

Sixth 431

Chapter 431: The Death of Malcolm

Herag's current level is still too low, and he is not qualified to access higher-level information.

The higher-ups of the Wizard Alliance probably know some relevant information, but as a Level 1 Junior Wizard, he currently has no chance to reach that level.

As Herag continuously uses the Desolate Plague to absorb life energy, the flesh and blood ground gradually turns grayish-white, losing its vitality like gray stone.

Gradually, this expanse of flesh and blood ground turns completely grayish-white.

Herag obviously feels that the life energy absorbed is much less than before, but he still does not stop, swearing to drain the last ounce of life energy.

At this moment, Malcolm no longer has the energy to deal with Herag. He tried various ways to stop Herag from absorbing life energy, but all failed.

In this form, many of his methods couldn't be used, putting him in a predicament instead.

Malcolm decided to use this magic to deal with Herag after seeing Herag's terrifying power and speed.

Originally, according to his assessment of Herag's strength, the flesh and blood ground magic should have perfectly restrained Herag.

Unexpectedly, Herag has the ability to absorb life energy without limitation.

If he had known this earlier, Malcolm would not have chosen to respond to Herag in this way.

But now, he has no chance to regret it.

As a large amount of life energy drains, Malcolm becomes weaker and weaker, gradually unable to maintain the form of the flesh and blood ground.

After the blood-red ground turns grayish-white, it gradually turns into solid stone, having reverted to its original stone nature.

After Herag absorbs all the life energy, the flesh and blood ground starts to slowly turn into stone.

Observing this process, Herag realizes why Malcolm doesn't cancel this state.

It's not that he doesn't want to cancel it, but rather he can't cancel it quickly.

Malcolm is undoubtedly a true genius wizard, with many spells of his own research.

But even for a genius, the spells he researches always have drawbacks, as the combat environment is full of various factors.

The spells that are still widely circulated may not be very strong, but they certainly have high universality.

It was actually the first time Malcolm used this spell in combat, and he never thought about the problem of life energy being absorbed.

When the land completely turned grayish-white, Herag discovered a skeleton appeared on the open ground ahead.

When he approached, he found it wasn't a typical skeleton, but a skin and bones figure; the flesh was completely shriveled.

Herag observed it carefully for a while and couldn't recognize that it was Malcolm.

But judging from its aura, this skeleton was indeed Malcolm.

Upon closer inspection, Herag found that Malcolm was not dead yet, still possessing extremely weak life energy.

Malcolm's heart was completely shriveled and not beating, yet he still had not completely died.

If given a long time, he might slowly recover.

Herag certainly wouldn't give him this chance; once he acts, it's to eliminate all threats.

Taking a deep breath, Herag's body instantly swelled again. He clenched his right fist, his whole body's muscles tensed tightly.

Boom!

The punch made a huge noise, echoing in this space.

Malcolm's already fragile body instantly shattered; all his bones turned into bone fragments.

Herag glanced at the scattered bone fragments, and with a wave of his hand, used magic power to gather every piece of bone in front of him.

Then, he punched again, shattering them even more thoroughly.

This was not the end. Gathering magic power in his hand, Herag cast one Fireball Technique after another at those bone fragments, completely incinerating them.

After burning with the Fireball Technique many times, Herag took out a round-bottomed flask and collected all the ash that was left.

He planned to store it for now, and later find a suitable witch array to seal it away.

Although it seemed a bit excessive, Herag thought it was absolutely necessary; Malcolm must not be given even the slightest chance.

Being cautious was absolutely necessary, merely a bit more troublesome, but it was to eliminate future troubles.

After collecting all the ashes, Herag still did not finish completely.

The flesh had been destroyed, but the soul remained.

Malcolm was a specialist necromancer; if his soul wasn't completely obliterated, it would be an ongoing threat.

"Undead Perception."

Using Undead Perception, Herag quickly discovered Malcolm's soul, standing bewildered in front of him.

Normally, after a human dies, their soul leaves the body. At this time, the soul is usually in a bewildered state, temporarily inactive.

After some time, as the soul gradually awakens, it begins to recover some memory.

If a means to sustain one's soul for longer life isn't found quickly at this point, the soul will start to dissipate slowly until it completely vanishes from this world.

Herag expected that a necromancer like Malcolm would have a way to make his soul awaken quickly.

But from a present view, Malcolm's soul was still in a bewildered state, not yet at the point of awakening.

"Undead Sword."

Herag rapidly gathered an Undead Magic Sword in his hand, a necromancy spell he'd learned from Lady Moran in the Moonlight Forest that can effectively harm spirit bodies.

Holding the silvery Undead Sword, Herag thrust it into Malcolm's soul's forehead.

After piercing with the Undead Sword, a crack appeared on Malcolm's forehead, with countless white lights emanating from the crack.

It seemed like some cognition returned to Malcolm's soul's eyes, looking at Herag with anger and terror, his mouth agape as if to shout, but no sound emerged.

At this moment, countless cracks spread from the center of Malcolm's soul's forehead.

A moment later, his soul completely shattered until it vanished entirely.

After Herag thoroughly obliterated Malcolm's soul, only then did he breathe a sigh of relief.

He picked up a silvery ring from the ground, which was Malcolm's Space Ring.

Holding the Space Ring, Herag felt that killing this man was like ridding the Wizard Plane of a menace.

There were indeed many valuable items in Malcolm's Space Ring.

Yet, anyone looking into his Space Ring would likely feel an instinctive disgust.

The Space Ring was like a slaughterhouse, except the subjects weren't pigs or dogs, but humans.

Herag felt a bit uneasy holding this Space Ring; if people from the Wizard Alliance learned about this and thought he did it, they would probably execute him immediately.

Chapter 432: Spoils of War

Herag saw the tragic scene in the space ring and couldn't help but wonder how Malcolm managed to do these things after entering the Land of Dawn.

He thought for a moment and then recalled Malcolm's mentor, the Level 3 Wizard Fran.

Now that he had killed Malcolm, he was bound to provoke this Level 3 Wizard.

Realizing this, Herag immediately considered the potential threat.

After leaving the X-617 World, he must head back to Serlandir's territory as soon as possible.

Because many people saw Malcolm enter the black space with him, if Malcolm didn't return, it must be Herag who killed him.

If Herag doesn't leave the Central Region, a neutral zone, quickly, he couldn't escape once Fran finds him.

Apart from the flesh and blood, Herag also saw a black sphere in the space ring, which Malcolm used to draw him in for a one-on-one fight, but unfortunately, he was killed instead.

In this space, the teleportation ring doesn't work because it is already in another space, with no space passage to the Wizard Plane.

Herag took out the black space, and after infusing magic power, he understood how to use this Level 3 Witchcraft Artifact.

If he wanted, he could exit this space at any time or enter whenever he wished.

The black space can also designate a target and absorb it inside.

Unless the opponent has special means or is a Level 2 Wizard who has comprehended rule power, a typical Level 1 Wizard cannot resist this attraction.

However, the magic itself has no killing power; you must take action yourself to deal with the people inside.

Moreover, it's not very realistic to keep people trapped inside all the time because while others exist in the black space, the magic power consumption increases dramatically, requiring you to input a lot of magic power at intervals to maintain it.

Otherwise, it won't be long before the people inside are automatically expelled, demanding high magic power from the owner.

This Level 3 Witchcraft Artifact has a high tier, so naturally, the consumption is much higher.

Herag felt that if he didn't have enough magic power, he wouldn't necessarily be able to use this artifact.

This also indirectly shows how terrifying Malcolm's magic power was, maintaining the black space while fighting Herag.

"This is..."

Herag saw a thick roll of parchment, which turned out to be a magic called 'Bloodstained Skin' after he took it out and examined it.

It was clear that this was Malcolm's manuscript, detailing the entire process of researching this magic, including various formulas and experimental records.

The Bloodstained Skin greatly enhances a wizard's speed, power, constitution, and other physical qualities, boasting formidable combat abilities.

Herag initially thought about studying it but abandoned the idea after reading.

The reason was that condensing the Bloodstained Skin required a large amount of human flesh, blood, souls, and grudges, making it a magic that infuriated the heavens and enraged people.

If Herag dared to perform such magic in the Land of Dawn, it would be akin to courting death, and he didn't have a Level 3 Wizard as a mentor to shield him.

Moreover, Herag couldn't bring himself to do such things as he had the most basic moral bottom line.

Though the Bloodstained Skin is powerful, it's nothing compared to his own Titan Power, having no learning value.

Besides the Bloodstained Skin, there were many others magic researched by Malcolm.

But none were normal; Herag didn't want to be imprisoned by Serlandir for learning such magic.

Herag initially planned to burn these magical materials but decided to keep them after some thought.

Herag certainly wouldn't let these magics spread out; his lack of interest in learning doesn't mean others wouldn't.

Once circulated, it would probably lead to all sorts of tragedies.

Herag kept them only to study Malcolm's thoughts and ideas, which could be a useful reference.

Malcolm indeed had to be called a genius; it's a pity his talents were wrongly applied.

Besides the black space, Herag discovered another Level 3 Witchcraft Artifact, a black umbrella.

After taking out the black umbrella, Herag learned the name of this artifact, 'Fallen Wings,' supposedly made from a feather of a powerful existence from some plane.

Fallen Wings is a super-enhanced version of the Wildfire Tent, capable of directly opening up a space for living and viewing the surroundings.

With this, Herag could draw a mark on a wall, stone, or even a tree, allowing the space of Fallen Wings to appear.

Unlike the black space, Fallen Wings can observe the surroundings at any time without worrying about being discovered since it is in another space.

The black space cannot see what's outside; it doesn't know what's happening out there.

From this perspective, black space is not suitable for outdoor habitation, while Fallen Wings was likely Malcolm's outdoor dwelling.

Herag also found a Level 2 Witchcraft Artifact, a straw doll, about the size of a palm.

"Cursed Doll: After obtaining the target's blood or bodily tissues, it can cause misfortune to befall the target within twenty-four hours, repeatedly encountering deadly threats."

Herag viewed this as a curse-type artifact, and the curse's effect varies based on the individual.

The weaker the target's strength, the more likely they will die from various unfortunate events, but for Level 1 and Level 2 Wizards, it's less easy to die from accidents, mostly encountering troubles.

Herag thought this artifact seemed to be somewhat useless and not very practical.

However, if used cleverly, it might yield unexpected effects, depending on the timing of use.

Herag also put away the cursed doll and continued to inventory Malcolm's space ring.

Later, Herag discovered eight Level 1 Witchcraft Artifacts, some functional, some offensive, and some defensive.

These Level 1 Artifacts were of little use to Malcolm previously, rarely used, and had been left in the space ring gathering dust.

Herag wasn't picky, collecting them all into his space ring, never having too many of these.

Aside from these artifacts, there were a great number of precious magic potion materials and casting materials. Herag collected them all as well.

The value of these materials is very high, whether used personally or sold later, it would yield no small profit.

Herag glanced at the suddenly cramped space ring, feeling perhaps it's the night's grass that fattens the horse, as his wallet instantly became full.

Unfortunately, there were few magic stones, only scattered ones totaling around fifteen thousand, implying most of them were deposited in a bank, out of Herag's reach.

Malcolm is dead, and his talisman stones cannot be utilized by others, nor used for bank transfers and similar operations.

Chapter 433: Capture

Herag tossed Malcolm's talisman stone onto the ground, then smashed it into powder with a full-force punch.

After destroying the talisman stone, Herag continued to inventory Malcolm's space ring, taking out everything of value inside.

He hadn't decided what to do with the remaining flesh yet, and he didn't want this space ring because it was too "dirty."

Who knows how many lives are inside; it's a hot potato that would be hard to explain if someone else found it with him.

Herag planned to find an appropriate time later to dispose of this space ring.

He hadn't figured out how to deal with it yet; it needed to be handled properly.

After carefully checking Malcolm's space ring several times, Herag temporarily put it aside, intending to dispose of it at an appropriate time later.

He took out the black space, and with a thought, returned to the original place.

The landing point was still the same as before, but there were no other wizards around, presumably gone to chase the white deer.

Most people weren't very concerned about the fight between Herag and Malcolm, as it had nothing to do with them.

The main purpose of coming to the X-617 world was to compete for world control, so they naturally couldn't stay in place waiting for the two to come out.

Herag immediately surveyed the surroundings, and after not discovering any potential dangers, began searching for the location of the white deer.

After obtaining the black space, he immediately had some thoughts; perhaps the black space could capture the white deer.

Herag even suspected that Malcolm had received some advance information, which is why he had the witchcraft artifact, the black space.

Perhaps the black space was prepared for him by Fran, specifically for capturing the white deer, but now it was in Herag's hands.

Herag spent four or five hours in the black space and, upon coming out, didn't see a single person.

He temporarily didn't know which direction the white deer went, nor could he find anyone to ask.

Herag looked around, deduced the direction of human activity from some traces, and then began to track along those traces.

Fortunately, there were quite a few people here, which suggested they all chased after the white deer together, leaving clear traces for Herag to easily follow.

Herag followed these traces, advancing at full speed.

About an hour later, Herag spotted some traces of people.

After walking forward a while, he found quite a number of people with wizards appearing everywhere.

However, judging by their looks, they seemed to have lost track of the white deer and were scattered around searching.

Herag also joined the search team, conducting an environmental scan and searching everywhere.

Two hours later, when Herag flew to the top of a mountain to rest for a moment, he spotted traces of the white deer.

Far away, under a waterfall, a white deer suddenly appeared, cautiously scanning the surroundings before approaching the creek and lowering its head to drink.

Seeing the white deer's traces, Herag immediately sprang into action.

No one was following him at this point, which was just right for making his move.

At first, some people noticed him and tagged along behind him, as before.

But after trailing him for over an hour, realizing Herag was searching aimlessly, they gave up.

Since Herag was just wandering aimlessly, they might as well search for themselves so as not to fall a step behind.

Herag concealed his presence and silently approached to swiftly deal with the white deer under the waterfall.

He slowly crept forward once he got close.

Upon reaching a suitable distance, Herag took out the black space and hurled it directly at the white deer.

With a thought, Herag made the black space emit a powerful attraction towards the white deer.

The white deer quickly became alert, raising its head to look at the black space.

Just as it tried to space jump away again, it was already too late, a step too slow.

The strong attraction of the black space sucked the white deer in, falling into Herag's hands.

Holding the black space, Herag watched the white deer stand bewildered on the desolate ground, frantically space jumping all around, yet unable to escape.

At that moment, Herag suddenly felt the surroundings darken.

Looking up, he saw the previously cloudless sky was suddenly covered with dark clouds.

Amidst the dark clouds, thunder rumbled, foreboding a heavy rainstorm.

Herag could clearly feel the energy particles around becoming violent, with many elements starting to converge.

He quickly realized that this was the world will of X-617 world mobilizing some rule power.

Herag looked at the cloud-filled high sky without fear, activating some bloodline power before flying straight towards it.

A lightning bolt over ten meters wide struck down, hitting Herag directly.

However, aside from some singed hair, his body was unscathed.

All the thunder power that entered his body was like a drop of water into the ocean, causing no ripples.

The Thunder God Ancestral Bloodline was naturally endowed with the power to control lightning, so he naturally had no fear of it.

Upon activating part of his bloodline power, Herag inherently possessed high lightning resistance; thus, the lightning could do little to harm him.

Aside from some paralysis, he suffered no harm.

After one lightning bolt, more swiftly followed.

In an instant, the lightning became fierce, bolt after bolt striking down amidst deafening thunder, making the scene quite dramatic.

In that instant, Herag suddenly experienced a mysterious feeling.

He sensed something gathering above him, some existence watching him.

Looking up, Herag saw nothing except endless dark clouds, rain, and lightning.

Yet, he clearly felt something above watching him.

Herag immediately realized this was likely the world will concentrating, though he couldn't see it.

He promptly retrieved the world staff from his space ring, pouring magic power into it, and the world staff automatically flew upwards towards the sky.

Herag never understood the principle of the world staff, nor how it operated.

Now, upon activating it, the short staff swiftly ascended into the sky, disappearing into the dark clouds.

Boom!

Suddenly, from high above, red lightning like a dense spiderweb flashed through, followed by continuous rumbling thunder.

The sound was deafening, making it seem as if the sky would fall, an apocalyptic feeling.

However, this scene lasted only briefly, and soon the dark clouds scattered, revealing a clear sky once more.

A short world staff automatically flew back down, landing in Herag's hand.

Chapter 434: Master of the World

When Herag held the World Staff in his hand, he suddenly experienced a feeling he had never had before.

He felt as if he was connected to this entire World.

Herag closed his eyes and could see every corner of this World, sensing everything happening in every place.

Not only that, Herag also felt many things he had never sensed before.

That is the Power of Rules.

The Power of Rules is intangible, yet ubiquitous, as this whole World is formed based on Rules.

Herag opened his eyes, reached out to touch the empty space before him, that was the Spatial Rules.

He could feel himself being completely enveloped by the Spatial Rules, as he was already within them.

He just hadn't opened his "eyes" before, hence never discovered the existence of this Power.

Herag closed his eyes again, carefully experiencing the omnipresent Rule Power between heaven and earth.

As long as he wishes, he can turn a clear blue sky into one filled with clouds.

With a mere thought, he can slowly change the direction of a river, though this change requires Time.

This is the Power of Rules, similarly bound by Rules.

Herag cannot make a tree soar into the sky without reason, because that doesn't conform to the Rules.

But he can create a gale, allowing the wind's Power to uproot the tree.

Everything is governed by Rules, Rules are everywhere.

Herag greatly enjoys this moment, feeling as if the World is entirely within his grasp.

In this moment, he truly understands what being Gods means.

Herag realizes that at this moment, he is the World's Will here, able to accomplish what he desires through manipulating various Rule Powers.

"Shenlan, record all my current visions, experiences, and the entire process."

Herag knew he could not always wield the World Staff, as it was not something a mere Level 1 Wizard could possess, so he had Shenlan record everything for future reference.

This level of the World Staff is merely a Level 2 Witchcraft Artifact.

But after seizing World control, its value can no longer be measured by a Level 2 Witchcraft Artifact.

Even if offered to Herag, he wouldn't accept it, as he couldn't bear the pressure that comes with it.

Herag has a clear sense of self; without enough strength, owning such an item would only lead to disaster.

To be a temporary Master of the World, able to see and manipulate various Rule Powers, is already the greatest achievement.

This is the most important thing for Herag now.

"Time Rule..."

Herag opened his eyes, spread his hand, and looked at his fingers.

The Time Rule, like the Spatial Rules, is still everywhere.

In Herag's perception, these Rule Powers are all flowing, constantly in motion.

Herag initially tried to pause the time of the entire World but realized he couldn't.

After thinking it through, he understood that he had control through the World Staff, but his strength was still too weak.

Theoretically, pausing the World's time through manipulating Time Rules is possible, but he lacked the sufficient Power to support it.

Pause time doesn't inherently belong to the World's operational Rules; to pause it requires enough strength to mobilize the Rules, yet he can only sense, see, and slightly utilize it through the World Staff.

Realizing this, Herag didn't attempt to pause time, lest he drained himself accidentally.

As a Level 1 Wizard, he couldn't sustain such a level of Rule invocation.

With a casual flick of his hand, a gust of wind blew up.

He wasn't using any Magic, only utilizing the most basic Rule Power without needing Magic Power to invoke the Rules.

Herag then poured some Magic Power into the World Staff, intending to conjure just now the scene of thick clouds and thunderstorms.

As soon as he had this thought, Magic Power was frantically absorbed by the World Staff like a floodgate being opened.

Herag quickly halted the action, and the pouring of Magic Power ceased.

When he looked up, there were already many clouds in the sky, appearing as if it would start raining.

"Remaining Magic Power: 36%."

Herag checked his remaining Magic Power, sweating profusely.

In a short moment, he had used more than half of his Magic Power.

If thick clouds and thunderstorms occurred following the World's natural Rules, it wouldn't consume so much Magic Power.

But now, under a clear blue sky, wanting to forcefully change it to heavy rain requires a personal energy input.

Through this experiment, Herag roughly understood the scope within which he could invoke Rule Power.

Put simply, he couldn't greatly change the World's Rule operation.

If one wishes to make forced changes, sufficient energy input is necessary.

Herag now comprehended why the World Will couldn't directly kill those invaders coming through the Spatial channels.

Because it doesn't conform to the Rules, the World Will doesn't have the means to kill invaders directly, instead can only cultivate a Child of the Plane to indirectly expel the invaders.

As Herag was experiencing various Rule Powers, he realized quite a few Wizards had arrived.

Among these Wizards was someone Herag really didn't want to see, Medel.

Medel looked gloomily at Herag, floating mid-air, holding the World Staff.

He was in a very bad mood now, and all the Wizards present knew what this scene signifies.

None of them expected Herag to seize World control in such a short time; they all lost.

Now, as soon as Herag activated the Teleportation Ring, returned to the Wizard Plane, it would mark Serlandir's victory.

Medel squeezed out a forced smile of sunshine and said to Herag below, "Congratulations, Mr. Herag, I never thought you'd succeed."

"Thanks for the compliment, just lucky," Herag replied.

He didn't rush to activate the Teleportation Ring as he was pondering a question.

Whether to directly eliminate Medel to avoid future trouble.

But the problem was that there were too many people here; he couldn't possibly kill them all.

Medel smiled and said, "Mr. Herag, how about we talk business? Give me the World Staff, and I'll ensure you never lack resources. With us the Taylor Family as your backing, you'd have everything to continue your study worry-free. Whether wealth, rights, or strength, I can offer you all that. All I need is that little World Staff."

Chapter 435: Threat

"How about it? Isn't it a worthwhile deal?" Medel smiled.

As other wizards approached, some were ready to make a move and snatch it, but upon seeing the standoff between Medel and Herag, they hesitated.

They didn't want to provoke Medel, so they decided to wait and see how the situation developed.

If they acted now, not only would it offend Medel, but there was also the issue of whether they could defeat him, as Medel was not alone.

Herag, holding the World Staff, said, "No need, I'm not interested in this deal."

"Mr. Herag, I advise you to think carefully before answering." Though Medel still wore a smile, his expression had turned cold, and his words were full of threats.

Herag ignored him and instead opened his arms with a smile, saying, "Is this what it feels like to become the Master of the World? Truly fascinating."

Seeing that he was being ignored, Medel, already filled with anger, couldn't hold back anymore.

He said coldly, "Herag, if you don't hand that thing over to me, I will kill all your family and friends. Oh right, according to the information, you have no family, you were even just a stable servant before."

"However, I remember you do have some friends, right? Those people from the Cheqi Family, your old acquaintances on the Coleson Continent. You should be clear, with my means, dealing with these people is way too easy."

"World Staff, give it to me. Otherwise, not only you, all those people you know will die."

Medel had obviously conducted a detailed investigation into Herag, researching all his experiences, even knowing about matters on the Coleson Continent.

Medel's threat was now naked, abandoning all pretenses.

Primarily because he wasn't confident in taking down Herag; with the Teleportation Ring at hand, Herag could leave at any moment, and Medel wasn't confident enough to instantly kill Herag.

In this situation, Medel adjusted his tactics.

He used information previously gathered to threaten Herag with the people he knew, making Herag apprehensive.

This way, perhaps he could get Herag to voluntarily hand over the World Staff without having to lift a finger.

After hearing Medel's words, Herag gripped the staff, glaring at Medel expressionlessly.

Seeing this, Medel was pleased and said, "Angry? That means my threat is effective. Hand over the World Staff obediently if you don't want those people to die painfully."

Although Herag showed no expression, Medel still keenly sensed the change in Herag's emotions.

Seeing Herag's anger indicated that these threats were, in fact, effective against him.

Medel wasn't really sure about Herag's relationship with these people, he was simply testing.

Suddenly, a golden giant enveloped Medel's body.

At the same time, a loud noise resounded behind Medel.

He turned around to see Herag, who somehow suddenly appeared behind him, throwing a punch.

This punch carried great power, directly triggering the Blessing Spell on Medel, the Giant Spirit Guardian.

The Giant Spirit Guardian is a Level 2 blessing-type spell that automatically activates to resist an attack when the blessed faces life-threatening danger.

This punch by Herag directly activated the Giant Spirit Guardian, meaning under normal circumstances, this punch could have killed Medel instantly.

Seeing the Giant Spirit Guardian, Herag wasn't surprised; it was normal for someone like Medel to have protective spells.

He had just used Spatial Rules to appear directly behind Medel.

Herag's punch was completely blocked by the Giant Spirit Guardian, and he immediately threw another punch, but it was still blocked, indicating this was not a single-use spell.

Seeing that even the Giant Spirit Guardian was activated, Medel was terribly frightened; he knew what this meant.

Medel never imagined Herag would be so decisive; he never expected Herag would dare to strike intending to kill him.

When he looked back at Herag, he only saw calmness and a determination to kill in Herag's eyes.

Medel was really a bit afraid now; he didn't want to die at the hands of someone like Herag.

In his view, he was destined to become a Level 4 or even Level 5 wizard in the future, how could he die here like this?

Medel didn't plan to fight Herag to the death; he valued his life much more highly than Herag's.

He initially wanted to force Herag to compromise through threats, to hand over the World Staff.

Unexpectedly, Herag's decisive move forced him to abandon this idea.

Seeing that Herag had indeed struck, and with lethal intent, Medel realized there was no room for negotiations anymore.

Winning or snatching the staff seemed impossible now as Herag was neither being intimidated nor appeased.

"You just wait; once I'm back, we'll settle this account." Medel stared fiercely at Herag before reluctantly activating his Teleportation Ring to vanish.

He didn't want to risk his life, he had to teleport out while the Giant Spirit Guardian was active.

If he delayed any longer, he might not get another opportunity to leave.

The Giant Spirit Guardian is effective for only a few minutes, capable of resisting even standard spells of Level 2 wizards within that time frame.

Herag's fist wasn't strong enough to break through the Giant Spirit Guardian yet, at least not in his current form.

Seeing Medel teleport away, Herag had no way to stop him.

With the Teleportation Ring in play, there was no way to keep someone if they weren't killed instantly.

The Expedition Team provided these Teleportation Rings to minimize the wizards' casualties as much as possible.

Herag glanced around at the other wizards, who, upon noticing his gaze, warily stepped back.

Many had witnessed Herag suddenly appear behind Medel.

They all knew Herag could now potentially control a certain level of Rule Power; engaging him now would be unwise.

The wizards began to teleport back, recognizing that Herag had taken control of the world, staying would only increase their danger.

As Herag watched them leave one by one, he thought for a moment and activated his Teleportation Ring to leave as well.

He needed to hurry back to prepare for Medel's retaliations, being even a few steps late could render escape from the Central Region impossible.

Medel would certainly unleash a storm of revenge against him.

If it were only himself, it wouldn't be as concerning, but if Medel targeted Reese, David, and others, the consequences could be dire.

Given Medel's status, if he decided to deal with him, Herag didn't think he would receive much help.

Chapter 436: The Wizard Who Cannot Return

To be precise, Herag cannot place his hope in others.

Parker might be able to help him, but at most, it would only be to ensure Herag's safety. As for the others, Parker surely wouldn't care, so Herag would have to figure it out himself.

As Herag thought about these issues, he infused his magic power into the teleportation ring.

A flash of light, and he vanished from sight.

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Twilight Temple.

"Lord Bannings, the people in the X-617 world are becoming fewer, but not a single person has been teleported out."

Beside the teleportation altar, a wizard named Lares reported to Bannings.

Lares was in charge of managing the teleportation altar and could sense how many people were still inside.

Bannings looked gravely at the teleportation altar, already sensing something ominous.

During this period, no one had been teleported out.

They knew how many people were still inside, but they couldn't tell the specifics of the situation or what was happening in there.

They had sent people in to investigate, but no one returned, each person disappearing one after another.

The number of people in the X-617 world was slowly decreasing, yet no one came out.

This suggested that the people inside might have died in there, leaving them no chance to teleport out.

At first, this seemed normal, as wizards dying is quite a common occurrence.

But gradually, the wizards guarding outside the Twilight Temple felt something was off.

Not a single person teleported out, clearly against reason. Could it be that they all died instantly with no chance to escape?

Upon hearing the news, Bannings sent people in to investigate, but those sent in never came back.

That's when everyone realized something might be seriously wrong in the X-617 world.

As they were trying to figure out what was happening inside, a mutation occurred.

The number of people inside the X-617 world rapidly decreased, but none of those reduced numbers came out.

Within just a few hours, there were only a little over thirty wizards left inside that world; the others were all gone.

Disappearance meant two things – death or teleportation out.

Since no one had teleported out, it indicated they all died in there.

"What kind of situation would lead to such a massive death toll, without anyone being able to escape..." Bannings mused over the possible scenarios.

Suddenly, something came to his mind, and he said to Lares, "Let me see the teleportation ring."

Lares immediately handed over a teleportation ring.

Holding the ring, Bannings rolled it between his fingers, scrutinizing it.

After watching it for a while, he asked, "Have these teleportation rings been tested?"

Lares bowed his head and said, "Every teleportation ring has been tested many times. Both in accuracy and stability, all tests showed no issues; they should teleport back to this point just fine."

"Are you sure? Maybe not," Bannings continued to inquire. "Who crafted these teleportation rings?"

"By the witchcraft artifact crafting master, Mr. Alannis," Lares replied.

Bannings rubbed the teleportation ring in his hand, whispering, "Alannis... I should go see him."

"Sir, do you mean there's a problem with the teleportation rings?" Lares asked.

Bannings replied, "It's only a hypothesis, but for so many people not to come out is too unusual. I don't believe they all just died in there; if the issue lies within the rings themselves, then everything makes sense."

"Problems with the teleportation rings..." Lares understood the possibility but felt a chill down his spine.

If the teleportation rings were indeed faulty, then those wizards who entered the X-617 world might as well be dead.

He knew the chaos within plane space very well, and if one were teleported into a chaotic spatial torrent, even crystallization wizards had little chance of survival.

More importantly, these wizards were promising talents from various factions.

If something happened to them...

Just the thought of it made Lares break out in a cold sweat.

Holding the teleportation ring, Bannings made a few space jumps to arrive outside Alannis's blacksmith shop.

He glanced at the old shop sign, adjusted his monocle, and stepped inside.

The inside of the shop was clean and tidy, unlike the disorder seen in many other blacksmith shops.

Bannings suddenly remembered this was a place for making witchcraft artifacts. He nearly mistook it for an ordinary blacksmith shop.

Walking through the narrow shop, he didn't see anyone and moved further inside through a small path.

Arriving in a dimly lit room, Bannings saw Alannis lying peacefully on a recliner.

"Something's wrong..."

Bannings noticed something amiss; he couldn't hear Alannis's heartbeat.

He quickly approached the recliner and, upon inspection, discovered that Alannis was indeed dead.

Alannis had no wounds on his body, seemingly having died of natural causes.

Moreover, it appeared he'd been dead for some time.

Since Alannis had no family or friends, no one knew he died at home.

If not for the fact that a wizard's body is more resilient than an ordinary person's, decomposition would have already set in.

"Dying right at this time, it's too much of a coincidence."

Bannings realized it was highly likely the teleportation rings had malfunctioned.

The timing of Alannis's death was too coincidental to be chance.

Hurriedly, Bannings returned to the Twilight Temple, informing the others of what had transpired and expressing his suspicions.

Soon, this matter reached various factions, and people began arriving at the Twilight Temple to start an investigation.

The craft of making teleportation rings was not complicated; there were many witchcraft artifact crafting masters, not just Alannis.

Since Alannis had never had any anomalies in his life, the expedition team chose him to fulfill this batch of orders.

But no one expected that this person, who had masked himself all his life, would leave such a trap on the verge of death.

Undoubtedly, Alannis was a master in crafting witchcraft artifacts; the teleportation rings he made were of high quality and very stable.

The expedition team had initially conducted checks and tests on each teleportation ring, finding no issues.

Yet no one imagined that Alannis had hidden an extremely small witch array within them.

This tiny witch array usually served no purpose and showed no anomalies.

Its only function activated upon Alannis's death.

Initially recording the teleportation altar coordinates at the Twilight Temple, upon activation, one should have been teleported back here.

Under normal circumstances, indeed, there would be no problem.

Chapter 437: Unknown Plane

But the problem lies within the tiny witch array inside the teleportation ring.

After Alannis's death, this witch array would be activated, and subsequently, the teleportation coordinates would be changed.

The teleportation ring was quickly analyzed, and the Wizard Alliance discovered the trick hidden inside this teleportation ring.

However, the current issue is that no one knows the coordinates after the witch array's alteration.

Because this witch array can only be activated once, it automatically becomes ineffective after serving its purpose.

No one knows the location of the coordinates set by Alannis, hence it's impossible to know where the wizards in World X-617 were ultimately teleported to.

Without knowing the exact coordinates, it's impossible to carry out the subsequent rescue operations.

The missing wizards were talented individuals from various factions and could not be abandoned, so everyone was trying to find a way to rescue them.

The only good news in this incident is that the coordinates must be of a plane where the expedition team has already established a space channel.

Because only such coordinates would enable the teleportation ring to work.

If an arbitrary unorganized coordinate in a space-time stream was used, it would be an invalid coordinate, the teleportation ring would not work properly, and those wizards would not be teleported.

Thus, the coordinates initially set by Alannis were definitely of a plane explored by the Land of Dawn.

Having a rough area in mind, the expedition team quickly started their actions.

The first step was to send messages to members across various planes, informing them of the situation, and asking them to keep an eye out for any signs of these wizards.

If found, they must be rescued immediately.

The orders were issued, but no feedback was received in a short period.

There are many planes where the expedition team has established space channels, including low-tier worlds and middle-tier worlds.

The danger levels of these worlds vary and are not significantly related to the plane's rank but rather to how much the expedition team has developed them.

If they are planes that have been fully developed and conquered, the dangers would be much lesser, anyway, there's everywhere with expedition team members.

But in some planes where the expedition team just established space channels, even the expedition team doesn't fully understand them.

Under such circumstances, even if it's a low-tier world, there could still be many unknown dangers.

All participants in the Cradle Operation are Crystalization Wizards, to them, it doesn't matter if it's a low-tier or middle-tier world.

...

The strong wind blew, stirring up a sky full of yellow sand.

Before him was a vast and boundless Gobi Desert, and there were cracks everywhere on the ground.

The moment Herag arrived here, he knew for sure he wasn't on the Wizard Plane.

Besides the scene before him, he also sensed that the atmosphere here was entirely different.

It was neither the Abyss Plane, nor the Wizard Plane, nor did it resemble the Elf Plane.

Since Herag temporarily became the Master of the World, he developed a sharper sense of plane atmospheres.

He glanced at the teleportation ring on his finger, understanding that something was wrong with this item.

Herag wasn't sure if it was just his teleportation ring having issues or if everyone's teleportation rings were like this.

He even suspected his teleportation ring might have been tampered with by someone sent by Medel, causing the current situation.

If that's the case, Herag felt a bit worried for Reese, David, and even the Cheqi Family.

The most urgent task at hand was to quickly find a way back to the Wizard Plane, as it's the most important thing.

Herag knew the situation was urgent, but he remained calm without panic.

He unfolded Shenlan's environment probing and started observing his surroundings.

The most vital thing was to clarify what this place was and to which plane it belonged.

Only after determining this could the subsequent plans be discussed.

Herag looked at the sky and found several large celestial bodies hanging in the sky, which were likely satellites of this star.

He sensed the distribution of stars using the Starry Sky Meditation Technique, confirming this was a plane he had never been to.

The Gobi Desert was desolate, aside from some hidden animals everywhere; there was no sign of other people.

Herag walked towards what seemed like an exit of the Gobi Desert based on the vegetation distribution.

He didn't know if it was the correct direction, but he tried to walk out.

After walking for several hours, Herag discovered the vegetation gradually increased, proving his choice was correct.

If he continued backward, it would likely lead to a desert-like place.

It seemed that although this was a different plane, some basic rules were still the same.

During his time as the Master of the World, Herag had numerous insights about rules.

He found that in the planes he visited, like the Wizard Plane, Elf Plane, World X-617, and this current plane, the fundamental rules seemed somewhat similar.

Of course, this was just Herag's personal feeling and wasn't very accurate.

Having just come out of the Master of the World state, he still had a slightly keen sense of these rules.

Herag recalled that only the Abyss Plane felt somewhat different.

But he couldn't quite pinpoint what made them different; he only had a vague perception.

The Abyss Plane was very distinct from the planes he visited before, that was a very evident feeling.

Herag took out the World Staff from the space ring; it couldn't be activated anymore, it would only work once he entered the X-617 World again.

He couldn't help but ponder a question, if much time had passed, could this World Staff still control the World Will of that world?

If not, would it be considered the task completed or not?

Herag thought about it, then shook his head; better to wait until he could return to the Wizard Plane to address these matters, as he still hadn't figured out the current situation.

He glanced at his left hand, sensing the plane coordinates of his left hand, confirming it was in an activatable state.

This meant that Herag could still temporarily enter the Abyss Plane from this plane by activating the plane coordinates.

Herag continued to walk on the Gobi Desert, and a few hours later, nightfall came.

Just as he was about to find a place to rest, he suddenly detected some commotion over a thousand meters away through environmental probing.

Five kobolds, each about two meters and three tall, holding weapons like wolf fang clubs, giant hammers, and long blades, were chasing a human.

This was a woman wearing a robe, with long blond hair, fleeing in a sorry state.

Her robe already had several broken spots, and her left arm was hanging limp, seemingly with a fractured bone.

Herag carefully discerned for a while and found that this woman was indeed Tessa, who was following Medel.

He had followed Medel for a while and was familiar with this woman, so he recognized her upon seeing her.

Chapter 438: Tessa

Tessa's hair was disheveled, her clothes torn, looking extremely bedraggled.

The five kobolds behind her, although large in size, moved with surprising swiftness.

Their muscles bulged out, making them look exceptionally strong. They panted heavily, their eyes fixated on the fleeing Tessa.

It was a gaze akin to someone who hasn't eaten for a long time, staring at food.

Having sustained serious injuries, Tessa's magic aura was chaotic, only stabilizing enough to conjure a fiery shield around her.

The moment the shield appeared, a giant wolf fang club was hurled towards her, striking the shield squarely.

Although the fiery shield managed to withstand the attack, it shattered immediately afterward.

Tessa, being a Level 1 Crystalization Wizard, had her Level 1 Shield break after just one attack, showcasing the immense power behind the wolf fang club.

The club's tremendous force crashed into the shield, sending Tessa flying.

When Tessa rolled to the ground, though unhurt from the attack, she still scrambled up in terror and continued running.

As she ran, she gathered magic in her hand, and after forming a large fireball, hurled it towards the kobolds behind her.

The kobold, seeing the fireball, quickly dodged, but the kobold following closely behind didn't have time to evade and was hit directly by the fireball.

The kobold toppled over from the impact of the fireball, then clambered back up, continuously growling while speaking in a language that Herag couldn't understand.

The Fireball Technique seemed to cause little damage; only the kobold's chest area was slightly charred, with no substantial harm.

Herag frowned at this scene. Despite Tessa being a Crystalization Level Wizard, her fireball had little effect on these kobolds.

The robustness of the kobolds was incredible, being hit directly by a fireball, yet shrugging it off and continuing their pursuit.

Herag observed the kobolds closely, noting their speed, strength, and constitution were ridiculously strong, much stronger than that of an ordinary Level 1 Wizard.

Most wizards focus on spell research, unlike Herag who emphasizes strengthening physical power.

Herag compared himself, confident that in his Titan Power form, he could handle these kobolds without issues.

He pondered for a moment, then hastened his pace towards Tessa.

Not to save Tessa, but to ask her some questions.

Since Tessa was here, Medel might also be nearby.

Upon finding Tessa, Herag wanted to quickly find Medel and finish him off neatly, leaving no future troubles.

As Herag advanced rapidly, he kept an eye on the situation over there.

He realized he might not make it in time, being over a thousand meters away.

Tessa, being gravely injured, couldn't run fast and had to rely on gathering magic to Flash away.

But due to her injuries, her magic aura was chaotic, and seemingly she had little magic left, making it difficult to use Flash consecutively.

Several times, Tessa barely dodged the attacks from behind, her figure already tottering.

Most of her magic was spent, and her space ring was nowhere to be found, preventing her from using magic potions to replenish herself.

Suddenly, Tessa heard a gust of wind behind her and knew it wasn't good, just as she was about to dodge.

However, she found it difficult even to lift her leg, realizing her body had reached its limits.

Not only was her magic depleted, but even her physical strength was nearly exhausted.

Since arriving in this place, Tessa had faced multiple attacks, fleeing in a haphazard manner.

When she felt her legs go weak, a sense of impending death arose within her.

The next moment, a heavy blow struck the back of her head, sending her flying.

Tessa saw a stout giant approaching quickly in front of her before her consciousness plunged into darkness.

"Still not in time..."

Herag saw a kobold wielding a large wooden club, striking towards Tessa's nape.

Tessa's nape caved in instantly. After she flew and rolled on the ground, she glanced at Herag before passing away.

Herag sighed, "You just couldn't hold on a little longer..."

He had arrived as quickly as he could, but still wasn't in time.

Now there was no chance to ask any questions.

The kobold that killed Tessa sprinted to her corpse, grabbing and ripping her fractured arm completely off.

The kobold tore off the arm and immediately started devouring it, feasting on the fresh flesh.

Apparently starved for a long time, the kobold realized Herag's presence only after taking several bites.

The kobold immediately grew wary, picking up the large wooden club nearby, eyeing Herag vigilantly.

At this point, the other four kobolds had also arrived, looking at Herag with hostility.

Herag's current size and aura were somewhat intimidating, causing the kobolds to hesitate to attack, remaining on guard.

With a thought, Herag enlarged the Storm Giant Shield on his left arm.

The five kobolds exchanged a glance and then charged at Herag with a mutual understanding.

The massive wolf fang club swung directly at Herag's forehead. But since Herag was a head taller than them, it seemed like a child swinging a stick at a strong man.

Herag moved his left hand, blocking the wolf fang club with the enormous Storm Giant Shield.

Magic aura fluctuated around him, and in a flash, he appeared behind the kobold at the back.

The five kobolds were puzzled, wondering where Herag had gone.

Capitalizing on this opening, Herag pulled a longsword from his space ring, aimed at the kobold's nape, and pierced it directly.

Crimson blood spurted out instantly, gushing profusely.

The kobold instinctively tried to grab the sword piercing its neck, but felt weak all over and collapsed heavily on the ground.

Blood quickly spread across the cracked earth, seeping into the soil and staining the ground a blood-red hue.

The pungent odor permeated the air, and the remaining four kobolds tightened their grip on their weapons, realizing Herag's strength.

Herag glanced at the broadsword lying at his feet, which was the weapon used by the kobold he just killed.

He bent down, picked up the broadsword, and swung it around, finding it quite suitable.

The longsword he usually wielded was somewhat small for his current size, making it unwieldy. The broadsword, with its length, width, and weight, was just right, providing a good fit.

Chapter 439: Demon Aura

A wisp of black qi floated from the kobold's body, and the other four kobolds began to inhale violently, drawing the black qi towards them.

The wisp of black qi was completely divided among the four kobolds, and they seemed quite satisfied with it.

Herag was somewhat puzzled about what this black qi was. He had also tried to absorb it but received no response.

This wasn't a regular gas; it was more like some special energy.

It seemed only these kobolds could absorb and utilize it.

Herag felt that after the kobolds absorbed the black qi, their aura seemed to become slightly stronger.

This feeling wasn't very obvious, and he couldn't be entirely certain.

After absorbing the black qi, the four kobolds grabbed their weapons and charged at Herag, unfazed by the previous scene.

Herag held his long blade, watching the four incoming kobolds without any panic.

He used the Storm Giant Shield to block the attack of a large wooden club, and at the same time swung his blade, directly striking a kobold on his right.

Herag's speed and power far surpassed these kobolds. The kobold on the right couldn't see Herag's blade swing at all and naturally couldn't respond.

A large kobold head flew high into the air and landed in the distance.

A headless body spurted blood from its neck, collapsing heavily to the ground.

The other three kobolds finally showed some fear in their expressions upon seeing this.

At this time, another wisp of black qi floated from the kobold's body and was absorbed by the remaining three kobolds.

Herag, with a shield in his left hand and a blade in his right, was the first to chop down.

The three kobolds seemed to value that wisp of black qi greatly, even amidst the chaos, they fought to absorb it.

Catching the moment they absorbed the black qi, Herag swung fiercely, slicing down another kobold's head along with its shoulders on the spot.

But that wasn't the end; after killing one, Herag twisted his body at a strange angle, following through with the inertia of his swing, and slashed at another kobold.

This kobold had a bit of reaction time, raising its long blade to shield itself.

However, Herag's power was too great, cleaving both the blade and the kobold in half.

In the blink of an eye, only one kobold was left.

Two wisps of black qi floated up, spreading in the air.

The remaining kobold glanced at the two wisps of black qi, but had no time to absorb them, only able to look on with a regretful expression.

The kobold glanced at the black qi and then at Herag, who had felled two companions in an instant, displaying a human-like fear on its face and turned to run.

It realized that Herag wasn't someone they could contend with, a strong sense of fear rising from within, driving it to flee.

Herag watched the terrified kobold, tightened his grip on the long blade, and with a flash appeared behind the kobold, then clasped his blade with both hands and struck down, beheading another kobold.

In the span of two seconds, the area around Herag was already filled with kobold corpses.

A wisp of black qi floated up from the kobold's body in front of him, and Herag watched as it dissipated into the air and gradually spread out until it disappeared completely.

Herag still couldn't figure out what this black qi truly was. He could only sense it as a type of magical energy, but didn't know how to absorb or utilize it.

Judging from how eager the kobolds were to absorb the black qi, it must be something valuable.

Looking at the kobold corpses, although the battle was relatively easy, Herag felt no relief.

Because judging from the kobold's attire and behavior, they seemed to be just ordinary mountain bandits or thieves.

If even robbers in this world were so formidable, what level of power would this world's truly powerful individuals possess?

Herag recalled the scene he had just witnessed; the kobolds seemed as if they hadn't eaten in a long time, famished for quite a while.

No matter in which plane, food is the basic necessity.

Anyone with some status generally wouldn't lack food.

These kobolds, being hungry for so long, were likely just low-level figures.

But even these low-level figures had such strong physical power.

Thinking of this, Herag's heart grew heavier.

He tried to activate the Bloodline Mark and found the bloodline power he could mobilize was extremely limited and heavily suppressed.

The Thunder God Ancestral Bloodline Power's status was too high, resulting in strong suppression.

Herag had not yet advanced to a Level 2 Wizard, and without rule power within him, he had no qualification to contend with the World Will, exceedingly limited in unleashing the power of the Bloodline Mark.

"Bloodline Power..."

Suddenly, Herag thought of something and crouched down to examine the kobold bodies.

He sensed a very weak bloodline power from within the kobolds.

The Great Dark Heaven has requirements for absorbing bloodline power, and the kobold's blood just barely reached the absorbable standard.

Normally, absorbing such a level of bloodline power would be useless, not even reaching the enhancement level of a mosquito's leg.

But Herag was ready to try, wanting to verify his thoughts.

Herag extended his hand over the kobold's body, his magical aura fluctuating, as a stone slab silhouette appeared behind him.

After using the Great Dark Heaven, he absorbed the faint bloodline power from within the kobolds.

After absorption, Herag waited awhile, only to find the absorbed bloodline power was too weak, causing no changes.

He glanced at the other kobold corpses and went over to continue absorbing the bloodline power from them.

After Herag absorbed all the bloodline power from five kobold bodies, there was finally some change.

"Demon Power: Able to absorb demon aura to strengthen oneself."

This was the talent ability extracted from the kobolds, Demon Power.

Herag quickly realized that the black qi floating from the kobold bodies was this so-called demon aura.

If he could absorb that demon aura, he should be able to enhance his physical power.

Herag soon figured out why these kobolds had such strong bodies, relying completely on this talent ability, constantly absorbing black qi to strengthen their bodies.

These kobolds had been absorbing black qi for many years, which is why their bodies were so strong.

Recalling every detail he had seen, Herag noted that.

The black qi also varied in thickness, even though the black qi of these kobolds appeared similar in size.

But upon closer inspection, he could see the thickness varied slightly.

From this, Herag inferred the thickness of the black qi was likely related to the kobold's strength.

The stronger the power, the thicker the black qi, and vice versa.

Chapter 440: Absorption

The strength gap between these five kobolds wasn't something Herag could clearly feel, because the gap was too large, he just struck them down with a single slash.

A gust of wind blew by, carrying the scent of blood far away.

Herag collected the wolf fang clubs and other usable weapons from the ground for future use.

Since the situation here was still unclear, anything potentially useful had to be gathered.

After storing the weapons, Herag swiftly left this place.

He arrived at the place where Tessa died and checked, confirming she was completely dead, with no chance of revival.

If there were a Necromancy-specialized wizard, they might be able to awaken Tessa's soul to ask something.

But Herag lacked such means, so he let it go.

He rummaged through Tessa's body for a while, puzzled by the absence of any Space Ring.

Judging by the various injuries on the body, it was evident she had been attacked multiple times, as the healing stages of the wounds differed, indicating different times of occurrence.

Most likely, these kobolds just took advantage; by the time they encountered Tessa, she was already near her end.

A Level 1 Crystalization Wizard, reduced to having her skull shattered by a kobold's blow, died just like that.

Herag couldn't help but lament the fate of others, thinking he might be next.

He glanced at the direction Tessa came running from; one could already see some areas of the forest.

The edge of the Gobi Desert was nearby, and moving forward, he should encounter other intelligent creatures.

Since Tessa was running from that direction, danger must have lurked there.

Herag thought for a moment, then decided to explore.

Retreating bore no meaning; retreat would only lead deeper into the desert region, where the likelihood of finding valuable clues was slim.

Advancing might be riskier, but contact with intelligent creatures could yield many valuable clues.

Having made up his mind, Herag stood up to leave.

He suddenly halted, glancing back at Tessa's body, extending a hand to form a fireball and cremating her remains.

Tessa bore no enmity toward him; both hailed from the Wizard Plane, granting her basic dignity, avoiding becoming food for other creatures.

After a few Fireball Techniques, Tessa's body was thoroughly incinerated.

With these tasks concluded, Herag steeled his Spirit, proceeding with caution.

The vegetation around him gradually thickened; Herag even discovered a meandering stream hidden among the grasses.

He followed the direction Tessa had come from, and soon discovered a cave.

The cave's location was extremely concealed; an underground cave with its entrance as a slope, surrounded by dense shrubs.

Without environmental detection, Herag would have hardly noticed this cave.

At the cave's entrance, he spotted some footprints, identified as belonging to the kobolds.

Environmental detection also noted another kobold inside, sleeping soundly on the ground.

The cave was cluttered with various objects, bones of different animals, and even human bones.

"Shadowy Corner."

Herag's massive form transformed into a mass of black shadow, swiftly advancing toward the sleeping kobold, stealthily approaching.

The shadow moved unimpeded, arriving before the kobold; Herag leaped from the shadow, gripping the long blade in both hands, slicing down vertically.

The kobold detected nothing, his head severed in his slumber.

The kobold experienced no pain, his life ended just like that.

A wisp of black qi floated out from the kobold's body; seeing it, Herag hastily used his Talent Ability, Demon Power, to absorb it into his body.

Once inside, the Demon Aura permeated throughout his body.

Herag closed his eyes, carefully sensing the changes the Demon Aura brought.

There wasn't much notable sensation, just a faint enhancement to his physical body.

"Shenlan, what changes did this wisp of Demon Aura bring to the body?" Herag inquired.

"Calculating..."

"The Demon Aura increased Strength by 0.1, Agility by 0.1, and Constitution by 0.1."

"An increase of 0.1," he mused.

Herag hadn't anticipated enhancing by 0.1. His physical strength was already quite high.

Such an enhancement at this level was considerable.

Herag began contemplating more; if he could acquire a substantial amount of this Demon Aura, wouldn't it allow him to enhance his physical body to an extraordinary level?

Reflecting on the wasted Demon Aura earlier, he felt a pang of regret.

After absorbing the Demon Aura, Herag wandered around the cave in search of anything valuable.

However, after a thorough search, he found nothing of worth.

He had hoped to find any written text, but found none.

Texts represent civilization, providing much knowledge.

With no additional gains in the cave, Herag departed.

The surroundings had completely transformed into a forest scene, though curiously, there were scarcely any animals, just a few small ones.

Normally, such a large forest area wouldn't be lacking animals.

But within Herag's environmental detection range, not even a rabbit was seen, clearly defying logic.

He promptly considered that the kobolds appeared as if they hadn't eaten for a long time.

Their cave lay so close to the forest; with their physical strength, food scarcity shouldn't have been an issue.

Herag also recalled Tessa coming from that direction, already injured at the time.

Considering these factors, the forest must contain hidden dangers.

Herag cautiously entered the forest, constantly alert to environmental detection feedback; as of yet, he discovered nothing unusual.

After stealthily advancing for half an hour, he discovered a pile of excrement.

Finding the excrement heightened his vigilance, signaling his entry into some animal's territory.

The shadow he had assumed paused briefly near the excrement, then swiftly moved on, soon hearing a distant beast's roar, resonating loudly.

Following the roar's origin, Herag moved, soon spotting the source of the noise.

A tiger-like creature stood there, not extremely large but slightly bigger than ordinary tigers.

"Is this creature controlling the forest area?" Herag speculated uncertainly.

Judging by its size, the tiger didn't seem particularly strong; the kobolds should have been able to fight back, rather than huddle between the Gobi and forest borders.