

Sixth 471

Chapter 471: Mutation

After dinner, Herag stayed with Jim in a spacious room in the villa, drinking hot tea and chatting.

Outside, the cold wind howled, and snowflakes danced in the air.

The door had been tightly shut, as even the smallest gap would allow the biting cold wind to seep in.

The fireplace burned fiercely, and Herag checked its structure to ensure there were no issues with the chimney.

Herag lifted the teapot, poured himself a cup of piping hot red tea, added two cubes of sugar, and stirred with a spoon.

He stirred it a bit; the sugar cubes instantly melted, and he tried a sip, finding it a bit too hot.

Setting the red tea aside, Herag asked, "Since there's nothing else going on now, can you tell me about those Outer Heaven Demons? I'm quite interested in what signs you've discovered here."

Herag's curiosity was quite normal, as anyone learning about Outer Heaven Demons for the first time would be somewhat intrigued.

Jim said, "Actually, I don't know much either. Lord Arios just mentioned that they come from another world and are quite powerful. The reason we're here is because they found a dead Winged Demon in the Alster Mountain Range."

"Winged Demon?" Herag had little knowledge of the magic creatures in this world and hadn't heard of such a demon.

Jim, aware that Herag was a foreigner, explained, "A Winged Demon is a high-tier demon, very powerful. The guards here reported it to Amy City immediately upon discovering it."

"The Winged Demon's corpse was sent to Amy City, where Lord Arios personally examined it and found some peculiarities."

Herag looked puzzled but didn't interrupt Jim; instead, he picked up the red tea and continued listening.

Jim continued, "Lord Arios said the Winged Demon's body had several wounds caused by energy-type attacks, reminiscent of those used by Outer Heaven Demons."

"Can that deduce anything? It might have been other demons, or maybe exorcists with special abilities," Herag remarked.

Jim replied, "I thought the same, but Lord Arios considers the possibility of Outer Heaven Demons and insists on investigating, even if there's just a faint chance."

Herag nodded, sipped his tea, and stared at the fireplace deep in thought.

After chatting for a while longer, the two retired to their respective rooms to rest.

Herag lit the fireplace in his room, added some firewood, warming the room bit by bit.

He lay on the bed, processed recent events, then entered into a meditative state, beginning his meditation practice.

About two hours later, Herag suddenly felt cold.

He found it strange, for his physique should not feel cold even if the fireplace went out.

Moreover, he was nestled under the blankets, with even less reason to feel chilly.

Herag opened his eyes and sat up, finding the room pitch dark, the fireplace's embers long extinguished.

He glanced around the room, quickly noticing something amiss.

The floor was covered in dust, as well as the bedding.

Rising from the bed sent a cloud of dust swirling, as if he'd been lying there for centuries.

He immediately equipped the Storm Giant Shield, drew his longsword, and vigilantly scanned his surroundings.

What lay before him seemed eerily familiar, reminiscent of events when he first traversed to the Abyss Plane, albeit without the Abyss Plane's aura, ruling out his presence there.

He glanced at his left hand; the plane coordinates were intact, not activated.

Confronted with this unknown circumstance, he grew increasingly cautious.

Herag deployed Shenlan's environment detection to scan his surroundings.

The overall layout of the little villa remained unchanged, appearing just as it always had.

The difference was, no one remained in any of the other rooms.

He was the only one left.

"Was this teleportation? When did it occur?"

Examining the scene, it seemed to Herag as if he'd been teleported somewhere.

Though in a meditative state earlier, his spirit was highly focused; he felt no abnormal occurrences around him.

Thud! Thud! Thud!

A sudden, urgent knocking broke the eerie silence.

Herag turned to look but didn't approach the door.

Using the environment detection, he saw emptiness outside with no one present.

"Evil Spirit?"

Herag quickly considered this possibility, then cast the Necromancy spell, Undead Perception.

This spell could sense and see spirits around him.

Scanning his surroundings, Herag found no spirits.

Next, he took out a necklace from around his neck, the Soul-devouring Crystal.

The Soul-devouring Crystal was a demonized item he bought from Lady Moran, said to cleanse lingering malevolence within.

He kept it on him, as it would turn red in the presence of evil spirits, and emit heat near exceptionally powerful ones.

To date, he'd yet to encounter such a spirit.

At the moment, the crystal remained unchanged, leading Herag to question whether Lady Moran had sold him a fake.

He re-stashed the necklace and fixed his gaze on the door.

The knocking continued with erratic variations in pace.

Herag naturally wouldn't entertain the idea of opening the door, opting instead to observe what might unfold.

The knocking persisted intermittently for about half an hour before abruptly ceasing.

With its sudden end, an oppressive silence descended upon the world, chilling and deathly still.

Herag watched the door intently, convinced something stood behind it, unseen but present.

Bam!

The door exploded suddenly, wooden fragments scattering, ricocheting off Herag's Absolute Defense Shield before landing on the floor.

The room filled with dust, severely hampering visibility.

Herag saw a humanoid creature standing in the doorway, around two meters tall, with robust limbs and prominently defined muscles, yet its waist was unusually slender, making the figure appear elongated.

The creature had no hair, replaced by writhing tendrils suspended in the air.

"Single eye..."

As the dust settled, the creature's likeness fully revealed itself to Herag.

A single enormous eye and a mouth brimming with sharp teeth, arranged in several rows like those of a shark.

Looking down, Herag saw the creature's feet resembled twin blades, glinting with a chilling cold light.

Chapter 472: One-Eye

After the humanoid creature smashed the door with a punch, its single eye fixed on Herag, seemingly observing something.

Herag didn't act rashly either, and the two sides faced off for a brief moment.

A moment later, the one-eyed creature flickered and rushed directly in front of Herag, delivering a swift punch.

Herag raised his left hand, and the Storm Giant Shield instantly enlarged, blocking the blow.

Holding the shield firmly in his left hand, he withstood the considerable force of the one-eyed creature's punch without his hand sinking even a fraction.

"What the heck..."

Herag felt somewhat baffled, as an unknown demon suddenly appeared and attacked without a word.

He clenched his right fist and retaliated.

The one-eyed creature, seeing Herag's fist, showed a hint of fear in its eye, hurriedly retreating to evade.

"Titan Power!"

Seeing the retreat, Herag immediately utilized Titan Power, entering a state of maximum combat potential.

With the enemy's strength unknown, Herag didn't care if others saw, as giving his all was most important.

Recently, he significantly enhanced his physical attributes by absorbing Demon Aura, elevating all attributes to over forty points.

Under the original Titan Power form, each attribute was fifty or sixty points, not much different from the base attributes.

But now, Herag glanced at his body data panel: "Power 75.5, agility 68.6, Constitution 78.4."

The attributes provided in the Titan Power form had also increased slightly, which Herag guessed was due to an increase in basic attributes, further elevating the effects of the Titan Power magic.

Herag's current size was massive, over four meters tall, with his head nearly touching the ceiling.

Looking at the one-eyed demon ahead, the huge size difference made it seem like the demon was being relentlessly hunted.

Herag struck first, using Space Travel to appear directly behind the one-eyed creature, then extended his massive palm to grasp its head.

The one-eyed creature reacted quickly, its body spinning in place, with blade-like legs slicing toward Herag's huge hand.

Despite the dark gold armor covering his body, Herag didn't choose to clash directly, as the blade edges might have additional properties.

If these blade edges had the same properties as Ed's Black Sword, there was a risk of injury.

The one-eyed creature seized the opportunity to roll forward and evade Herag's grasp.

After getting back on its feet, the single eye started glowing, then suddenly emitted a black-purple beam toward Herag.

The speed was so fast that Herag didn't have time to react.

The room was so narrow and the beam so fast, it shot towards Herag's chest from a very close distance.

The black-purple beam pierced through the dark gold armor, leaving a small hole and directly touched Herag's flesh.

Herag was shocked, completely surprised by the beam's strong penetration.

He thought he would suffer serious injuries, but then a miraculous scene unfolded.

After piercing the armor and touching his body, the beam vanished as if it was nonexistent.

Herag felt something and discovered that an internal black membrane had completely absorbed the beam's energy.

Not only did it nullify the beam's attack, but it also seemed to make the black membrane more resilient, serving as its nourishment.

Seeing this, Herag didn't understand why, knowing too little about this world.

But the reason was insignificant now; he knew one thing—that his black membrane had complete immunity to the one-eyed creature's beam.

Still, if the beam's energy was immense, the membrane might not be able to completely neutralize it.

The one-eyed creature seemed stunned as well, seeing Herag just touch his chest without any issues.

Herag felt much more at ease now and used Space Travel again to appear in front of the creature, delivering a swift slap.

That beam seemed to have drained the creature's strength and energy, slowing its reaction.

Herag's slap sent it flying, crashing through the cabin wall into another wooden hut.

Following closely, Herag appeared above the landing spot before the one-eyed creature could hit the ground, wielding a large knife for a precisely timed vertical slash.

The one-eyed creature flew right into the slash, its neck meeting the blade for a swift decapitation.

Dark purple blood sprayed out instantly, splattering throughout the cabin and releasing a strong stench.

Herag, with his massive stature, dark gold armor stained with blood, stood there holding a large knife.

Moonlight streamed down, casting a shadow over the beheaded demon, with blood spreading across the floor towards his feet.

Herag waited for a long time, wondering, "Where's the Demon Aura?"

Most demons in this world, when killed, emit Demon Aura unless they are particularly weak.

But this demon was clearly more powerful, not a weak mermaid but a strong demon.

Had it not been for the black membrane, he would have been in big trouble.

That beam, while not lethal, would certainly have caused severe injury.

Why didn't this demon release Demon Aura when killed? Herag was puzzled.

Herag left through the hole in the wall and surveyed the outside scene.

The moon hung high in the sky, revealing a lush landscape of vegetation and forest.

"Isn't it winter now?" Herag thought, remembering the evening's heavy snowfall while drinking tea by the fire indoors.

As soon as he spoke, the surrounding scene changed abruptly, turning a snowy white.

Herag raised his hand, watching a snowflake land on his dark gold armor.

Looking around, he saw heavy snow falling, with thick layers covering the ground and wind howling, along with the sound of guards snoring in the distant cabin.

The cabin nearby appeared intact.

In their recent fight, the cabin wall should have been shattered, but everything seemed normal now.

Through environmental sensing, Herag quickly saw others in the cabins, sound asleep.

He realized he had returned.

Having this thought, Herag immediately disengaged from the Titan Power form and changed into a set of clothes.

Just after changing, Jim opened the door, rushed out, and knocked on Herag's cabin door frantically.

"Herag, help! You must help me, it's over, it's over!" panicked Jim, clearly distressed by something.

Chapter 473: Nightmare

Herag saw Jim anxiously knocking on the door, muttering something under his breath.

He walked over, patted Jim's shoulder, and asked, "What's the matter with you?"

Jim was startled and, seeing it was Herag, breathed a sigh of relief. Then he remembered something, and anxiously said, "Herag, it's over, it's over, I think I'm about to encounter a Nightmare."

"Nightmare? You mean a bad dream?" Herag was curious why an exorcist would be so afraid of having a nightmare.

Jim exclaimed in surprise, "You don't know about the Nightmare?"

Herag shook his head, "Never heard of it."

"You really don't know about the Nightmare. It seems like information around your hometown is really scarce. Maybe you have another name for it. Nightmare is something that all exorcists hope to never encounter. Once you do, it's basically certain death, very few exorcists escape a Nightmare." Jim explained.

Herag frowned, "Tell me more about it."

Seeing that Herag truly hadn't heard of it, Jim continued to explain, "The Nightmare is also known as the Demon Hunter, specifically hunting exorcists. It's generally uncommon to encounter them during the exorcist apprentice stage; it's only after you become an Official Exorcist for a while that there's a chance of encountering one descending."

"Once the Nightmare descends, the exorcist enters a very strange world and can only return by killing the Nightmare. But most exorcists only meet death upon encountering a Nightmare."

Herag recalled everything he had just experienced and was sure that what he encountered was indeed a Nightmare.

That Nightmare was indeed very strong. If it were other exorcists, it would have been truly hard to escape its grasp.

Herag thought for a moment and asked, "Is there any pattern to when a Nightmare appears? Or what circumstances cause it to appear?"

"There's no pattern at all. Some exorcists never encounter a Nightmare in their entire life, but some might encounter one as soon as they become an Official Exorcist. That's the unluckiest situation. However, I've heard that the stronger an exorcist is, the more likely they will encounter a Nightmare. And those exorcists who are extremely powerful will face Nightmares that are terrifying, with almost no one being their match."

"But these are just rumors. There are only a few exorcists of that level, not to mention those who have met a Nightmare." Jim said.

Herag pondered for a moment and looked at Jim, asking, "So what did you mean when you said you might encounter a Nightmare?"

Jim seemed to remember something, his face filled with terror, and he took out a half-burned paper figure saying, "It's this, this is the proof."

"Is there something special about this?" Herag glanced at it, seeing it looked like just an ordinary paper figure.

Jim explained, "This was given to me by a mysterious exorcist, she said that when the paper figure starts to burn, it might be a sign that a Nightmare is about to descend or has already descended. As soon as you see the paper figure burning, you should be prepared to deal with it."

"I think I probably can't defeat the Nightmare, so I wanted you to help."

Herag began to take the paper figure more seriously; it seemed it could indeed be useful.

The Nightmare had indeed already descended, it had just been killed by him.

It seemed Jim didn't know that once a Nightmare descended, it would only drag the corresponding exorcist into that world, and others couldn't help.

Herag, keeping his composure, picked up the paper figure, glanced at it, and placed it back into Jim's hand, saying, "You're fine right now, there's no Nightmare. It's just a small paper figure, perhaps it has some special substance that makes it spontaneously combust under certain circumstances, don't think too much."

"But... I've been wearing it for so long, it was always normal before, and today it suddenly started burning." Jim still felt that the paper figure should be useful.

Herag said, "If a Nightmare really shows up, just scream a few times. Anyway, we're so close, I'll come over to help immediately when I hear something."

"I... this..." Jim was still a little uneasy, always feeling a bit unsafe inside.

Herag said, "Alright, I need to go back to sleep."

If Jim were a woman, Herag might have said, "Come sleep in my room."

But since Jim was a man, Herag would only tell him to crawl back to his room and stay there.

"Alright." Jim nodded, not saying anything further.

Watching Herag open the door, Jim suddenly asked, "Hey, you weren't in the room, where did you go just now?"

"To pee." Herag closed the door without turning back.

Houses here didn't have bathrooms, so people solved it outdoors themselves, making Herag's explanation reasonable enough.

Jim nodded, not thinking much more, just returning to his room with worries, not daring to close his eyes as he looked at the half-burned paper figure in his hand.

Nightmares were too widely spread among exorcists, with many terrifying stories that he couldn't help but be afraid of.

Back in his room, Herag was also contemplating this matter.

He indeed hadn't been an Official Exorcist for long and then encountered this thing called a Nightmare.

From the information Jim provided, encountering a Nightmare was just a rare event, how did he just happen to run into one?

Herag, thinking more broadly, quickly began to consider the issue from the perspective of the plane's hierarchical level.

He again examined some of the world's rules.

The basic rules of each world are mostly similar, yet there are many differing rules among them.

The demon aura of this world is clearly unique to this plane's rule.

Herag recalled past experiences; clearly, the demon aura is used to enhance the strength of individuals in this plane.

Under the unique mechanism of demon aura, there are bound to be ever-growing, more powerful individuals.

The World Will's intention in nurturing the Child of the Plane is to utilize their power once they grow to address external threats and solve various troubles.

If it were the Wizard Plane or Elf Plane, individual growth would be extremely difficult and slow.

But in this plane, as long as conditions are sufficient, individuals can quickly grow into extremely powerful beings.

If these rapidly growing individuals don't comply with the World Will's arrangements, not only not solving external troubles but also posing threats to the plane, how would the World Will handle them then.

Herag quickly thought of the Nightmare.

From the traits of the Nightmare, it's meant to singly solve certain individuals.

The appearance of a Nightmare has no pattern, that's because it's inherently just a method of the World Will, a tool.

The World Will uses the Nightmare's existence to resolve those individuals that could potentially threaten the plane.

Individuals in this plane wishing to grow must absorb demon aura to do so and can thus be trapped in the rules triggered by the Nightmare.

Chapter 474: As Winter Ends

The nightmare resembles more a self-defense mechanism and a cleansing system of this world, specifically designed to eliminate those unstable elements.

Herag himself hails from another plane, thus upon becoming an official exorcist, he triggered this nightmare mechanism.

Luckily, his own strength was already formidable, so he wasn't particularly afraid of that nightmare.

Even without the existence of the black membrane, Herag could handle it, though it would cost him more effort.

However, if Herag hadn't possessed his prior strength and only relied on the power gained through demon aura, defeating the nightmare would be nearly impossible.

The black membrane can dissolve the ray, but the ray is the nightmare's final resort.

Without his prior strength, Herag would find it difficult to force the nightmare into using its ray, not even reaching that stage.

The nightmare's power, speed, and other attributes far surpass those of ordinary exorcists, and a newly promoted exorcist stands no chance.

Thus, it seems most exorcists find surviving an encounter with the nightmare extremely difficult.

Suddenly, Herag wondered if this might be a harvesting mechanism of the World Will.

Cultivate individuals to become strong, then send nightmares to eliminate them, allowing the demon aura within them to return to this realm.

Herag pondered another question: whether the total amount of demon aura was fixed or constantly increased.

If the total amount is constant, the appearance of a super individual would mean the others in this world would generally be weaker.

Because the majority of demon aura would gather in one individual, leaving the others with insufficient power.

At that moment, it would mean the world has entered an era devoid of magic.

Only when the super individual falls, allowing demon aura to return to the land, can others gradually become stronger.

If the total amount of demon aura in this world is constantly growing, what is its source, and where does it originate?

Herag's mind was filled with questions regarding these matters.

Though he hadn't seen the apex individual in this world, he conjectured it would likely be terrifyingly powerful.

This world is likely a middle-tier world, but most likely not a higher-tier world.

Herag speculated that the hidden dangers of this world far exceeded his imagination.

If the wizard plane has truly established a spatial passage, whether the expedition team would dare to invade remains another matter.

The wizard plane no longer possesses the strength of the Sixth Ring Tower's era, with the strongest in Land of Dawn being only a Level 4 Wizard, incapable of contending with Level 5 or Level 6 entities.

The expedition team, upon entering this plane, would definitely first ascertain the situation here before making any decisions.

So far, there hasn't been any word of a large-scale invasion by Outer Heaven Demons, and most people are unaware of arrivals from other worlds.

Herag gazed at the snow fluttering outside the window, realizing it might take some effort to find the wizard from the expedition team.

The members of the expedition team were surely in hiding as well; under such circumstances, finding them proved exceedingly difficult.

The fireplace inside was still burning; Herag walked over to add some wood, then lay on the bed to continue meditating.

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Time passes differently in the mountains; three months of winter vanished in an instant.

Early in the morning, Herag emerged from the door to find the outside still blanketed in snow, though the wind was no longer as biting.

A month later, spring would arrive, and Herag and Jim were soon to return.

During these months, nothing significantly momentous had occurred.

Herag and Jim occasionally led a few of the mountain guards into the mountains to investigate, but found no trace of the so-called Outer Heaven Demons.

Due to the mountain being sealed by snow, the demons rarely ventured out, causing this period to be extremely peaceful.

A few mountain guards were already active in the yard, preparing the supplies needed for today's expedition into the mountains.

This was the daily routine of mountain guards, patrolling the mountains in shifts on a scheduled basis to check for any suspicious traces.

Having gone into the mountains many times before, Herag was very attentive to this task.

Each time he examined meticulously, though regrettably, no valuable clues were discovered.

As of now, it's apparent that there's no presence of wizards around the perimeter of the Alster Mountain Range.

This time, Herag decided not to venture further in; searching further seemed to hold no meaning.

He planned to return to Amy City in a few days.

Herag unsheathed his longsword and moved around a bit in the yard.

The guards preparing to venture into the mountains respected him deeply; after saluting, they took their supplies down the slope, ready to enter through the mountain pass on the other side.

Jim was still asleep; he generally couldn't wake up when the weather was too cold.

Approximately half an hour later.

Just after Herag sheathed his sword, he heard some faint sounds.

The sounds came from deep within the Alster Mountain Range, gradually becoming louder.

Herag immediately shouted: "Everyone up, there's something happening."

The other mountain guards in the house heard and rushed outside, with Jim following closely, albeit slightly slower.

"What's wrong?" Jim asked, as he hadn't heard any disturbance.

Herag looked towards the Alster Mountain Range, speaking with a heavy tone: "Something seems to be coming out of the mountains, probably something sizable; we should retreat for now."

Hearing the sound growing closer, the commotion seemed substantial, as if something large was advancing rapidly.

Instinctively sensing danger, he wanted to escape first.

"That's bad, Calvo and the others have already ventured into the mountains; we must call them to come out quickly," Jim said hurriedly, trusting Herag's judgment.

However, a few mountain guards had already entered; if they retreated directly, those who entered would likely be doomed, possibly unaware of the unfolding events.

Herag sighed: "There might be no need..."

"Why?" Jim asked.

Herag gazed at the mountains and said: "That thing is coming out; if Calvo and the others haven't encountered it yet, they might survive, but once they face it... no one could save them."

Jim looked puzzled at the silent mountains, sensing nothing amiss.

But soon, Jim understood what Herag meant.

A rumble emanated from the Alster Mountain Range, growing progressively louder.

"Avalanche!"

Jim and the others realized what was occurring; the sound was that of a large-scale avalanche in the area.

Judging by the extent of this, Calvo and the team had been inside the mountains for half an hour, likely deep within the range.

With such a severe avalanche, the chances of their survival were slim.

Chapter 475: White Snake

But what they didn't know was that the avalanche was but a small issue; the real problem was the thing that caused it.

A massive white serpent's head emerged from the mountain entrance, flicking its tongue as it peered around.

This snake's body was immense, with an estimated diameter of over ten meters, and its length was even more unfathomable, as its tail was nowhere in sight.

As the white snake's head emerged, the whole world seemed to fall silent.

In the small mountain village on the slope, nobody dared to breathe loudly, afraid of drawing the white snake's attention.

Judging by the white snake's size and aura, it was definitely an Apostle Level demon, far beyond what the people present could handle.

Herag's expression was solemn. He had only heard sounds earlier but hadn't seen anything from his environmental detection.

By the time he saw it, the white snake had already reached the mountain entrance.

It moved so quickly that Herag couldn't react in time.

If he had known what it was earlier, he would have fled without hesitation.

The white snake appeared large and slow-moving, yet it was incredibly fast.

Herag remained still, as the white snake seemed not to have noticed them yet.

Careless movements might attract the white snake's attention, putting everyone in danger.

The white snake flicked its tongue, probing as if searching for something.

Watching the massive serpent, Herag suddenly thought that perhaps the Alster Mountain Range wasn't devoid of wizards; they might have all been wiped out by this white snake.

It would take at least a Level 2 Wizard to manage this white snake. Anything below that is just walking into death.

The white snake probed forward, dragging more of its enormous body from the mountain, making it even more visible.

Seeing its massive body, everyone took a sharp breath.

The snake's length seemed enough to encircle the entire Amy City.

The small mountain village where Herag and the others were located was diagonally opposite the left side of the Alster Mountain Range. The white snake's head was looking to the right, so it hadn't noticed the people on the small slope for now.

No one dared to make a sound, fearing to attract the creature's attention.

After the white snake emerged, it moved to the right, its thick body like a city wall.

It seemed not to have noticed the people on the small slope, moving towards the right.

The group silently waited for the white snake to pass. Although the snake moved quickly, every second felt excruciatingly long.

Gradually, the white snake's body completely vanished from sight, seeming to have moved far away.

Only then did everyone breathe a sigh of relief. Many mountain guards realized their legs were weak and couldn't walk.

They were just ordinary people, unable to withstand the overwhelming aura of the white snake.

The fact that they didn't collapse was already remarkable.

"Herag..." Jim's mouth was dry as he turned to speak to Herag but found him shocked, with a hint of fear in his eyes.

"What's wrong?" Jim asked, puzzled.

He suddenly noticed the sky seemed to darken, the sun obscured by clouds, though it hadn't been snowing.

Jim instinctively looked up, freezing in place at what he saw.

He felt as if his body was being pricked by needles, an extreme danger signal, a primal warning response.

A giant snake's head loomed over the slope, the white snake emerging from behind the mountain, its snake eyes emotionlessly observing them.

"Run!"

Herag shouted, jolting everyone awake.

In a flash, he used space travel to appear at the foot of the slope.

Others finally reacted, Herag's shout pulling them out of the snake's oppressive aura.

Jim was the second to react and move, quickly running down the slope.

The white snake's head crashed down, smashing several mountain guards into the ground, killing them on the spot.

A few lucky guards weren't hit and scattered to flee.

The white snake raised its head, watching the fleeing guards, its snake eyes flashing, freezing them in place instantly.

Soon after, cracks appeared on their bodies, breaking them into pieces of flesh scattered on the ground.

It looked as if statues had been smashed by a hammer.

This all happened in an instant, all the guards perished.

Only Jim and Herag were left running.

Herag, using space travel, had reached the mountain's base in the meantime, heading outwards.

The white snake, focused on him, ignored Jim, crushing through the forest in pursuit.

Moving swiftly, the snake was soon behind Herag, its mouth opening wide to bite.

Although Herag didn't look back, he constantly monitored his surroundings for the snake's movements.

As the snake lunged, he used space travel to dodge, reappearing a hundred meters away.

The Spirit of the White Deer talent was perfect for escaping; otherwise, that white deer would not have been so elusive.

A party of elite Crystalization Wizards pursued relentlessly but couldn't capture the white deer, all due to this talent.

Herag relied on this talent to repeatedly evade the snake's attacks.

However, the White Deer's Spirit's space travel had limitations, primarily its short range.

A hundred meters might seem far normally, but it was too short when dealing with a behemoth like the white snake.

Each time Herag dodged, the snake could catch up instantly, unable to shake it off.

After a few failed attempts, the snake's eyes began to flash with energy.

Herag knew what this meant, having witnessed the scene on the slope.

"Absolute Defense!"

"Titan Power!"

Herag transformed into a giant, with colorful shields appearing around his body.

Although he didn't know how the snake's eyes caused people to shatter, enhancing his constitution could only help.

If he had the opportunity, Herag would have considered taking a sample to study the bloodline.

But escaping took priority, leaving no room for such actions.

After the snake's eyes flashed, Herag felt an intense weight, as if something was pressing in from all directions.

The Absolute Defense shield fluctuated, indicating it was under pressure.

Chapter 476: Holy Light

The shield of Absolute Defense was struggling to hold on, as Herag continuously channeled magic power to maintain it.

At the same time, Herag's speed slowed down, and his movements were hindered.

The White Snake opened its mouth and spat out an unknown white energy body, directly blasting towards the sluggish Herag.

Fortunately, the surrounding space wasn't solidified, and spatial rules could still be utilized.

Herag used the Spirit of the White Deer again to escape from danger.

The white energy body exploded instantly after hitting the ground, leaving a huge crater in its place.

Herag observed this scene through environmental detection, feeling a bit fearful.

If he hadn't escaped in time, even with his current Titan Power combined with Absolute Defense, it might not have withstood it. He would likely have been severely injured, if not dead.

One man and one snake, one in front and one behind, pursued relentlessly.

At this moment, Herag truly felt the power of the rules. With his ability to use spatial rules, he could continually avoid danger under such a terrifying monster.

If he had used a flash spell instead, aside from distance issues, the magic power wouldn't have been enough to sustain it.

Moreover, the distance of a flash spell is very short, almost useless in front of such a giant creature.

As Herag ran, he thought about how to shake off this thing.

He had already tried several spells during his escape, but they had no effect on the White Snake.

The scales on the White Snake were incredibly hard, impervious to attack.

Unable to break through its defense, there was no question of counterattacking.

The White Snake chased him all the way, its massive body sweeping everything aside with immense power.

The forest was flattened directly, and smaller peaks were crushed under its weight.

Herag felt a bit speechless. He hadn't provoked the White Snake; why was it fixated on him?

He sensed that the White Snake seemed intent on devouring him, though he didn't know why.

The White Snake had been chasing him for a day and a night, still tightly pursuing by the second dawn.

Herag could already feel his stamina depleting significantly, yet the White Snake continued its pursuit.

By now, they were not far from Amy City. Herag pondered for a moment, sighed, and changed direction to avoid running toward Amy City.

There were too many people there, and Herag didn't need to think to know what chaos ensue if he led it there.

Herag kept running while changing directions, bypassing Amy City and heading north.

The White Snake seemed patient, determined to eat him.

After running for another half a day, leading the White Snake past the northwest direction of Amy City, Herag could faintly see the city's silhouette.

The commotion caused by the White Snake's passage was significant, drawing attention from many in Amy City.

Arios, in his office reading some documents, immediately went outside upon sensing the disturbance.

With a flash in his hand, a white staff appeared, and a pair of white wings of light unfurled behind him, allowing him to fly into the air.

Suspended in mid-air, Arios gazed toward the northwest, quickly spotting the gigantic White Snake and Herag, who was fleeing for his life ahead.

Arios quickly realized that although Herag was fleeing, he had no intention of leading the White Snake to Amy City.

If he had brought the White Snake here, he might have had a chance to shake it off.

But the cost would be the deaths of countless innocents.

Arios pondered momentarily, then flew over, a streak of white light trailing him.

...

Herag vanished from sight, once again using space travel to evade a white energy body attack.

"Face your judgment!" A solemn voice suddenly echoed across the heavens and earth.

A massive pillar of white light descended from the sky, striking the White Snake's head.

Several white scales flew off, and a bloody crater was blasted where it struck.

Seeing this, Herag quickened his pace, executing several space travels to escape the area.

When he reached a distant location, Herag hid behind a mountain peak, secretly observing the scene.

It was only then that Herag realized it was Arios who had blocked the White Snake's path.

Arios, holding the white staff, shone with holy light, even a huge hole appeared in the clouds overhead, beams of white light pouring down from the gap.

After being attacked, the White Snake let out an angry roar and spat a white energy body at Arios.

Arios waved his staff, conjuring an angelic apparition before him, which absorbed the explosive force of the white energy body without harm.

He then waved his staff again, summoning an angelic apparition wielding a bow and arrow behind him.

The angelic apparition was immense, occupying the entire space.

It drew the bow and shot a massive beam arrow.

The arrow sped rapidly, piercing through the White Snake's throat.

The White Snake let out a scream, rolling on the ground, its massive body smashing into nearby hills, causing significant tremors.

The vibrations reached Amy City, where a mass exodus had already begun, with countless people fleeing the city.

Some in carriages, others on horseback, and many on foot, all raced against time to escape.

Many seemed to be experiencing this scenario not for the first time, fleeing orderly as if rehearsed in advance.

Most people's expressions were serious, yet they seemed to trust Arios, believing that the guardian of Amy City would resolve the situation with the giant White Snake.

Their escape was merely a worst-case precaution. Should Arios fail to subdue the monster, it would buy them some time to escape, preventing total annihilation.

Meanwhile, after sustaining severe wounds, the White Snake went completely berserk.

It raised its massive body, its enormous tail sweeping toward Arios with great power.

However, these attacks were blocked by the angelic apparition, and the White Snake, now in a fury, wrapped around the apparition, attempting to crush it with sheer strength.

Arios remained calm, raising his right hand, a steady voice resonating around, "I pronounce your death."

As his words fell, countless giant light sabers appeared in the sky, stabbing into the White Snake upon forming.

Many light sabers severed the White Snake; so many light sabers struck simultaneously, cutting it into innumerable pieces.

Sections of the White Snake's body fell to the ground, still twisting on the ground.

Arios took a golden cross from his chest, placed it in front of him, closed his eyes, muttered something, then declared, "Holy Light will purify everything."

The golden cross instantly shone with light, flew out, enlarging into a colossal cross in the air.

After forming, the golden cross crashed down, with countless strands of black qi from the White Snake's segmented body drawn into the golden cross.

Once the black qi was fully absorbed, each segment of the White Snake's corpse ceased to move, lying still on the ground.

Chapter 477: The Dignity of the Holy Tower Shall Not Be Violated

Arios stretched out his hand, and the Golden Cross quickly shrank and disappeared into his hand.

Herag was completely shocked by this scene and felt the need to re-evaluate the power of an Apostle-level Exorcist.

He originally thought an Apostle-level Exorcist would be at the Level 2 Wizard power, but now it seems far beyond that.

Herag realized that it wasn't simple to compare the power system of the Wizard Plane to this world.

Arios, as an Apostle-level Exorcist, displayed power that made Herag feel most Level 2 Wizards couldn't compare to.

Herag himself was now an Exorcist, so he could very intuitively sense how terrifying the aura on Arios was.

This White Snake was at least close to a Level 3 Wizard, yet it was so easily slain by Arios.

The power Arios used was no longer just simple exorcist power but belonged to an entirely different level.

Herag finally understood why Arios had such high prestige; with a god-like figure like him around, the residents of Amy City had little to worry about regarding safety.

Herag looked at Arios floating in mid-air and quietly began to retreat.

He had no intention of interacting with such a high-level figure because he was currently in the Titan Power form, making it easy to be detected.

However, Arios had already noticed him.

In the instant Herag retreated, Arios appeared in the high sky above him, looking at Herag seriously.

"You are... Herag?" Arios recalled through Herag's Demon Aura.

He had seen Herag a few times before, though he didn't have a deep impression of him, he remembered his aura characteristics.

Herag said, "Yes, Lord Arios."

"Why do I sense the aura of an Outer Heaven Demon on you?" Arios asked gravely.

With these words, Herag's muscles tensed, realizing extreme danger was about to descend.

Given Arios' stance on Outer Heaven Demons, he would never let Herag's problem go unaddressed.

Herag wanted to argue, but Arios wasted no time, raising his staff to form a Light Saber.

The Light Saber was much smaller compared to the one that killed the White Snake, perhaps considering Herag too weak, a small Light Saber would suffice.

Herag dodged with a flash, disappearing from his original spot, avoiding the Light Saber's strike.

If he had been slower, the Light Saber would have pierced through him from the crown of his head, through his body.

"Hm?" Arios was a bit surprised, not expecting Herag to be able to use Rule Power, which was unexpected to him.

"Hammer of Judgment!"

Arios' powerful voice echoed across the land, spreading far and wide.

A massive hammer appeared between heaven and earth, rapidly forming.

This hammer was seven to eight hundred meters long, with an enormously large head.

Seeing the hammer, Herag cursed inwardly, wondering if such a large force was necessary to kill him.

He instinctively wanted to use the Spirit of the White Deer to escape, but found the surrounding space frozen, making Space Travel impossible.

Herag quickly understood it was the hammer that locked the area, disabling his use of Spatial Rules' power.

Not only was space solidified, but Herag's body was also immobilized, unable to manipulate magic power after being locked by the giant hammer.

As the hammer rapidly formed above, seemingly about to crush Herag into paste.

At this moment, a man's voice sounded: "The dignity of the Holy Tower is inviolable!"

This voice was accompanied by the calls of crows, echoing across the landscape.

The descending giant hammer suddenly stopped, freezing in mid-air.

Subsequently, the hammer cracked with many fissures, eventually shattering into light fragments scattering away.

Herag immediately felt relieved; the space around was no longer solidified, and his inner magic power could flow again.

He immediately used Space Travel to flee backward. After gaining some distance, he looked back to see a figure wrapped in a black robe and hat floating opposite Arios.

This black-robed figure had a seemingly ordinary crow perched on his shoulder.

"Wizard..."

Herag sensed an extremely powerful magic aura from this black-robed figure, unsure of the specific power level.

"Someone from the Expedition Team?" Herag then wondered.

Any Wizard encountered in this plane would likely be from the Expedition Team, but something felt off to Herag.

He looked at the black-robed figure, getting a peculiar feeling that he wasn't quite an Expedition Team Wizard.

The most important thing was recalling the Wizard's earlier words: "The dignity of the Holy Tower is inviolable," and Herag didn't understand what was meant.

"Who are you?" Arios asked with a stern face, warily eyeing the suddenly appearing black-robed figure.

The black-robed Wizard completely concealed his appearance within his robes, speaking in the Avite Language native to this plane: "You are merely a slightly stronger lower life form of this plane, unworthy to know my name."

Arios was never so belittled before, but he wasn't angry or upset.

Because he could clearly sense how powerful the black-robed figure was, feeling intense pressure.

The black-robed figure extended his hand, covered in black leather gloves, to play with the crow on his shoulder, saying, "Go, have a little snack."

The seemingly ordinary crow nuzzled against the black-robed figure's finger, spread its wings, and flew off, making a distinct crow call.

Arios was on high alert, gripping his staff tightly, his body bathed in glowing Holy Light.

A massive angelic silhouette appeared, bowing its head, with arms curled in rest, as if in deep slumber.

Simultaneously, the sound of bell tolls echoed from the clouds above.

A colossal golden Light Sword formed above Arios, far larger than the one that killed the White Snake earlier.

This immense golden Light Sword descended with an overbearing aura, striking towards the slowly flapping crow.

As the Light Sword neared it, the crow shuddered slightly, causing the Light Sword to shatter into fragments upon contact, disintegrating into light points as if it never existed.

The crow remained unharmed, without losing a single feather.

Chapter 478: Crow

Arios watched the scene unfold, his eyes gradually widening in disbelief.

He looked up at the sky, placed his right hand on his chest, and muttered something under his breath.

Arios then turned his head to look at the crow before him, his whole body glowing as if about to undergo some transformation.

However, the crow was already upon him. It opened its mouth, which instantly expanded a thousandfold and swallowed Arios and the angelic silhouette around him whole.

Burp~

The crow burped, seemingly satisfied, and then lazily flew back to settle on the black-robed wizard's shoulder to rest.

The world returned to its usual tranquility as if nothing had happened.

Only the segments of the giant serpent's body on the ground reminded people of the fierce battle that took place there.

Herag was still in shock from what had just occurred.

In just a brief moment, so many things had happened in succession.

Herag had just escaped from the White Snake, only to fall into the hands of the even more formidable Arios.

Just when he thought he was doomed, Arios was unexpectedly and effortlessly eaten by a crow...

Arios equaled the strength of a Level 3 Wizard, yet he was consumed by a mere crow.

Herag wondered if he was experiencing a death hallucination; the scene seemed unbelievable no matter how he looked at it.

The cold wind blew, and feeling its chill, Herag realized that it was indeed real.

The black-robed wizard stood ahead, his back to Herag, seemingly preparing to leave without turning back.

"Senior..." Herag said, uncertain how to address him.

The black-robed figure paused momentarily, glanced back at Herag, and then turned and walked away.

As he stepped through the air, his figure vanished within a few strides, leaving no trace behind.

When the black-robed wizard looked back, Herag clearly felt that the other was indeed looking at him.

But something under the robe obstructed his view, making it impossible to see the wizard's face, or perhaps it was simply beyond Herag's ability to perceive it.

After the black-robed wizard left, Herag slowly recalled the recent events.

The wizard had appeared so suddenly that even Shenlan's environmental detection system hadn't picked up on when he arrived.

Herag couldn't be sure if the wizard had intentionally come to save him or had merely passed by and acted on impulse.

Reflecting, he recalled that the wizard had only spoken two sentences, neither providing much information.

One was about the Holy Tower, representing a significance unknown to Herag.

Herag immediately thought back; the sentence coincided with the moment he was about to be crushed by a Giant Hammer.

"Holy Tower... Sixth Ring Tower?"

Herag considered this possibility, thinking the Holy Tower might denote the Sixth Ring Tower.

If that were the case, the black-robed wizard was from the Sixth Ring Tower.

However, Herag had neither joined the Sixth Ring Tower nor knew its location, let alone joined it.

The only connection Herag had with the Sixth Ring Tower was the Meditation Method he practiced.

If the other could identify him through his Meditation Method, it barely made sense.

Though Herag didn't know how to distinguish others' Meditation Methods, it didn't mean there wasn't a way.

That the wizard saved him and left immediately further convinced Herag he wasn't part of the Expedition Team.

Since, had the wizard been from the Expedition Team, he would've likely asked Herag something, not just left like that.

Herag also recalled the black-robed wizard's second remark, that Arios was seen as nothing more than a lowly being.

Arios was formidable, a Level 3 Wizard, yet regarded as a lesser being.

Then, what could be the power level of this black-robed wizard? Level 4? Perhaps even higher...

Herag knew that the strongest known beings in the Land of Dawn were Level 4 Wizards, and such a figure wouldn't typically be encountered in a place like this.

He felt that even a Level 4 Wizard wouldn't easily deal with Arios like this.

For Arios was defeated merely by a crow, a pet of that wizard.

Filled with puzzlement, Herag prepared to leave the place.

As he started to go, he suddenly looked back at the segments of the White Snake's body, forming an idea.

Originally, he planned to leave immediately, knowing there was another Arios in the dungeon of Amy City, identical in appearance but of unknown strength.

Herag didn't know the situation regarding that Arios, and if the one just killed was merely a clone, that would be disastrous.

He couldn't hope for the black-robed wizard to rescue him again.

But with the white serpent's body right there, Herag wanted to at least try; it wasn't far.

He quickly decided not to waste time; to commit fully to the plan or leave decisively.

Herag used Space Travel repeatedly to reach the front of one of the massive segments of the White Snake, stored it into his Space Ring, and then turned to flee immediately.

He kept an eye on his surroundings, noticing some disorder brewing in Amy City.

None of this concerned Herag, as he was solely focused on whether Arios had appeared and pursued him.

For now, no one seemed to be following, easing Herag's mind slightly, yet he didn't let his guard down and continued fleeing north.

Herag had a map in his mind, recalling that north of Amy City lay a Stone Forest, a complex terrain.

Beyond the Stone Forest was a large city in the north, called Baiyu City.

Herag planned to head there, as staying in Amy City was no longer an option.

If Arios wasn't dead, going back would be tantamount to surrendering himself.

And if Arios was dead, Amy City would still be unfit to stay in.

Without a strong protector, the environment would become perilous, vulnerable to some powerful demon randomly wiping out the city.

Herag increasingly realized the world's dangers exceeded his expectations; even a White Snake emerging from the mountains held such power.

He traveled at utmost speed, gradually distancing himself from Amy City, following a sand-filled path into the Stone Forest.

Night fell swiftly, yet Herag chose not to rest, continuing his rapid journey.

Holding the Long Blade obtained from the Kobolds, he suddenly thrust it into the ground while crossing a sandy patch, and a gush of blood erupted, staining the sandy ground scarlet.

It was a giant serpent lying in ambush underground, waiting for Herag to pass, ready to strike.

But Herag had long discovered it and struck first, killing it in a single blow as he passed.

Chapter 479: Expedition Team Members

A wisp of black Qi emerged from the snake body underground, and Herag quickly absorbed it.

After absorbing it, he glanced at the data panel, frowning: "No improvement?"

This Demon aura wasn't small, just a bit less than the Demon aura provided by the Kobold.

Normally, there should be some slight improvement, but now the data panel showed no response.

Herag carefully felt it; indeed, this Demon aura had somewhat strengthened his body, meaning it was effective, but he didn't know why the data panel didn't reflect it.

After thinking for a moment, he had a general hypothesis.

It's not that the Demon aura didn't enhance him; rather, with his current body attributes, the increase the Demon aura provided was too minimal, making it unnoticeable on the data panel.

Herag thought it might also be related to advancing to become an Official Exorcist; after becoming one, it required more Demon aura for improvement.

After slaying this large snake, he continued forward, encountering many other Demons along the way.

These Demons were relatively weak, easy for Herag to handle, almost all solved with a single swift blade stroke.

The Stone Forest's area far exceeded Herag's imagination; he traveled for two days and nights and still hadn't exited.

If Herag wasn't sure that he was going in the right direction, he would've doubted whether he was lost in the Stone Forest.

This is also the reason why the northern Baiyu City and Amy City appear adjacent but have little trade between them.

The Stone Forest area has formed a natural barrier, making it extremely difficult for ordinary people to cross this region.

Just the harsh natural conditions alone are too much for ordinary people to handle, not to mention the numerous Demons active here.

Herag looked at the simple map in his mind, speechless, as the maps here are crude, lacking any notion of scale.

The Stone Forest on the map was just represented by a few stone pillars with no other information.

Traversing the area practically, Herag felt that its size was vaster than the grand desert.

After nightfall, Herag finally planned to stop and rest for a while.

He was already far from Amy City, and if Arios hadn't died and wanted to chase him, he would've been caught up long ago.

He kicked a lizard away, took over the two stones the lizard was lying on, sat down and lit a campfire, preparing to cook some hot food.

Herag glanced at the huge object in his Space Ring; a part of the snake body took up a large portion of the Space Ring's space.

This thing couldn't be cut within the Space Ring, so Herag simply took it all out and then placed his hand on the large piece of snake meat, activating the Great Dark Heaven.

A stone slab's phantom appeared behind him as the Great Dark Heaven began to absorb the bloodline power from the snake body.

A moment later, Herag released his hand, and the stone slab phantom disappeared.

He acquired two talent abilities.

"White Fang's Eye: Can see through most camouflage effects, can beguile and control targets with lower Spiritual Power than oneself, with higher success rate the greater the power difference."

"White Fang's Shedding: Can be immune to most illusion effects, and can nullify most curses targeted at you."

Herag sighed, unable to obtain the most powerful talent ability of the White Snake.

What he wanted was the ability to make those Mountain Guards instantly burst apart once the Snake Eyes ignited.

The White Snake's Snake Eyes definitely had many abilities, and he had only obtained one of them.

Both talent abilities seem related to illusion, curses, and other negative states, so it's better than nothing.

After absorbing the bloodline power of the snake meat, Herag took out a long blade and sliced a large chunk, then put the remaining snake meat back into the Space Ring.

After washing the snake meat, he marinated it simply with some spices and then roasted it over the campfire.

Additionally, he took out some vegetables from the Space Ring, put them into a pot mixed with some marinated snake meat, and cooked a pot of snake meat soup.

Before long, the aroma spread, making one's mouth water.

Herag opened the pot lid and directly took a piece of snake meat out with his hand and put it in his mouth.

The texture was excellent, worthy of being from the big White Snake; it was simply a delicacy.

Herag quickly finished the pot of snake meat soup and the roasted snake meat, replenishing some energy.

He didn't plan to continue traveling tonight, intending to find a place to enter the Fallen Wings for the night to rest.

Herag looked around and walked forward for a while, arriving at a very concealed place.

As he was about to release the Fallen Wings, he suddenly noticed a ripple in the Space ahead.

Herag immediately became vigilant; he knew what this implied.

Looking closely, he saw two men appearing abruptly in front of a cliff ahead, both wearing robes.

The style of the robes looked very familiar to him, so he didn't act immediately.

While Herag was attentively watching these two, to his surprise, the other party initiated a greeting, speaking in the common Sivr Language of the Wizard World: "Herag?"

"You are..." Herag was taken aback, not expecting the other party to call his name directly.

"It is indeed you; your magic form is very recognizable. Finally, another wizard part of the Cradle Operation has been found," said a plump-faced wizard, whose body wasn't fat but had a bit of flesh on his face.

He smiled at Herag and said, "I'm Tony, this is Yordan, and we are both members of the Expedition Team. Originally, we were conducting survey work in this Demon Plane, but after the Cradle Operation incident, we received a new mission to find the whereabouts of you wizards involved in the Cradle Operation."

Herag didn't trust them outright and asked, "How can you prove it?"

Tony nodded, took out a Talisman Stone, and displayed his personal information interface in front of Herag.

Though at a distance, Herag's eyesight was good enough to clearly see the content on the Talisman Stone at a glance.

With this, it was almost certain; Herag nodded and said, "Indeed, I am Herag. I didn't expect to meet you here. I was just wondering how to contact you."

Tony said, "How did you know that there are members of our Expedition Team in this Plane?"

"I just did some analysis and guessed it might be the case," Herag explained his prior thoughts.

Tony nodded and said, "That's right, just as you guessed. When the transmission coordinates were activated, they became the coordinates of the Demon Plane. We don't know much about the Demon Plane as it was just recently explored and is still in the initial investigation stage."

Chapter 480: Base One

Herag glanced at the mountain wall behind them and said, "So the base is built here?"

"That's right, this is the No.1 base in the Demon Plane. The original plan was to take some time to understand the situation here, determine whether it's worth conquering, and whether we have the ability to conquer it," Tony explained.

Herag asked, "Is this a middle-tier world or a high-tier world?"

"Of course, it's a middle-tier world. If it were a high-tier world, there would be no need for exploration," Tony said with a bitter smile.

He sighed and continued, "The Wizard Plane is not what it once was; after losing its top power, it no longer has the confidence to casually conquer other planes."

Now, when the Wizard Plane wants to conquer other planes, it must carefully explore at the beginning to confirm that the plane can be handled before launching a large-scale plane opening war.

If it were in the Era of Radiance, it wouldn't be so troublesome at all; almost anything below a high-tier world could be pushed through recklessly.

Herag nodded silently; he remembered the black robe wizard he had met a few days ago, whose origins were unknown.

"What's with this teleportation ring?" Herag took out the teleportation ring he had been given and asked.

Tony said, "The maker of the teleportation ring was a master of witchcraft artifacts, but no one expected him to be an Abyssal Cultist. He tampered with the teleportation ring and embedded the coordinates of the Demon Plane. This plane hasn't been thoroughly explored; it's full of uncertainties and is relatively dangerous."

This matched Herag's previous suspicion; the maker of the teleportation ring intended to trap them in this plane.

Since this is a middle-tier world with little information, even the expedition team was cautiously exploring; a group of crystallization wizards falling in would have a very low survival rate.

"Besides me, did you find other wizards participating in the Cradle Operation?" Herag asked.

"So far, including you, we've found four; the other three have already returned to the Wizard Plane through the teleportation array," Tony said.

There were a total of 180 wizards participating in the Cradle Operation; accounting for those who died in the X-617 World and the wizards who didn't activate the teleportation ring, there should be about 100 wizards who arrived at the Demon Plane.

Finding four out of all the wizards scattered across an entire plane was akin to searching for a needle in a haystack, so finding four was already quite fortunate.

"By the way, did you encounter any other wizards? Like Medel," Tony casually mentioned.

Herag maintained a normal expression and shook his head, "I didn't meet any other wizards, well, I did."

"What do you mean?" Tony asked in confusion.

"I saw a wizard captured and imprisoned by locals in Amy City to the south, but I don't know the wizard's identity," Herag explained.

"Has anyone from the expedition team been captured by the locals here?" Herag inquired.

Tony shook his head, "No, so far we haven't been exposed. It seems that the wizard you mentioned should be one of those participating in the Cradle Operation. If they're in the city, rescue will be troublesome."

The expedition team knew that cities here were generally guarded by powerful beings, and any rescue attempt was bound to result in conflict.

In the past, individuals had to rely on their own resources.

But now, with the expedition team responsible for operations, they must take responsibility if people run into trouble.

They could ignore a rescue in the past, but now they can't.

However, these matters had little to do with Herag; he certainly wouldn't venture into Amy City again.

Should Arios still be there, it would spell trouble. The expedition team would have to find a way on their own, since the information had already been provided.

Herag noted Tony's specific mention of Medel. Although no one knew he had killed Medel, many had seen the two of them clash in the X-617 World. This matter warranted careful attention.

"Let's return to Base No.1 first." Tony looked around as he spoke.

Although it appeared deserted here, the abilities of exorcists were varied and unpredictable; there might be someone undetectable lurking in the shadows.

Herag then followed the two into Base No.1, passing through what appeared to be a solid mountain wall.

Inside the base was an open area, not very spacious, dotted with tents, and there was a conspicuous teleportation altar in the middle.

This was originally just an exploration base, so many facilities were missing, and the team's primary task was to gather intelligence about this plane.

Upon entering, Herag scanned the area and found a total of eight people, including himself.

"Our exploration team consists of twenty people; most are currently out on various tasks, leaving few people in the base," Tony said.

"Can you share some information about this plane?" Herag tried asking.

Tony smiled, "Much information cannot yet be disclosed to anyone outside the expedition team, but in truth, we don't know much. Having been here for a while, you must have encountered the local extraordinaries, who can absorb a kind of black energy to strengthen themselves. Their power system is very different from ours."

"What level is the strongest here approximately?" Herag asked.

"That is still unknown for now. Based on our current knowledge, the most formidable being here should be equivalent to a Level 3 Wizard on the Wizard Plane. There might be even stronger entities, but we have yet to encounter them," Tony replied.

Herag nodded and said, "I see, thank you. By the way, may I ask if there are any Level 3 Wizards in your team?"

"For this exploration operation, there aren't any; later, some Level 3 Wizards might join, mainly to rescue the wizards trapped here. Currently, I'm the person in charge of Base No.1, responsible for managing daily affairs and maintaining contact with the Wizard Plane," Tony explained.

Herag pondered, knowing Tony was a Level 2 Wizard. Based on his information, there were no Level 3 Wizards in the current expedition team either.

The black robe wizard he had encountered previously was clearly of a very high rank, likely beyond a Level 3 Wizard.

Thus, it's clear that this black robe wizard was not part of the expedition team and might not even be from the Land of Dawn.

But apart from the Land of Dawn, the Wizard Plane had only a few wizards on other continents, and their strength was relatively weak.

"Where exactly did that black robe wizard come from? The Sixth Ring Tower? However, according to the historical records of the Land of Dawn, the Sixth Ring Tower has already betrayed the Wizard Plane, and whether it still exists is uncertain." Herag sighed inwardly, lamenting his lack of information to make an accurate judgment.