

Sixth 461

Chapter 461: Slaughter

Jim looked at the ground covered with mermaid corpses, this is what they call a stroll...

In such a short time, this man has killed so many, it's almost too fast.

At this moment, there were also some noises coming from the other side, with footsteps and talking voices.

Not long after, the dense fog revealed the figures of three people, who were the other three exorcists.

At the front was a thin-faced man, holding a short sword, with quite a bit of blood on it.

When the three arrived, they first scrutinized Herag and Jim, then glanced at the mermaid corpses all over the place.

"Did you guys take care of all these mermaids?" the man asked.

Jim glanced at Herag without speaking.

Herag said, "Sort of."

The man with the short sword didn't look pleased, but seeing Herag was with someone else, he didn't say much and turned to leave.

The three of them didn't manage to kill many mermaids either, and after taking care of their side, they found out there were none left here.

They continued towards the lake, thinking they might be able to kill some more mermaids.

Herag glanced at Jim and said, "I'm planning to go check it out, what about you?"

"I'll go with you," Jim said.

The direction Jim was heading was similar to Herag's, so on the way, besides seeing mermaid corpses, he hardly killed any more.

He certainly didn't want to go back just like that, so he decided to continue and take a look.

Herag carried the longsword, his posture was agile and swift, with a step on his toe, he leaped a few meters away, his whole body light as a feather.

Jim, watching this scene, knew he had truly encountered a master.

This move by Herag indicated that his physical strength and other attributes had reached a very high level, and his control over his body had also reached its peak.

This kind of control can only be achieved through years of practice.

Jim quickly followed, the white mist was too thick, and a momentary inattention would cause him to lose track.

Herag was very fast, and when he arrived, he found that there were only mermaid corpses left on the ground.

He looked up and saw through environmental detection that those three exorcists were dealing with the mermaids in the thick fog ahead.

The mermaid corpses in front of them were all left by them.

Herag quickly went over and also began to kill the remaining mermaids.

These mermaids seemed unaware of fear, rushing mindlessly at people when they saw them.

Even though they had already seen Herag and others killing so many mermaids, they still weren't afraid and just charged.

After a while, Jim caught up as well.

He had gotten off track just now, wandered around, and then followed the mermaid corpses to find his way here.

Seeing the others killing mermaids, Jim didn't want to fall behind either and charged out with his longsword.

The thin-faced man, after slaying one mermaid, disappeared and then reappeared in front of another mermaid.

His short sword emitted a dark glow, not from poison but from being enchanted with some special energy.

Herag also noticed, this was different from Ed's black sword.

Ed's black sword was entirely his ability, and it didn't have a physical form, only being summoned when needed.

The thin man's short sword clearly had a physical form, only the special energy on it should be related to his own abilities.

The two groups were very synchronized, not interfering with each other, each killing mermaids in their own area.

After all, there were so many mermaids, and they wouldn't run away, so fighting was unnecessary and not worth it.

In less than an hour, almost all the mermaids here were killed, not a single one left.

After Herag was done, he casually asked, "Jim, have there been mermaids here before?"

Jim shook his head, "I've been here many times before, and I've never encountered mermaids. I don't know why, but so many suddenly appeared this time."

"I see..." Herag thought.

If something unusual happens, there must be a cause; he felt that this matter wasn't so simple.

The thin man, holding the short sword, turned back and said, "Gentlemen, these mermaids probably came from the lake. Would you be interested in taking a look?"

The other two hesitated; the situation by the lake was unclear and had a certain level of danger.

However, these mermaids were so weak, they posed almost no threat to them, so after some thought, they nodded in agreement.

After reaching a consensus, the three quickly entered the dense fog and disappeared, swiftly heading to resolve the situation by the lake.

"We..." Jim was somewhat tempted; having just killed so many mermaids and tasted the benefits, he also wanted to follow.

Herag glanced at him and said, "There might be some issue over there. I personally don't mind, but for you, if an accident happens, you'll have to fend for yourself."

Herag felt subconsciously that there must be something wrong over by the lake and that perhaps there were hidden dangers.

He had space travel abilities; typically, fleeing wouldn't be a major issue.

After speaking, Herag carried his sword and left. Jim stayed in place, hesitating for a while before finally following.

"Power +4.2, agility +4.4, constitution +3.6."

"Herag Merlin: Power 43.6, Agility 43.9, Constitution 44.2, Spirit 79.5, Magic Power 100%."

Herag glanced at his attribute panel, seeing that each of his attributes had significantly improved.

The entire process of mermaid killings increased his stats on average by six or seven points.

With this significant boost in basic attributes, using Titan Power would likely raise all his attributes to a very high level.

Thinking about this, Herag quickly advanced through the dense fog.

The dense fog could only obscure his vision, but Herag could still clearly perceive the surroundings.

Through environmental sensing, he saw the three had already approached the lakeside, and quite a few mermaids were emerging from the lake, rushing upon hearing the commotion.

The three displayed great excitement; to them, these mermaids were like walking demon aura, eagerly charging to kill the mermaids.

Herag's brow furrowed; he felt something was amiss and decided not to proceed further.

Although he was tempted by the mermaids, he wasn't going to let his head be clouded by temptation.

Herag felt there must be something in the lake.

Not long after, Jim arrived.

"Aren't you going over?" Jim asked, puzzled, seeing Herag stop short of advancing.

Herag said, "Go if you want to, but I feel something isn't right, so I'm not going for now."

If it had been before, Jim would have gone over by himself immediately.

But knowing now that Herag was a master, he began to consider Herag's words.

If a master said there was something wrong and dared not advance, it would be foolish for him to rush in and risk his life.

Jim chose to be cautious, recognizing that while demon aura was tempting, one must be alive to enjoy it.

He stood aside, starting to look towards the lake.

The white mist here was lighter, allowing him to vaguely see the scene by the lake.

The three thin men were quickly killing mermaids that rushed out of the lake, then absorbing the demon aura.

Chapter 462: Tentacle

The thin man's silhouette flickered, tracing a line of black-purple light, and the mermaid before him was instantly split in two.

A faint whiff of demon aura escaped, but was swiftly absorbed by the thin man.

The three of them were quite measured, not snatching the demon aura obtained from each other's kills.

How much one could absorb depended on one's own skill.

"Eton, those two seem not to be following us," stated an exorcist beside the thin man, glancing back.

Eton, holding a short sword, replied, "Probably scared, which is just as well; only we get to enjoy here."

"This lake feels a bit strange. I remember there never used to be mermaids here," noted the man beside him, casting a wary look at the lake.

Eton, nonchalant, said, "What is there to fear? We're three official exorcists. Who can stop us from leaving if we want to? Even if there are demons in this lake, they won't be strong. Just look at these mermaids. So weak...could there possibly be an Apostle-level demon in the lake?"

Apostle-level demons are extremely powerful entities, rarely encountered by most exorcists in their lifetime.

The other two realized this as well, knowing that as long as they didn't run into an Apostle-level demon, the three of them could always leave at any time.

Once they figured that out, they were no longer worried, just a bit more vigilant.

They weren't foolish; recognizing something was off here, they moved slightly away from the lake.

But leaving wasn't an option; there were too many mermaids to give up on.

After absorbing some more demon aura, Eton smiled, "I feel I'm not far from becoming a high-tier exorcist. It would be great if I could kill these mermaids daily."

As soon as he finished speaking, a snow-white, transparent tentacle suddenly appeared, piercing through Eton's mouth, going straight through the back of his head.

The scene fell silent instantly, even the mermaids stopped their chaotic cries.

No one, including Herag, noticed when this tentacle appeared.

It seemed to materialize out of thin air, but in reality, the tentacle's speed was too fast for anyone to see its approach.

This white tentacle was transparent, with a remarkably smooth surface, revealing nothing of its true form.

After the tentacle pierced through Eton's head, no blood seeped out.

The surface of Eton's body suddenly exuded a lot of water, rapidly melting like a candle, turning into a pool of lake water.

A wisp of black Qi drifted out, only to be completely absorbed by the tentacle immediately.

The other two, witnessing this, could scarcely believe their eyes, even suspecting if the white mist had hallucinatory effects.

Eton, an official exorcist on the verge of becoming a high-tier exorcist, was reduced to a pool of water in just the blink of an eye.

The whole process happened too quickly for anyone to react, Eton leaving not a single drop of blood, as if erased from this world just like that.

"This...," Jim, having roamed for so many years, had never encountered such a scene.

He turned his head to ask Herag, only to find Herag already gone.

Where did he go...

Jim turned his head to look around, vaguely seeing Herag's silhouette departing through the white mist behind him.

"Damn, running so fast!"

Jim was dumbfounded, not expecting this expert to be so decisive, running away with incredible speed.

He didn't hesitate either, turning to run, ignoring what was happening on the side of the lake.

The mysterious tentacle was clearly beyond their capability to handle.

Upon witnessing what happened earlier, Herag immediately and decisively made his escape.

Eton turning into a pool of lake water wasn't due to a blinding technique or magic, but rule power.

Though Herag didn't know what particular rule power the tentacle used, he could faintly sense it was rule power.

To directly use rule power to turn an official exorcist into a pool of lake water, what level of existence could do this?

Herag knew this wasn't something he could contend with, so he fled without looking back.

At this moment, he didn't care about anything else, using space travel to flee directly.

Fortunately, the white mist was thick now, and no one saw his process of space travel.

Herag wasn't overly concerned about being seen; at worst, he could explain it as an awakening of his own ability.

It's just better to keep these things hidden, letting fewer people know about his abilities isn't a bad thing.

From the thick fog behind, two screams resounded.

Hearing these two screams, Herag quickened his pace, faint streaks of electricity flashing over his body.

By the lake, two official exorcists turned into two pools of lake water, merging into the lake and disappearing.

Two wisps of black Qi were completely absorbed by the tentacle, leaving nothing behind.

After finishing off the three exorcists, the tentacle rose high, seemingly gazing in the direction of Herag's escape.

It stood on the lake as if pondering something, then submerged back into the water, leaving no trace.

Herag at this time had already reached the forest, a safe distance from the lake.

Yet, he still didn't stop, sprinting far from the lake.

Herag was fully aware of the power possessed by such a level of existence; this distance meant nothing to them.

He quickly traversed through the area filled with mermaids, arriving at a small town.

Most in the town were still asleep, with only a few awake.

Herag didn't linger, diving straight into a stable, taking a horse and mounting it, then galloping off.

The town was too close to the lake; if that thing came out, the entire town would suffer.

Once on horseback, Herag kicked his feet and sped off instantly.

He couldn't wait for daylight, just wanting to leave this place as soon as possible.

After Herag left, Jim also came running into the town, breathing heavily.

He went straight to the stable, looking around puzzled, "Where's my horse?"

Jim found his horse had been stolen at some point. Usually, there was someone watching over in the hut next to the stable.

However, the watchman had dozed off, so it was unclear who took the horse.

Jim had no choice, randomly grabbing a strong horse, riding it, and starting his escape.

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After leaving the town, Herag didn't take a detour to the main road, fearing it would get too close to the lake.

He cut straight through the wilderness, intending to reach the other side of the main road, then head to Amy City.

The distance to Amy City was only a two-day journey, so he would arrive soon.

Riding on horseback, the cold wind brushed against Herag's face, bringing a slight chill.

He realized he had underestimated the power of demons, and needed to be more cautious in the future.

Herag, though unfamiliar with the world's power structure or advancement rules, observed from that demon's actions just now.

High-tier power here still relates to rules.

Chapter 463: Arios

Herag recalled the experiences he had so far and felt that the power systems in any world were essentially the same.

The core and foundation remained the Rule, though the rules might differ from world to world.

The power systems derived from these Rules might also differ, but the source of power didn't vary much; everything originated from the Rules.

Once power reaches a certain level, it still touches upon the power at the level of Rules.

Herag was well aware that mastering Rule Power placed one on a completely different level, which is why he fled the moment he saw that tentacle.

An hour later.

The sky was already dimly lit, the surrounding temperature gradually rising, making it feel a bit warmer.

The speed at which Herag rode had slowed somewhat; upon reaching this place, the sense of crisis that enveloped him had significantly diminished.

It seemed that the tentacle in the lake hadn't chased after him.

Herag speculated there must be some reason preventing the tentacle's main body from leaving the lake, or it was unwilling to.

Otherwise, given the distance at the time, Herag would have hardly managed to escape; he truly felt as though death was imminent back then.

This feeling had only occurred when facing that giant spider in the polluted area, and now he experienced it again.

Soon after, Herag noticed someone had joined him from behind.

Turning his head, he saw Jim also riding over.

Herag slowed down a bit, gradually waiting for Jim to catch up.

The first glance Jim took upon arrival was recognizing that the horse under Herag belonged to him.

His expression turned slightly peculiar, but he held back from commenting and instead said, "Brother Herag, what exactly was that thing in the lake?"

Herag casually replied, "How would I know?"

"You don't know either..."

Jim had assumed Herag's rapid departure meant he knew the origin of the Demon.

Herag said, "How could I know? I just sensed danger at the time. What about you? Do you have any information?"

"I'm not sure either; I've never heard of such a terrifying Demon in Thousand Lakes. That Demon must be at least Apostle Level." Jim said with lingering fear.

"Apostle Level Demon..."

Herag muttered the term in his mind, guessing Apostle Level might be comparable to a Level 2 Wizard or even a Level 3 Wizard.

"I must quickly get to Amy City to report this to Lord Arios. Currently, the Demon hasn't left Thousand Lakes, which must be due to some reason. We must resolve it before it emerges from Thousand Lakes. Otherwise, an Apostle Level Demon appearing threatens the densely populated vicinity..." Jim said worriedly.

"Arios?" Herag was a bit puzzled.

Jim said, "Don't you know Lord Arios?"

"I'm an Exorcist from afar, not very knowledgeable about this place," Herag explained.

Jim nodded, as if he understood something.

This world is vast, and indeed many Exorcists wander far and wide; Jim often encounters Exorcists from foreign lands.

Jim then explained, "Lord Arios is the City Lord of Amy City and the most powerful Exorcist there. He personally handles many tricky situations."

Herag nodded, silently remembering the name.

He intended to stay in Amy City for a while.

Amy City is populous, and there are numerous channels for information, perhaps leading to clues about the Expedition Team and Wizards.

While searching for the Expedition Team, he'd also easily find opportunities to slay Demons.

The two proceeded together, and during the journey, Herag took the chance to learn a lot about Amy City from Jim, forming a rough idea in his mind.

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Two days later.

Herag eventually arrived at Amy City after two days of travel.

Seen from afar, Amy City was vastly larger than Greenfield City.

Moreover, there was a large market outside Amy City, where most business transactions took place.

According to Jim, the market's setup was primarily to prevent chaos within the city, allowing merchants to engage in trades outside for easier management of the city.

Due to the lack of reliable identity proof, all sorts of people passed through here, and various chaotic events often occurred.

The City Lord's Mansion couldn't manage so many affairs, so they established a market outside the city to resolve commerce outside.

Herag and Jim rode slowly through the market, progressing at an extremely slow pace.

There were too many people and carriages around, crowding the already narrow road to the brim.

The road was also rugged, surrounded not only by puddles but occasionally littered with cow and horse dung.

The mixed scents combined, filling the air with an unpleasant fermented smell.

Herag spent half an hour in the market before making his way out, then started heading towards Amy City.

He couldn't ride into the city now, having to dismount and lead the horse along the main road outside.

If he dared ride into the city, he'd have to be wary of the guards' cold arrows at the gate.

"Herag, would you like to accompany me to meet Lord Arios? I'll report the situation in Thousand Lakes Town, and I will surely mention you, likely calling upon you to ask some questions." Jim said.

Herag nodded and said, "Alright, lead the way."

Since he planned to stay here for a while, he naturally couldn't afford to fall out with the City Lord.

The two led their horses into Amy City, heading toward the City Lord's Mansion.

Reaching the City Lord's Mansion required passing through a square, a vast expanse.

Many festivals and celebrations occur there, and daily activities of various professions frequently take place here too.

"Hmm, Lord Arios." Jim looked toward the square, where a crowd gathered, with a burly man standing atop a high platform speaking to those around him.

"Is that Lord Arios?" Herag looked over and asked.

Jim nodded, "Yes, it's quite strange; normally, Lord Arios wouldn't appear in this place."

The two walked to the outer edge of the crowd, seeing Arios standing on the high platform with a cross erected behind him, a disheveled man tied to it appears to have undergone severe torture.

"Attention everyone, recently, we've noticed some very strange people appearing. It's one thing they don't speak our language, but they somehow lack Exorcist powers, yet possess abilities stronger than many Exorcists. These individuals are very powerful; if I hadn't intervened personally, capturing them would indeed have been challenging."

"In the capture, two people died, and we only managed to take one alive."

Chapter 464: The Captured Wizard

Arios looked at the crowd below and continued, "Through some special means, I saw some memory fragments in his mind. I can confirm that they are a group of Outer Heaven Demons. Their appearance seems to be a scheme to seize our world, a far greater threat than demons."

"So, everyone, I hope you will spread this information. If you find someone as powerful as an exorcist but not an exorcist, be sure to contact me immediately. These people are extremely dangerous and must be dealt with!"

"Kill him! Kill him!"

The crowd below, upon hearing this, looked at the person tied to the cross with hatred, wishing to behead him immediately.

Arios is the City Lord of Amy City and also a figure at the Guardian Level, holding a very high status and prestige.

These people naturally trust him unconditionally and have no reason to doubt Arios's words.

Herag, after seeing the person tied to the cross, controlled his expression to not reveal any anomaly.

He did not recognize the person on the cross.

But Herag could clearly sense the aura of magic power on the person on the cross.

However, it was very weak now, barely hanging on.

This person should be at the Crystalization Wizard's Level, but Herag didn't know whether this wizard was part of the Cradle Operation or the Expedition Team.

Based on Arios's statements, Herag roughly deduced what had happened earlier.

These few wizards probably had a conflict with the exorcists here, leading to some battles, which eventually alerted Arios, an Apostle Level exorcist.

Arios acted, killing two wizards outright and capturing one alive.

After capturing, they couldn't communicate due to the language barrier.

So, they probably used some special means to view some of this wizard's memories, thus learning that he came from another world.

Arios, as a powerful Apostle Exorcist, quickly realized the huge threat within.

From those memory fragments, he saw many powerful beings.

If those people came here, it would probably be a disaster.

As the Guardian of Amy City, Arios felt it his duty to disclose these matters, to make more people vigilant.

Arios looked at the angry crowd and said, "This person cannot die yet; we know too little about them. We need to extract as much information from him as possible. Everyone, I need you to spread this news. Only if more people are aware of this can we better protect our home, protect our world."

In the Polantes Empire, cities are almost independent, and there are no efficient communication means between them.

Arios had no choice but to inform the public, letting these people from all over spread the word to wider places.

The purpose he wanted to achieve was just to make people aware enough.

As long as they have some awareness, when encountering these wizards, they would know these people are Outer Heaven Demons.

Herag glanced at the male witch on the high platform, whose eyes were unfocused, clearly not in a normal mental state.

He looked away after a glance to avoid meeting the male witch's gaze.

If Arios noticed anything unusual, it would be troublesome, Herag had no confidence in dealing with an Apostle Level Exorcist.

He wanted so badly to communicate with that male witch to gather some information he wanted.

But now it seemed impossible; the male witch was under Arios's strict surveillance, he had almost no chance to contact the male witch.

Taking rash action would only attract attention and bring trouble upon oneself.

Herag temporarily set aside this thought and could only pay more attention to information in this area, to see if there would be any opportunity later on.

While Arios was speaking, he scanned the surroundings as if observing something.

He saw Jim and said, "Little Jim, you're back?"

It seemed that Arios and Jim were quite familiar, exchanging greetings.

Jim walked over respectfully and said, "Lord Arios, I have very urgent news to report to you."

"Oh? Tell me," Arios said.

Jim hurriedly recounted in detail what happened in Thousand Lakes Town and introduced Herag to him.

Arios just glanced at Herag, then pondered, "It seems there's indeed a big problem inside Thousand Lakes. According to your description, that demon must be at the Apostle Level, but it's unclear what it is doing inside Thousand Lakes."

Arios looked serious, this matter compelled him to take it seriously.

An Apostle Level demon, if not handled properly, could threaten the entire Amy City.

Because demons can grow stronger by absorbing demon auras, once it starts killing, its power will swell extremely quickly.

Arios said, "Thank you for the information you brought, it seems I must go back to discuss it, and act quickly."

Arios acted swiftly, immediately taking the male witch back to the City Lord's Mansion.

He wanted to immediately gather his subordinates for a meeting to discuss how to deal with the demon inside Thousand Lakes.

Any demon, once discovered, must be dealt with immediately.

These are lessons learned from countless bloody experiences.

Now that demon is staying inside Thousand Lakes without coming out, obviously preparing something, Arios cannot give it the time to fully prepare.

"Brother Herag, I need to go to the City Lord's Mansion first, to see if I can be of any help. This is my address in the city, you can come find me if you need anything later." Jim took out a wooden plaque that looked like some kind of property certificate.

On the wooden plaque, it said: "Jim, 17 Bordeaux Street."

Herag silently remembered it, nodded, and said, "Alright, I've noted it. I'll find a place to stay for now."

Jim smiled and waved, then turned and jogged to catch up with the departing Arios.

Herag didn't spare a glance at Arios, turned and left with his head lowered quietly.

He was thinking, if Arios went to Thousand Lakes Town to solve the problems there, would it give him a chance to contact that wizard.

Of course, this entailed great risk, and Herag was weighing whether it was worth doing.

Herag walked a few streets and chose a somewhat secluded inn to check-in.

In this world, gold coins, silver coins, and copper coins are the main currency, this was something Herag had already learned in Falling Leaves Town.

Herag's gold coins were all remelted by himself, with no markings from the Wizard Plane, just a simple gold coin.

This was a necessary preparation to avoid exposure; he didn't want his identity revealed just because of currency issues when buying something.

Chapter 465: Trap

The inn Herag chose is actually located just west of the City Lord's Mansion, less than three kilometers away in a straight line.

It's much quieter here, and the price is significantly higher, comparable to a wealthy district.

Herag doesn't care about the price; his Space Ring is filled with more Gold Coins than he could ever spend.

After settling in the inn, he spent a few days strolling around Amy City, thoroughly familiarizing himself with the situation here.

Exorcists remain a scarce profession here, easily finding work.

Only after learning thoroughly did Herag realize how severe the demon problem here is.

Centered around Amy City, numerous small towns or human settlements are scattered all around.

Correspondingly, demons are also attracted by the humans here, with demon attack incidents happening almost daily in various places.

Ordinary people can barely handle weak demons at best; any slightly stronger demon turns them into lambs to be slaughtered.

At such times, only exorcists can be relied upon.

These days, Herag also wandered around near the City Lord's Mansion, strolling casually, not attracting anyone's attention.

He mainly observed and recorded the structure within the City Lord's Mansion.

Herag discovered that the wizard who had been captured was imprisoned in the dungeons below the City Lord's Mansion.

He originally planned to make contact with that wizard while Arios was out.

Since he has the ability to perform space travel, it's relatively easy for him to enter the dungeon.

However, after a scanning probe of the environment, Herag discovered that there is a hidden chamber next to the room where the wizard is imprisoned.

The door to the hidden chamber is extremely concealed, appearing on the surface as just a wall.

Even if an ordinary person stood in front of the wall, they wouldn't see that there is a door there.

Just having a hidden chamber would be fine, but Herag also found someone inside the chamber, silently resting with eyes closed, unmoving.

Herag keenly observed and discovered that the person looked exactly like Arios, matching in height and body type, as if carved from the same mold.

"Didn't Arios leave?"

Herag clearly remembered that a few days ago, Arios had left Amy City with a group, and Jim was also in that team.

The group hasn't returned yet, and the matter in Thousand Lakes Town surely won't be resolved so quickly.

Moreover, a round trip from here to Thousand Lakes Town would take at least four days.

Who is the person in the hidden chamber within the dungeon?

Herag is somewhat puzzled, as the person seems to be in a long-term state of slumber or meditation, unmoving.

But this is a living person, with breathing.

After observing this person's existence, Herag directly abandoned the idea of making contact with the wizard.

It turns out the wizard in the dungeon is just a trap, waiting for someone to fall into it.

The person who looks exactly like Arios in the hidden chamber is likely lurking, waiting to see who will try to contact the wizard.

Herag quickly understood Arios's intentions.

On that day, when Arios announced the matter in the square, besides intending to let more people know about this, he was also probing to see if there are hidden allies in Amy City.

He intentionally didn't kill the wizard, waiting for someone to rescue him and handle them together.

If Herag hadn't discovered the existence of that hidden chamber through environmental scanning, his reckless attempt to contact the wizard would have led him into a pre-arranged trap.

No wonder Arios could leave without worry; he was already prepared with a backup plan.

Herag quietly left the vicinity of the City Lord's Mansion, for now having no thought of the wizard in the dungeon.

All he wanted was some intelligence.

If the person in the dungeon was from the Expedition Team, there would indeed be a need to make contact, but if they were a wizard participating in the Cradle Campaign, it wasn't necessary.

The wizards participating in the Cradle Campaign might not know as much about this world as he does.

Herag just wanted to contact the Expedition Team's wizard, to find a way back to the Wizard Plane.

He isn't in a hurry to return now, so there's no need to rush into danger.

Herag arrived outside a bar named Old Tree Bar.

This bar has a rather unique design, resembling an old tree that's been long withered on the outside.

The bar is built inside the already hollow trunk, making it a well-known place in Amy City.

Herag came here mainly to gather intelligence and undertake tasks.

Old Tree Bar is a place that many exorcists frequent, consistently offering tasks that only exorcists can undertake, with decent rewards.

Many people seeking to commission tasks also come here to find people from Old Tree Bar.

As Herag walked in, a few individuals glanced at him before continuing to sip their drinks.

The tables here are all wooden stumps, quite fitting for the ambience of the place.

Herag walked straight to the counter, where a neatly dressed young man stood, wiping a glass with a white cloth.

"Do you have any good commissions lately?" Herag asked directly.

The young man glanced at Herag and asked, "Exorcist?"

Herag nodded.

"I'm Tiva. Please follow me." Tiva put down the cloth and glass, leading Herag to a room behind.

This room appeared like a file room, with a row of cabinets filled with documents.

Tiva asked, "What type of commission do you want? Any specific requirements?"

"The ones with lots of demons," Herag replied.

Tiva chuckled and said, "Tasks with many demons mean high risk. Without sufficient strength, I wouldn't recommend undertaking them."

Tiva knew many exorcists want to slay more demons to quickly enhance their strength.

Many novice exorcists are like that, eager to succeed without a clear comprehension of their own abilities.

The demon aura on Herag was faint, and Tiva keenly sensed this, confirming Herag was just a novice exorcist.

"You don't need to worry about that, just introduce them to me." Herag said.

Tiva nodded, without saying more.

Respecting others' destinies and letting go of the urge to assist.

"How about this task: guarding Fire Land Ranch, with a term of three months, and a reward of twenty Gold Coins." Tiva presented a piece of parchment in front of Herag.

Herag took the parchment and examined it carefully.

Fire Land Ranch is located to the south of Amy City, housing many cattle, sheep, and horses. It supplies meat and dairy to the vicinity.

Due to raising many animals, it often draws demons in for food, causing considerable losses to the ranch.

The ranch consistently hires exorcists to guard, making it a long-term task.

However, most exorcists won't stay too long, since the number of demons is unpredictable.

Sometimes there might be many, and sometimes few; it's entirely up to chance.

Chapter 466: Stalking

Most exorcists, if they squatted for a month without encountering a few Demons, might choose to leave.

Their main purpose is not to earn Gold Coins, but to hunt Demons.

The cattle, sheep, and horses in the ranch are just bait to them.

Hunting Demons is the goal, protecting the ranch is merely incidental.

If they can't find any Demons, they naturally won't waste Time any longer.

Accepting the mission at Fire Land Ranch is purely based on luck, the number and strength of Demons are uncertain.

However, generally speaking, the Demons that come here are not too strong, just some regular ones.

This is a bit of goodwill from Tiva, helping Herag pick a relatively low-risk mission, taking care of this naive and fearless youngster.

Of course, Tiva wouldn't say that out loud.

Herag looked over, feeling that this task might be worth a try.

He could actually just leave Amy City and hunt Demons everywhere.

But the problem with that is the lack of some crucial information.

Just like the tentacles at Thousand Lakes, you never know when you'll encounter some extremely powerful Demons.

Through the Old Tree Bar's channels, Herag can at least gather some intelligence, getting a rough idea of the strength of the Demons at the destination.

Having some understanding before acting ensures much greater confidence, and the risk is significantly reduced.

It's much more stable than wandering around recklessly with only a sword; Herag does not believe his capabilities are strong enough to move freely in this World.

"Then I'll take this mission." Herag said.

Tiva said, "Take this document and just head straight to the Fire Land Ranch down south. Show this document to the ranch owner."

No signature is required for taking these mission contracts, as many people are illiterate.

The parchment in Herag's hand is the proof, representing his acceptance of the mission.

Herag left the tavern with the parchment, preparing to head towards the Fire Land Ranch.

After he left, a man wearing a cowboy hat put down his glass, stood up, and walked to the door of a back room, where he bumped into Tiva coming out.

"Buddy, I'm looking to buy some information," the cowboy-hat man said with a faint smile.

"What kind of information?" Tiva asked.

"I just want to know, what task did the person who just left take?" the cowboy-hat man said.

Tiva said expressionlessly, "Kramer, you're targeting newcomers again? Give it up, I would never sell his information. If it got out, I'd have no business left."

Tiva knows very well why he can conduct such business here, entirely relying on mutual trust and established rules.

The clients and those accepting the assignments trust him, which is why they come here.

If the trust collapses, it would be very difficult to rebuild.

Tiva won't destroy the Old Tree Bar's reputation for a single piece of information business.

Kramer shrugged, said nothing more, and just turned around and left the bar.

He also knows Tiva's character and was just trying his luck.

He saw that Herag was a new face and had a faint Demon Aura about him, immediately judging him as a newcomer.

Among exorcists, many do not only hunt Demons, but also hunt other exorcists.

Because hunting exorcists can also yield Demon Aura, but since Demons pose a bigger threat, infighting is rare.

However, there are always those who don't follow the rules and have their own agendas.

Such as Kramer, who often targets weaker exorcists.

In his view, these individuals are weak, and the Demon Aura obtained after killing them is not insignificant, making it quite worthwhile.

Moreover, killing them allows for plundering their possessions, earning a double profit.

In this chaotic World, there is no law, only moral constraints.

To someone like Kramer, moral constraints are worthless; acquiring more profit is his main focus.

Herag returned to the inn's backyard, fetched his horse, and led it out of the city, as riding within the city is not allowed.

Shortly after he left, Kramer also rode out, keeping a long distance behind Herag.

Initially, Herag didn't notice anyone, but after some distance, he realized someone was trailing far behind.

He immediately understood the situation; he was being followed.

Herag glanced at the sky and kept moving, maintaining a certain distance from the person behind him.

After sunset, as Nightfall approached.

Herag had entered a forested area, the only way to the Fire Land Ranch.

He tied his horse within the forest and then hid himself.

Shortly, Kramer arrived on horseback.

The forest cover prevented him from seeing Herag's actions.

Thinking he hadn't been discovered due to keeping a significant distance.

Kramer had been tracking by following hoof prints on the ground, so he didn't think Herag would notice someone behind.

He entered the forest, saw the horse, and realized the issue.

Kramer immediately drew his Longsword, cautiously observing the surroundings.

He extended his hand, and a wisp of Black Qi emerged from his left palm, coalescing into a pitch-black bird.

The bird appeared and hovered over Kramer's head, circling around.

Suddenly, the bird let out an extremely unpleasant screech.

Kramer felt a jolt of tension, just about to dodge, when the tip of a sword suddenly appeared in front.

He glanced down to see a Longsword piercing through his chest, the agony surged, rendering his body powerless instantly.

"When did it..." Kramer collapsed, blood pooling around him.

He never perceived when Herag crept up behind him.

The bird had just sounded the alarm, but he hadn't time to react before being struck.

Herag looked coldly at the twitching figure on the ground, swung his Longsword, and finished him off.

A wisp of Black Qi floated from the man's body and was completely absorbed by Herag.

"Power +1.6, agility +1.7, Constitution +1.5."

Herag frowned at these numbers, feeling they should've been higher.

The Black Qi from killing this man was slightly robust, estimated around two points; yet now, none of the attributes reach two points.

Herag speculated that his numerous kills of Mermaids lately, absorbing ample Demon Aura, might be the cause.

And now, the attribute boost from the Demon Aura appears to have diminished, being less effective than before.

This was somewhat within Herag's expectations; he had presumed the Demon Aura boost would likely reduce as Time went on.

Herag wasn't too concerned about it, any improvement was appreciated, given his physical stats had already significantly increased.

Chapter 467: Giant Mountain Bear

"Herag Merlin: Power 45.2, Agility 45.6, Constitution 45.7, Spirit 79.5, Magic Power 100%."

Herag glanced at the data panel; his physical attributes had now all reached over forty points.

He felt it might not only be due to the Demon Aura but also because of his continuously increasing physical attributes.

As physical attributes rise, the difficulty of further improvement naturally becomes higher.

Compared to when he first arrived in this Plane, Herag's physical attributes had significantly improved.

Now, it's expected that the difficulty of improvement has increased slightly.

Herag checked the body of the person, finding only a few Gold Coins and Silver Coins, with nothing else of value.

After dealing with this person, he continued horseback, planning to find a place to stay overnight ahead.

The bird conjured by this person seemed to have a reconnaissance function, but before Kramer could fully demonstrate his abilities, Herag had already dispatched him with a single sword strike.

Early the next morning, Herag rode his horse and continued on his journey.

After five days of travel, Herag finally arrived at Fire Land Ranch.

Fire Land Ranch had a vast pasture, with cattle, sheep, and horses, all taken care of by ranch staff.

Herag arrived at the ranch entrance and showed a piece of parchment.

The ranch owner was a weathered man, looking to be in his fifties or sixties, named Bowen.

Bowen held a pipe in his mouth, took the parchment, glanced at it, then looked up at Herag and said, "It's a total of three months. If you leave early, it's ten Gold Coins; if you stay for the full three months, the reward is twenty Gold Coins."

Bowen intended to explain the rules clearly in advance to prevent this Exorcist from arguing later.

These Exorcists rarely stay for the full three months; they usually leave after a short while, and Bowen had grown accustomed to it.

Herag nodded, saying, "Understood."

Bowen then led Herag into the ranch, to a wooden cabin outside, which was Herag's accommodation.

Meals were provided by the ranch, with two meals a day.

Herag's job was simple, as he didn't partake in the regular management of the ranch.

The care of cattle, sheep, and other such animals was handled by designated personnel who managed the daily grazing.

The only task Herag needed to perform was to intervene when the ranch encountered a Demon attack, repelling or killing the Demon to minimize losses for the farm.

After settling at the ranch, it was tranquil for half a month.

Daily, watching the cattle, sheep, and horses moving about the plains, his mind seemed to find some peace.

The ranch staff totaled five people, all ordinary folks.

However, two of them were former Adventurers who bought the ranch after earning some money to retire.

Bowen was said to have been a powerful Adventurer with many experiences.

Herag often saw Bowen with a pipe in his mouth, sitting by the ranch, staring at the cattle and sheep, lost in thought.

He would often sit there the entire afternoon.

Herag stayed in the wooden cabin, diligently engaging in Meditation, which showed some progress as another star successfully formed.

In his mind, the third Array Map lit up the fourth star, marking the twenty-ninth star.

Herag glanced at the starry sky outside the window and continued meditating.

Observing the entirely different starry sky above, he couldn't help but wonder, having meditated on stars from several different Planes, what effects it might have in the future.

At present, they seemed similar, with nothing particularly different.

As he meditated, Herag thought about how he hadn't encountered a single Demon in these half-months.

If no Demons appeared in the coming days, he considered returning home, not wanting to continue wasting time here.

Herag was willing to wait half a month because Bowen mentioned that in autumn, some Demons might come to forage in preparation for winter.

Yet after half a month, he hadn't seen even a trace of a Demon.

Late at night, Herag opened his eyes and looked outside the window.

At the ranch's outskirts, a brown Giant Bear was approaching with heavy steps.

It watched the ranch's scenes through the wooden fence, drooling heavily upon seeing the herds of cattle, sheep, and horses.

This Giant Bear was no ordinary animal but a Demon, standing a full five meters tall when standing upright.

The Giant Bear casually swiped a paw, seemingly using little strength, and instantly smashed down a section of the wooden fence.

The noise quickly alerted a few people at the ranch, with Bowen rushing to assess the situation and gasping upon seeing the Giant Bear.

"Giant Mountain Bear!" Bowen recognized this Demon.

Giant Mountain Bear, a High-Tier Demon, possessed exceedingly strong physical Power.

Its hide was thick and tough, with ordinary swords unable to harm it.

Bowen couldn't understand why a Giant Mountain Bear was here, as they typically didn't operate in these plains or grasslands, but in mountainous regions.

However, such thoughts were irrelevant at the moment, with no time left to ponder.

"Quick, run. It should leave once it's eaten enough. Don't provoke it. Tell Herag not to throw his life away." Bowen told those beside him.

Seeing the Giant Mountain Bear, Bowen had lost all hope of defeating it.

Although Herag was an Exorcist, in Bowen's opinion, there was no way he could match a Giant Mountain Bear.

Even High-tier Exorcists were rarely confident about handling a Giant Mountain Bear, let alone Herag, who seemed an Exorcist Apprentice at most.

Bowen only hoped to lose as few cattle and sheep as possible.

But given the Giant Mountain Bear's size and hunger, the losses this time could be severe.

"Mr. Herag isn't in the cabin..." said the young man sent to notify him, running back.

"Not there? Did he run away ahead of time? Perhaps it's for the best..." Bowen mused.

"Captain, he's over there!" Bowen's old companion Mahar pointed toward the Giant Mountain Bear.

Bowen looked over and saw Herag approaching the Giant Mountain Bear with sword in hand.

The Giant Mountain Bear also took notice of the approaching human, roaring with gaping maw, saliva dripping.

"Damn fool! Come back!" Bowen anxiously shouted to Herag.

Herag turned and smiled, "It's alright; I can handle it."

Bowen was speechless at Herag's audacity, unsure what to say.

"Let's get out of here," Bowen sighed, unwilling to witness the young man's tragic death, planning to retrieve Herag's body later if there was one left.

"Captain, look..." Mahar did not leave, still watching the Giant Mountain Bear.

Chapter 468: Hunt

Herag held the longsword, slowly approaching the Giant Mountain Bear.

Now, all of his physical attributes had reached over forty points. Even without Titan Power, his physical strength was already extremely formidable.

The Giant Mountain Bear charged forward. Its weight was immeasurable, and each step it took made the surrounding ground tremble, as if the earth itself was shaking.

Herag focused all his attention, observing every movement of the Giant Mountain Bear. As it leapt towards him, he swiftly dodged to avoid the attack.

With a sudden step, his body turned into a shadow, quickly maneuvering behind the Giant Mountain Bear, and thrust his sword into its body.

The sword barely pierced a small bit of the blade, soon hindered by the bear's muscles, unable to go deeper.

Herag did not attempt to push further but swiftly withdrew the sword and dodged a massive paw swiping towards him.

The longsword in his hand was just an ordinary weapon, unable to inflict significant damage on the Giant Mountain Bear.

The bear's fur was extraordinarily tough, each strand like a steel needle.

That Herag could pierce it with an ordinary sword was due to his own immense strength.

Such minor wounds were negligible to the Giant Mountain Bear, equivalent to a needle prick.

Bowen, witnessing this scene, sighed.

He realized Herag was indeed skilled, but the disparity with the Giant Mountain Bear was still vast.

If this continued, Herag was destined to die.

The Giant Mountain Bear could make many mistakes, and small wounds meant nothing to it.

But Herag was different; a single misstep meant death.

Bowen, no longer hesitant, led a group to hastily leave the area.

They were powerless to assist Herag, staying would be futile.

If they waited until Herag died, it would be too late to escape.

Bowen felt little emotion, only pity for Herag.

Having been an adventurer for many years, he had grown indifferent to many things.

Herag noticed Bowen and the others leaving, yet he still refrained from using Titan Power to end the battle swiftly.

After seeing the captive wizard in Amy City, Herag knew he couldn't easily use the obvious magic of Titan Power anymore.

Otherwise, if such news spread and reached someone like Arios, survival would be difficult.

This Giant Mountain Bear, though thick-skinned, couldn't pose a real threat to Herag.

Herag might appear thin, but his physical strength was not necessarily weaker than that of the bear.

Even taking a hit, he could brush it off and get up.

Moreover, Herag's speed far exceeded the Giant Mountain Bear's, making it impossible for the bear to touch him.

Herag handled the situation easily, and so did not rush to use the Titan Power magic.

Ten minutes passed.

The Giant Mountain Bear's body was covered with small wounds, all inflicted by Herag's longsword.

Herag didn't have a drop of sweat on his forehead, his expression calm.

Conversely, the Giant Mountain Bear was panting heavily, somewhat frustrated at its inability to capture its prey, anger rising.

"It should be taking effect now. This bear's constitution is surprisingly strong," Herag thought as he dodged another attack from the Giant Mountain Bear, observing the wounds.

Herag didn't approach the bear with just an ordinary longsword; he had anticipated its formidable defense in the cabin.

His first attack was merely a test to see if he could breach its defense.

As long as he could inflict some wounds, that would be enough.

He had already poisoned the longsword.

This wasn't just any poison but one concocted from various magic potion materials.

Under normal circumstances, just one milligram could kill a whale.

But this Giant Mountain Bear, despite being struck multiple times, continued fighting unaffected for ten minutes.

Herag wasn't in a rush, dodging the Giant Mountain Bear's attacks and seizing opportunities to strike.

Another ten minutes passed.

During this time, the Giant Mountain Bear's speed noticeably slowed, and the wounds on its body increased.

Panting heavily, the Giant Mountain Bear gasped for air.

Herag stood before it, sword in hand, quietly waiting.

The Giant Mountain Bear glanced at Herag, understanding not why it felt so tired, finding it increasingly hard to breathe.

It decided not to waste more time on this elusive prey.

Turning, the Giant Mountain Bear began to flee, realizing continuing was futile.

Herag couldn't simply let the Demon Aura escape before his eyes.

He pulled out a longbow and some arrows from his space ring, prepared long ago for this moment.

The arrows were also poisoned.

Ordinary arrows were ineffectual against wizards, often blocked by a mere shield.

But against the Giant Mountain Bear, they sufficed.

Herag trailed the Giant Mountain Bear, shooting arrows intermittently.

Soon, the bear's back bristled with arrows, resembling a porcupine.

An hour later, the Giant Mountain Bear collapsed with a thud.

A few minutes after it fell, a thick black qi began to drift out.

Only then did Herag approach confidently, realizing the bear had indeed been feigning death.

This Giant Mountain Bear likely intended to play dead, waiting to use its final strength to kill Herag.

Unfortunately for the bear, Herag wisely kept his distance, offering no chance.

What the bear failed to comprehend was that in this world, when a demon dies, the Demon Aura dissipates, rendering its ruse futile.

Seeing the bear's body lifeless with no immediate release of aura, Herag figured it was pretending.

Patience and caution, he waited behind, occasionally firing another arrow.

In the end, the bear succumbed entirely to the spreading poison.

Herag absorbed the thick black qi completely, leaving nothing behind.

He glanced at the data panel, and Shenlan provided the stats: "Power +5.1, agility +3.2, Constitution +6.1."

"Herag Merlin: Power 50.3, Agility 48.8, Constitution 51.8, Spirit 80.5, Magic Power 100%."

Herag was very satisfied with the increase; it exceeded his expectations.

Considering his current high attributes, the Demon Aura's enhancement was highly restricted.

Nonetheless, he still gained significant stats under these circumstances, a substantial reward indeed.

After absorbing the Demon Aura, Herag suddenly felt some changes within his body.

He sensed transformations occurring inside, with something new in the surrounding space, though he could not perceive it.

Chapter 469: Black Membrane

Herag closed his eyes to feel for a moment and discovered that the demon aura he had absorbed in the past had originally integrated throughout his body.

Now, this demon aura seemed to be trembling, with some sort of connection between them.

After a while, Herag felt as if something from the outside was being infused into his body.

The demon aura within him began to transform into a layer of black membrane, covering various parts of his body.

This black membrane covered his internal organs, wrapped around every bone, integrated into every piece of flesh and blood, enveloping every cell.

After a long time, Herag opened his eyes, standing in the cold wind.

By now, he knew what changes had occurred in his body.

He had awakened the exorcist's talent ability, now considered an official exorcist.

The black membrane inside Herag is his ability, significantly enhancing his body's strength, toughness, and defensive capabilities.

At the same time, his physical power would also be greatly enhanced.

Strangely, when Herag checked the data panel, none of his physical attributes had actually improved.

This meant that, even though the black membrane made Herag's physical strength and toughness stronger, it wasn't achieved by enhancing physical attributes, but it was due to the properties of the black membrane itself.

Herag raised his hand, squeezed his fist, and clearly felt a difference from before.

This feeling wasn't because his physical strength had increased, but because the nature of his body seemed to have changed.

Herag wasn't sure of the principle behind this black membrane and hadn't heard of any other exorcists with similar abilities.

He once heard Jim mention that an exorcist's abilities often reflect their character, habits, bloodlines, etc.

But this is also a metaphysical explanation, similar to using zodiac signs to determine personality.

Nonetheless, Herag was quite satisfied with this ability, feeling that it suited him well.

If he used the Titan Power now, Herag believed he would be much stronger than before.

After feeling the changes in his body, he looked at the giant bear's corpse on the ground.

The giant bear was poisoned to death, its body filled with various toxins.

If it just stayed there and some animals ate it, that would be fine, but if it accidentally poisoned a few people, that wouldn't be good.

Herag thought for a moment, took out a portion of corrosive potion from his space ring, and poured it onto the bear's body.

The bear's body began to melt quickly, sizzling and smoking.

A single portion of corrosive potion wasn't enough, as the bear's body was too large.

Herag used two more portions to completely dissolve the bear's body, leaving only some liquid at the site.

He then thoroughly cleaned up the marks on the ground before leaving.

Because he used a magic potion, Herag was more cautious, leaving no traces behind.

When Herag returned to Fire Land Ranch, he found the ranch empty of people, except for cattle, sheep, and horses.

The ranch owner Bowen and others had disappeared, with no sign of them within the environment detection range.

Herag did not bother about them and went back to his cabin to continue his meditation practice.

By the next morning, Bowen and the others slowly returned.

They were very cautious, observing the surroundings outside the ranch for a while before entering.

Seeing that the cattle, sheep, and horses were mostly still there and there were no traces of blood or carcasses, they felt puzzled.

When they went to the back plain, they saw Herag practicing swordplay in the distance, and were immediately surprised.

Seeing them return, Herag approached and greeted them, "The giant bear has been driven off by me and shouldn't be coming back."

He did not elaborate on the details, merely mentioned it casually before heading towards his cabin.

"Driven off?" Bowen was somewhat incredulous, but Herag was unharmed, and the ranch had suffered no losses, so he had no choice but to believe it.

Watching Herag leave leisurely, Bowen was deep in thought.

Half a month passed in a flash.

During this time, no demons came to attack, seemingly due to the giant mountain bear's passage; no other demons appeared during these two weeks.

Herag didn't plan to stay here longer, as winter was approaching, and demons would only become fewer.

In some time, heavy snow would block the mountains, making travel inconvenient.

When Bowen learned that Herag was leaving, he did not try to stop him, merely personally sending him to the road outside, handing him a bag of money, "This is your reward."

Herag looked inside the money bag, puzzled, "Why are there twenty gold coins? I haven't been here for three months."

Bowen took a drag from his pipe and said, "You may not have stayed for three months, but driving off the giant mountain bear saved the ranch from significant loss, this is rightfully yours."

Herag nodded, accepted the money bag, and without further words, mounted his horse, cracked the whip, and rode away.

Bowen stood outside the ranch, watching Herag leave, then slowly returned to the ranch.

...

After returning to Amy City, as soon as Herag got back to the inn, the clerk told him that Jim had come looking for him a few days ago.

At that time, Herag was performing a commission task at Fire Land Ranch, so Jim asked the clerk to relay a message, saying he had something to discuss with Herag.

Upon hearing the news, Herag went to the address Jim had given the next day.

Jim lived in a small courtyard with a limited area.

He knocked on the door, and soon Jim opened it.

"You're back, I thought you'd return after winter. It's good that you're back now, winter there isn't very comfortable, and supplies are scarce." Jim ushered Herag into the courtyard as he spoke.

Herag asked, "How are things going in Thousand Lakes Town?"

He hadn't heard much after returning to Amy City and was unsure if things were resolved.

Jim sat beside a table in the courtyard and said, "There was indeed an apostle-level demon in Thousand Lakes, a jellyfish."

"A jellyfish?" Herag recalled, that white translucent tentacle indeed resembled a jellyfish, just magnified many times.

Jim nodded and continued, "That jellyfish was very strong, and Lord Arios fought it to a standstill, neither able to defeat the other. It seemed stronger in water. Later, realizing it couldn't handle Lord Arios, the demon left, disappearing from Thousand Lakes."

"Disappeared?" Herag asked.

"Lord Arios believes the demon used some special means to leave. No trace of it can be found in Thousand Lakes now, and it's uncertain if it will ever reappear. After this event, Thousand Lakes has been designated a dangerous area, those living by fishing there might struggle." Jim explained.

The two of them continued to discuss details about Thousand Lakes Town's situation, and Herag gained a deeper understanding.

Chapter 470: Traces

Herag learned from some of Jim's information that the jellyfish was likely preparing something.

It initially should have suddenly appeared at Thousand Lakes and prepared to make it its territory.

So later it sent out many mermaids, intending to turn the surroundings into its domain to continue its task.

Only later did the appearance of the exorcists defeat the mermaid army, and Arios' arrival made the jellyfish realize that this place was not safe, so it chose to relocate.

No one knows the method of relocation; anyway, the jellyfish and all the mermaids disappeared into thin air.

"Did you come to me just for these things?" Herag asked after understanding.

Jim stroked the back of his head and said, "Actually, there's one more thing. Lord Arios assigned me this winter to guard over at the Alster Mountain Range. It's said to be quite restless there. Recently, due to a shortage of manpower, I'm currently the only exorcist there. I'm really not confident in my own strength, so I thought you might join me. The reward is the same as mine: thirty Gold Coins for three months."

"Are there many demons there?" Herag asked only one question.

Jim said, "There should be quite a few near the mountain regions; they often come out to roam. Also, according to what Lord Arios mentioned before, there might be activity from Outer Heaven Demons there. If we can find some clues, that would certainly be a huge accomplishment."

"Clues of the Outer Heaven Demons?" Herag feigned confusion.

Jim said, "It's like when you first arrived in Amy City; we saw the person tied to the cross in the square. Lord Arios said they are people from another world, intending to take over ours. The Alster Mountain Range seems to have activity from these Outer Heaven Demons because some traces don't look left by demons, nor by exorcists."

He looked around and whispered, "Actually, my main purpose for going there is to investigate these matters. Don't mention this outside; only we know internally. If those Outer Heaven Demons find out, they'll definitely flee. I think those people are probably very powerful, that's why I came to ask for your help."

Herag hesitated for a moment, wavering, "Hmm... alright, I'll go with you."

"Really? Thank you so much, my friend!" Jim was very pleased; he hadn't held much hope, but didn't expect Herag to actually agree.

Normal people would definitely avoid danger, not knowingly walk into it.

Jim shared the truth also because he didn't want to lead Herag into a trap, hence he honestly informed that there might be activity from Outer Heaven Demons there.

Outer Heaven Demons are unknown, mysterious, and powerful to them. No one knows what will happen after encountering them, nor what their strength is.

Jim truly lacked confidence in his own strength and couldn't enlist other powerful exorcists, so he sought out Herag to try.

Herag righteously declared, "It's what I should do; being able to contribute to the defense of our world is my honor."

Jim looked at Herag, feeling that this man seemed to be bathed in Holy Light.

"I'm so grateful to you; when we get back from there, if we manage to accomplish the task, we will surely gain Lord Arios' respect. Especially someone like you, skilled, young, and with potential, will definitely be viewed favorably by Lord Arios," Jim said.

Herag replied, "Don't say useless things like that, when are we departing?"

"Probably in three days; I need to prepare some supplies. There's already a base there, so essential daily supplies aren't lacking. The roads are very clear; you'll be able to eat fresh food even in the winter. However, they're short on manpower there, so exorcists are urgently needed to guard," Jim explained.

Herag said, "Understood, then you can come straight to the inn to find me by then."

...

After leaving Jim, Herag returned to the inn where he resided.

While in his room, he recalled Jim's expressions and actions during the whole process, not finding anything wrong.

Initially, Herag also suspected that it was a trap aimed at himself.

But after thinking it through, he deemed it unlikely, because he hadn't shown any abnormalities from the start, nor had made excessive contact with Arios.

If this matter was a trap set for him, then it must be arranged by Arios, implying Arios noticed something was wrong with him.

But if this were the case, Arios could take him down directly without much effort.

Herag finally decided to go to the Alster Mountain Range to check; if there really were traces of other Wizards, some clues could be found.

Many things these exorcists would not see or pay attention to, but as a Wizard, Herag could easily spot many traces.

Three days later, Jim drove the carriage to the inn entrance to pick up Herag.

This time he brought a total of two carriages out; one followed behind, driven by a coachman named Kobe.

The carriages were piled with various supplies, being planned for a winter stay over there, so a lot was prepared.

Herag merely carried a large bag, which also contained various items.

But the main purpose of this large bag was to conceal the existence of the Space Ring, making the appearance of various things more reasonable and less noticeable.

The two carriages sped up after leaving the city, traveling the road towards the northwest direction, headed for the Alster Mountain Range.

After five days, the carriages arrived at a villa under the Alster Mountain Range.

Here guarded were over a dozen soldiers from Amy City, primarily watching the entrance to the Alster Mountain Range and tasked with monitoring the movements here.

If any demon emerged from the mountains or if there were any anomalies in the range, they had to quickly notify Amy City.

There weren't many houses in the villa; many soldiers lived in shared rooms, the conditions relatively simple.

Herag and Jim each got a small room, which though small in size, was fully equipped with everything.

There was a fireplace, and stacks of wood piled outside; even in winter, it wouldn't be cold.

The coachman who came with Herag and the soldiers stayed together, he too had to remain here for the entire winter.

After arriving here, Herag looked at the surrounding terrain.

They were actually situated halfway up the mountain, with dense forests around the villa, facing the entrance to the Alster Mountain Range that could be directly seen from the villa yard, unhindered by any obstructions.

The cold wind blew, the weather turned increasingly cold, and snow began to fall from the sky.

Judging by the current trend, it won't be long before everything here turns into a silver-covered, snowy realm.