "Great, supreme, eternal Goddess of Light tells us, if allowed to continue, the world will be engulfed in endless darkness, and the light will fade away!" "Great, supreme, eternal Goddess of Light tells us, to wield the weapons in our hands, the fervent holy words, the blazing light, to give great purification to evil!"

"To give great purification!"

The worshippers opened their eyes, lifted their weapons high, and passionately shouted on each ship.

On the main ship at the heart of the fleet, Bishop Plas, clad in a creamy white robe and sporting a gentle, serene countenance, absorbed the fervent cries that nearly drowned out the ocean's roar. A subtle glint of crimson danced in his eyes.

Then he walked into the cabin and entered a hidden chamber. As soon as he opened the door, a foul smell rushed out.

But Plas showed no reaction, quickly closed the hatch, and went to the deepest part under the dim light.

A tall figure sat quietly on the throne.

Approaching this figure, Plas bowed to the ground with reverence and fervor. “Your Excellency Vida, everything is going smoothly according to plan now. That territory will soon be conquered by us, completing the mission given to us by King Darius.”

The figure moved slightly, gradually revealing itself from the dim light.

His skin, as dark and rough as pitch, bore veins that crawled like serpents across his chest. Though human in appearance, his eyes swirled with a blood-like hue, emitting a powerful aura of malevolence and bloodthirstiness.

This human or monster called Lord Vida showed a touch of satisfaction on his face.

“Indeed, after the success, I will mention your merits to King Darius.” Plas became excited. “Thank you for your promotion, your Excellency.” Vida spoke with emphasis and seriousness.

“But even if the advantage is great, do not underestimate this war. King Darius entrusted me with the task, and the lord of that territory is formidable.

Once we reach our destination, I will personally block that lord, and you will take advantage of this opportunity to land quickly, slaughtering any living beings on the island, and destroying all buildings and facilities, only then can the mission be accomplished.”

Plas said with hatred, “Of course, any creatures that try to stop the demons from returning to this world must be eradicated. Demons are the supreme race, while humans, elves, and other races can only be slaves!”

Vida expressed satisfaction. “Your mindset demonstrates real potential for acceptance by demons. I hope that one day, like me, you’ll receive an infusion of demon blood and evolve into a genuine demon.”

Plas nodded excitedly, quickly ended the conversation, and left.

As he closed the cabin door and turned away, his fervent gaze instantly returned to calm, a hint of scorn appearing at the corner of his mouth. Humph, who the hell wants to become a real demon and end up looking like you?

What a joke.

If it weren’t for having no other choice, why would he submit to these demons, even more evil than the infidels?