

System 391

Chapter 391: It Won't Hurt When You're Asleep (2)

As Yaya pondered, a footstep sounded suddenly.

Yaya returned to her senses instantly, feigning her steps to walk past, a puzzled voice emerging.

"Polia? You've delivered the wine to the master so quickly?"

Hearing these words, Yaya turned her head to look forward, it was Kuisi approaching her.

Yaya's steps halted, she lowered her head and said, "Yes, Steward Kuisi, the gin has been delivered to the master."

Kuisi looked at Yaya gratefully, "I don't know why, suddenly felt uncomfortable in the stomach, luckily you're here!"

"There should be nothing happening tonight, hurry back and rest, it's quite cold."

Yaya bent over, responding, "Yes, Steward Kuisi."

Kuisi nodded, her gaze shifting, as she watched Polia step away, swaying her hips gradually into the distance.

Watching that swaying motion, Kuisi couldn't help but glance at her own behind.

Flat and without any curves...

Kuisi pursed her lips somewhat displeasedly.

...

Under the night sky.

Seven or eight cavalry were galloping fast against the blowing cold wind.

At the end of their galloping path was a three-story mansion.

Although it was now deep in the night, the beams of light shining through the window gaps of the mansion were still clearly visible.

A few minutes later.

The cavalry arrived in front of the mansion.

Several attendants responsible for guarding the mansion immediately drew the scimitars in their hands.

However, upon seeing the armor worn by these cavalry, they nervously asked, "Who are you people?"

"Daring to intrude into Master Aiden's territory at midnight!"

The man atop a tall horse pulled down the wool scarf around his face.

He gazed directly at the attendants and said, "Commander Lawrence Ducas, accompanied by Knight Godfrey Harvey, is here to see Aiden Manor Lord."

"Quickly go and report!"

Hearing Godfrey's words, the attendants couldn't help but exchange glances.

This Godfrey knight, they naturally hadn't heard of him.

However, from Chief Attendant Ackman's mouth, they had heard of Lawrence Ducas's presence.

The Marquis Duca's younger brother!

One of the attendants spoke to Godfrey, "Please wait a moment."

Upon speaking, the attendant hurriedly ran towards the second floor, initially intending to go to Lady Justine's room.

Suddenly he remembered that Ackman had already left the territory with several attendants.

The attendant had to head to Master Aiden's room on the third floor.

Climbing the stairs, the attendant reached the door of the room.

The two attendants at the door glanced at him, then withdrew their gaze.

However, just as the attendant was about to knock on the wooden door, a series of applauding sounds erupted from within the room.

Amidst the rhythmic clapping, there were also women's cries.

The attendant immediately became somewhat hesitant.

The attendant tasked with guarding Aiden's safety at the side glanced over, advising, "I suggest you don't disturb Master Aiden at this moment..."

Nevertheless.

The attendant still knocked on the wooden door.

Instantly, the clapping and cries inside the room ceased abruptly.

Aiden's angry voice suddenly rang out, "You better give me a reasonable explanation, or I will have you torn to pieces and fed to the Greyhounds!"

The attendant's heart was full of tension, he hurriedly spoke, "Master, Knight Godfrey, who claims to be the Commander of Lawrence Ducas, is waiting downstairs."

"He asked me to quickly report to you."

Accompanied by a reluctant woman's voice, a hurried sound of footsteps on the floor resounded.

Amidst a rustling sound of dressing.

The tightly closed door was suddenly opened.

Amidst a mix of body sweat and sour odor, Aiden walked out of the room.

He glanced at the attendant, asking, "Have you confirmed the identity of the visitors?"

The attendant hurriedly explained, "Master, on their armor's left chest, there's a symbol of a Greatsword crossed with a shield..."

Aiden frowned, without saying a word, quickened his steps downstairs.

Arriving on the first floor.

Seeing the unfamiliar yet familiar face standing outside the mansion waiting, Aiden quickened his steps again.

Obsequious words poured out from Aiden's mouth, "Apologies, apologies, Knight Godfrey, I didn't expect you to visit my humble abode on such a cold night..."

"What are you still standing there for, quickly invite Knight Godfrey in!"

The attendants immediately lowered their heads.

Godfrey glanced at a few soldiers, instructing them to wait outside the door.

He said no unnecessary words, directly stepping inside, entering the mansion.

As the mansion door closed, a faint warmth enveloped Godfrey.

Brought by the attendants into the reception hall.

Godfrey looked at Aiden, speaking bluntly, "Aiden Manor Lord, I assume you know the purpose of my visit."

Seated at the main seat, Aiden feigned ignorance, asking, "Is it about the Iron Blood Brotherhood Bandit Corps?"

"Knight Godfrey, I truly don't know where they have gone!"

"Just as I informed Lord Lawrence before, I am the greatest victim of this bandit rampage."

"Now that Lord Lawrence is leading an army to suppress the bandits, if I knew, I'd definitely tell you immediately..."

Seeing Aiden's expression of having hardships he couldn't express, Godfrey nodded slightly.

"I believe Aiden Manor Lord truly doesn't know."

"Then let's put it another way, Aiden Manor Lord."

Aiden frowned, "Put it another way?"

Godfrey responded, "Yes, I've heard elsewhere that you have hired two mercenary corps to serve you!"

"The first is the Iron Thorns Mercenary Corps, which drove away the Iron Blood Brotherhood Bandit Corps from your mansion."

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"I sense something amiss here; why would the Iron Blood Brotherhood Bandit Corps occupy your manor?"

"If I'm not mistaken, the Iron Blood Brotherhood was invited by you, Aiden Manor Lord, wasn't it?"

Aiden's face stiffened, and he quickly wanted to argue, but was interrupted by Godfrey's words.

"But what kind of existence would compel Aiden Manor Lord, a vassal of Marquis Ducas, to choose to collaborate with a group of bandits?"

"This needs clarification from Aiden Manor Lord!"

Aiden remained silent, his expression growing somber.

He had heard of Godfrey's renown, meticulous in thought.

Yet he hadn't anticipated that Godfrey could deduce so much from these fragmented clues!

Aiden's voice was slightly subdued, "Knight Godfrey, I don't know what you're talking about."

"The Iron Blood Brotherhood Bandit Corps occupied my territory and manor. I am the victim here."

"Since Marquis Ducas won't intervene for me, I had no choice but to hire a mercenary corps..."

Godfrey raised an eyebrow, "Marquis Ducas..."

Aiden nodded, "Yes, my chief attendant took a letter to Bordeaux City, but was not even allowed to see the Marquis, and was subjected to a mouth punishment before being driven out of Bordeaux City."

"Knight Godfrey, what am I supposed to do?"

Godfrey fell silent.

He realized, the Ducas Clan was rotting, from the very root.

But he hadn't expected it to be so conspicuous.

Collecting taxes from vassals, yet failing to provide corresponding assistance.

Prolonged neglect would lead to losing the loyalty of the vassals.

The final result: vassals no longer pledge loyalty to Marquis Ducas!

A few seconds later.

Godfrey stared at Aiden, "Aiden Manor Lord, I must reiterate, I'm ordered by Lord Lawrence to investigate the Iron Blood Brotherhood."

"And he specifically instructed me, I only have seven days!"

"After seven days, he'll resort to other measures..."

Godfrey's tone shifted, "So, Aiden Manor Lord... your time is running out!"

Aiden's expression grew even more serious, but he still shook his head, "Knight Godfrey, I truly don't know."

"Even if Marquis Ducas earlier refused to meet my chief attendant, I never intended to betray Marquis Ducas."

"I can swear by the honor of the Morrison Clan!"

Listening to the resolute words from Aiden's mouth, Godfrey nodded and rose to his feet, "I understand, Aiden Manor Lord, then I won't disturb you any further!"

After a slight bow, Godfrey proceeded to walk out of the manor.

Aiden furrowed his brows slightly, didn't rise, only watched as Godfrey exited the manor.

Half a minute later.

The sound of horses being driven rang out, and Godfrey left the manor entrance with his soldiers.

Until they were completely gone.

The manor finally sank into silence.

Aiden remained seated in his chair, his brows tightly furrowed, his eyes moving back and forth, seemingly pondering something.

Godfrey's sudden visit made him feel a sense of crisis.

That feeling was as if Godfrey had already found some information about the lord behind the thick walls.

The tone was not inquisitive at all, more like an interrogation!

As for seven days after Godfrey spoke...

Aiden didn't know what measures Lawrence would employ.

But... Aiden couldn't believe that Lawrence would strike against him, a vassal!

As for the land behind the walls... it must never be revealed to anyone.

That land would be his only chance to develop and expand the Morrison Clan!

Thinking of this, Aiden gazed beyond the manor.

Hoping Ackman, who went out, would bring back good news...

...

For three consecutive days.

The sky was raining.

The cold rain soaked the whole earth, then the cold wind, barely below freezing, blew directly, forming a one-centimeter layer of ice.

The only good thing is, the Karedi Empire's temperate maritime climate, four or five degrees below zero is already its limit.

After breakfast, Lynn stepped on the cleared ice surface on the red brick road, heading towards the open space square in front of the town.

A total of six pieces, weighing over fifteen tons of granite boulders, had already been transported back by the townsmen.

Using pulley mechanisms, they were neatly stacked.

Now, there was a need for stonemasons with carving experience to sculpt them...

As Lynn stood by observing the stacked stones, hurried footsteps approached him from afar.

Lynn glanced sideways; it was Jode with Level 3 construction.

Coming before Lynn, Jode quickly bent in salute, speaking respectfully, "Lord."

Lynn responded, "I heard from Avery that you have experience in carving?"

Jode dared not conceal anything, "Yes, Lord."

"Previously my main work was carving, carving patterns on stone columns, using stones to create statues."

Lynn nodded, "A very good ability."

"Jode, I need you to use this stacked granite to carve a statue."

"The front should be my body outline, as for the pose, you can freely decide."

"It can be holding a sword in one hand, holding a sword with both hands, or riding a warhorse."

"But one thing, I need you to leave ample width for carving the names of soldiers or townsmen who sacrificed for the territory!"

Jode, upon hearing this, turned to look at the stones behind him, his mind beginning to ponder.

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A few seconds later, Jode spoke up: "No problem, my Lord."

Although the height of the statue he carved before was not as high as the one before him, it wasn't a big deal.

He only needed to modify it according to the contours and dimensions of the Lord's body to achieve it.

Lynn looked at Jode appreciatively, "I will assign you a hundred townsmen to assist you in the carving."

Jode's eyes lit up with some joy as he said, "Thank you, Master Lynn."

He had just been thinking about asking the Lord for this matter, but the Lord had already allocated the labor for him.

The Lord looked somewhat young, yet it was unexpected that he handled matters so meticulously.

No wonder he could manage such a vast territory and so many townsmen...

If he didn't have the manpower to help him, relying on himself for the carving, it couldn't be completed in a few years!

Let the guard hand over a hundred idle townsmen to Jode and let him use them as he saw fit.

Lynn stepped away from the open square.

Looking at the [Prosperity] panel, the [Lord Statue] had already been unlocked.

Lynn originally thought that as long as the prosperity was adequate, he could directly obtain a Lord Statue... but that wasn't the case.

Instead, a well-crafted statue was needed to attach the abilities bestowed by the [Lord Statue] upon it...

Thinking over it again, Lynn found it more reasonable.

A suddenly appearing, over ten-meter tall exquisite statue would indeed be rather abrupt.

He took a tour of the Crafts Workshop District.

In the textile workshop.

Yimini and Rachel, with the workers, had already begun the task of lacing the armor plates.

Because of the high adjustability of the armor plates, even without perfect sizing, lacing could be done.

After lacing, the wearer could try it on and adjustments could be made.

In the Glass Workshop.

It was still the daily production of glazed glass.

The difference was that Layla was in charge of producing glazed glass products needed for daily life.

Beo, on the other hand, was experimenting with the different qualities of glazed glass, based on varying proportions of silica sand as he had described before.

As Lynn watched the increasingly transparent blocks of glazed glass, with quality improving, an idea came to his mind.

Lynn called Beo over, "If you're interested, you might try making a telescope!"

Hearing the unfamiliar term from Lynn's mouth, Beo raised an eyebrow and repeated, "Telescope?"

Lynn replied, "Yes, a telescope requires the crafting of two types of lenses, a convex lens and a concave lens."

"The proportions for these lenses are 70% quartz sand, 15% soda, and 15% limestone."

"Quartz sand, you can find along the Aladia River bank, commonly white, appearing circular or near-circular."

"Soda can be somewhat tricky to find, but you can continue using my method, extracting it by soaking wood ash in water."

"Limestone doesn't need much explanation, does it?"

Beo listened earnestly and nodded.

Lynn continued, "If you can try making it, even a low threefold magnification telescope could discern the outlines of large objects kilometers away."

"With magnifications over thirty times, you might see even further detailed features of distant objects."

Upon hearing this.

An expression of anticipation and excitement appeared on Beo's face.

What seemed like simple glazed glass could have such uses?

Lynn opened his mouth and said, "Expand your mind, and try boldly."

"The uses of glazed glass are far more than you can imagine!"

Beo bent over, respectfully saying, "Yes, Master."

Lynn acknowledged and let Beo continue his work, then walked away.

The only consumption required for making glazed glass is manpower and resources.

Two hundred glass workers, and the anthracite needed to fire the glazed glass.

That's about it.

The glazed glass products fired by the glass workers could be traded to Grayson for revenue.

This doesn't count as a manpower drain.

And anthracite requires even less concern.

With the railway carts built, there's a continuous supply of anthracite transported back to the town every day.

In the short term.

There's no need to worry about anthracite consumption.

Suppressing the thoughts in his mind, Lynn arrived at the Blacksmith Workshop.

After the arrival of three hundred new Blacksmith Apprentices, Ehrelo was leading the apprentices in constructing an iron-smelting blast furnace and a blacksmith workshop.

Lynn didn't disturb them.

Under the reverent gazes of the Blacksmith Apprentices, Lynn rolled up his sleeves and approached the anvil in the forging area.

He picked up an Iron Hammer and began forging armor plates.

Ding~

Ding Ding~

Ding Ding Ding~

With every swing of Lynn's right hand, striking the glowing red-hot iron ore on the anvil, a crisp metallic collision resonated.

Followed by a shower of sparks.

[Forging Experience +1]

[Forging Experience +1]

[Forging Experience +1]

...

The experience rapidly increased as Lynn continuously swung the Iron Hammer.

In the cold winter, the skills available to hone were inherently limited.

Animals had already gone into hibernation, even those that didn't need to, rarely ventured out for food due to the scarcity of grass and food.

There was no way to go out Hunting.

Lack of herbal accumulation meant he couldn't grind more herbs and thus couldn't hone the [Medicine] skills.

In terms of [Construction], aside from the ongoing work on the city wall, such as making caltrops and digging trenches, and the building of the Stonemason Workshop.

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There weren't many construction projects.

The skills he could grind were mostly limited to craftsmanship.

With the war approaching, gaining experience in [forging] skills while forging more Zha Armor Plates was the most suitable choice.

When Lynn immersed himself entirely in forging.

The sky outside the workshop was rapidly changing.

Until evening.

Lynn, who had been grinding experience for almost a whole day, walked out of the Blacksmith Workshop and arrived at the open square in front of the town.

Lynn's gaze turned to the distance, where he saw horse-drawn carriages facing the cold wind, slowly making their way along the limestone road.

Perhaps because the ground was too slippery after freezing.

The speed of the carriage team was slow.

A journey that seemed little over two kilometers took nearly an hour.

Even the guards on horseback were leading the horses at a walking pace.

When the carriage team reached the open square and had parked all the carriages.

Boer walked over to Lynn.

Following behind him was Mike.

Standing in front of Lynn, Boer bent deeply and said, "Master Lynn."

Lynn smiled slightly, "Mr. Boer, I thought you had given up on trading with me."

Looking at Boer in front of him, he looked noticeably older compared to before.

In his early thirties, strands of white hair had appeared.

Despite surviving the last Bandit Corps attack by luck, Boer had not had an easy time.

Boer forced a smile and said, "Master Lynn jests. As long as Master Lynn hasn't refused me, Boer wouldn't dare give up on you."

Lynn nodded, glancing behind Boer.

Perhaps due to the cold weather, the draft horses standing in place were constantly snorting.

Boer naturally noticed Lynn's gaze and hurriedly explained, "Master, the carriages are loaded with 40,000 pounds of barley, 10,000 pounds of wheat, and 4,000 pounds of vegetables."

Lynn said, "Give me a quote, Mr. Boer."

Boer did not hesitate at all and said directly, "Master Lynn, at the market price will be fine."

"Barley is five pounds for one penny, wheat is still one pound for one penny, and the vegetables remain the same as before."

Lynn began calculating the exchange in his mind, "I can exchange for you 3,400 pounds of fine salt!"

"What do you think, Mr. Boer?"

A hint of emotion finally appeared on Boer's face, "Thank you so much, Master Lynn."

Boer naturally knew that Master Lynn had given him an extra few dozen pounds of fine salt.

It's not just this time; in every previous trade, Master Lynn always gave an extra few dozen pounds of fine salt!

Lynn nodded, then asked, "Mr. Boer, you came from Morgan Town, right?"

Without much thought, Boer replied, "Yes, Master, these foods were purchased from Kakasong City, passed through Morgan Town, and delivered to your territory."

Lynn continued to ask, "Did Mr. Boer hear any intelligence or information in Kakasong Town or Morgan Town?"

Upon hearing this, Boer began to ponder.

After a moment.

Boer spoke, "There's not much intelligence from Kakasong City, but what everyone is talking about is that there are almost no longships at the Fisherman's Wharf in Kakasong City."

Lynn nodded, quietly listening.

Boer continued, "But there's some in Morgan Town!"

"Marquis Ducas's brother Lawrence brought an army to Morgan Town, saying they're going to suppress bandits!"

"Little do they know, Master Lynn had already wiped out the Bandit Corps of the Iron Blood Brotherhood completely!"

Boer's voice grew noticeably louder.

"If it weren't for you, Master Lynn, waiting for the army to suppress bandits would have cost even more lives!"

Lynn did not respond to Boer's remarks but instead stared directly at him.

Boer immediately understood, his face resolute, firmly saying, "Master Lynn, rest assured."

"Even facing death, I wouldn't mention a word about you, not to mention revealing your information to others!"

Lynn nodded, "That's... for the best."

Feeling the aura from Lynn gradually dissipate, Boer felt slightly relieved.

Lynn spoke to Boer, "Let's go, Mr. Boer. It will take some time to unload and load the goods."

"Shall I take you to taste the distilled spirits Lex has just brewed?"

Boer seemed a bit lost until Mike's reminder from behind brought him back, "Distilled spirits?"

"This is the first time I've heard of it..."

Lynn and Boer walked side by side toward the tavern.

George remained on-site, organizing the townsmen to unload the grain.

Inside the tavern.

Lynn and Boer sat at a round table.

Boer held a nearly transparent glazed cup, his eyes filled with wonder.

He had the fortune to see glazed wares before.

But he never expected Master Lynn's tavern to entertain guests with glazed cups and bottles.

How extravagant!

After examining it for a few moments, Boer poured the golden liquor from the glazed cup into his mouth.

Instantly.

A rich aroma swirled in Boer's mouth.

A hint of surprise surfaced in Boer's eyes, and as he swallowed the gin, his astonishment grew.

Boer couldn't help but praise, "Excellent wine!"

"With just one cup, I feel the chill in my whole body dissipate! Master Lynn, this wine is..."

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Lynn smiled slightly and responded, "Lexus Gin, distilled from the brewing workshop in the town."

Boer widened his eyes and looked at Lynn, hesitating to speak.

Lynn directly said, "If Mr. Boer likes it, before you leave, I'll have someone place a barrel on your carriage."

Boer expressed his gratitude, "Thank you so much, Master Lynn."

Such strong liquor is perfect for getting through the winter.

Especially during winter trade transport, even a small sip can make you feel warm all over!

An hour later.

George came into the tavern, "Master, the goods have all been unloaded, and the fine salt is loaded onto Mr. Boer's carriage."

Lynn acknowledged, "Have someone go to the brewing workshop and load a barrel of gin onto Mr. Boer's carriage."

George didn't hesitate, "Yes, Master, I'll go right away."

George withdrew and left the tavern.

Lynn and Boer also stood up and walked out of the tavern, heading toward the open square.

Once the gin was placed on Boer's carriage, after saying goodbye to Lynn, the carriages began heading toward the distant mountains and forests.

On the limestone road.

Leading the horses, Boer glanced back at Mike, finding him with his head lowered, silent.

Boer asked puzzled, "What's wrong? Do you also want some gin produced from the Lynn Territory?"

Mike still kept his head down, not daring to respond to Boer's words.

Boer frowned, suddenly realizing something, and shouted, "Stop!"

The drivers pulling the carriages all tightened the reins, and the draft horses neighed loudly.

Boer looked directly at the Mike in front of him and said aloud, "Mike!"

Mike still kept his head down.

Boer's voice grew louder, "Mike! I told you to look up!"

The newly hired guards and drivers around watched the scene in confusion.

Under Boer's imposing pressure, Mike lifted his head.

In his eyes, there was a look of struggle.

Boer asked straightforwardly, "Did you tell anyone about this bandit attack?"

Mike's face was full of hesitation, but he didn't dare to speak.

Boer said sternly, "Speak!"

Feeling Boer's change in demeanor, Mike finally spoke, "Master Boer... I didn't tell anyone else, I just... just told my aunt..."

Boer's eyes widened instantly, perhaps from excessive anger, causing his chest to rise and fall rapidly.

You could even faintly hear the sound of his breathing through his nostrils.

Boer quickly extended his right hand, gripping Mike's left wrist, and started back toward the town.

Feeling Boer's grip and seeing the town's outline, Mike panicked instantly.

"Master Boer, what... what are you going to do?"

"Master Boer, let go of me!"

"I really just told my aunt. She... she wouldn't tell anyone else."

"Master Boer, believe me!"

Boer's words were cold, "I believed you, believed you wouldn't tell anyone about these things, just as I believed your uncle Ryan."

"But now, you've betrayed my trust!"

As Boer pulled him along, Mike was forced to head toward the town.

Looking at the town ahead, fear appeared in Mike's eyes.

If Master Lynn knew about this, what would the consequences be...

He didn't dare to imagine!

He had indeed seen with his own eyes Master Lynn ordering his soldiers to behead dozens of mercenaries!

Neat one-handed swords came down, and dozens of heads rolled off, the blood spurting and staining the ground red.

Thinking of this.

Mike quickly began to struggle, "Master Boer, please let go of me."

"If Master Lynn finds out, he'll definitely kill me!"

Boer's right hand continued to hold Mike firmly, without any slack.

"Master Boer! That's my aunt she's asking, kneeling in front of me where my uncle went, how could I possibly hold back from telling her?"

"It was my uncle who brought me out of the village, it was my uncle and aunt who raised me, Master Boer."

"He took me out, but only I went back..."

At this point.

Boer shook Mike's arm suddenly.

But it only lasted for a moment.

Boer still held Mike's right hand, heading toward the town.

Under Boer's pull, expressions flickered across Mike's face.

He even gripped the handle of the knife at his waist.

But seeing Master Boer's familiar yet unfamiliar back, Mike ultimately chose to give up.

When the bandits caught up, it was Master Boer who had him hide in the woods...

Until finally, Mike gave up resisting and let Boer drag him to town.

A few minutes later.

The two returned to the town, standing before Lynn.

Looking at Master Lynn, Boer turned his head towards Mike behind him and shouted, "Kneel!"

Mike didn't say a word, falling to his knees in despair in front of Lynn.

The next second.

In Mike's shocked eyes, Boer also knelt down.

Ignoring the dampness and cold of the ground.

Before Lynn could ask anything, Boer spoke first, "Master Lynn, I'm sorry, Boer failed your trust..."

Lynn stared directly at them, "Speak."

Boer explained, "Mike... Mike leaked the information about you wiping out the bandits."

Lynn immediately frowned.

After listening to Boer's explanation, Lynn glanced at Mike, then turned to Boer.

"Mr. Boer, Mike is your guard, deal with him as you see fit."

Hearing Lynn's indifferent words, Mike was somewhat surprised.

Let Master Boer handle it himself?

Does this mean he still has a chance to live?

However.

The next second.

Boer turned swiftly, drawing a dagger from his waist and plunged it into Mike's chest.

The cold, biting, intense stabbing pain spread quickly.

Mike looked at Boer full of disbelief, reaching out to grip Boer's arm still holding the dagger.

His words were broken, "Boer... Master... it hurts..."

In a voice that sounded comforting, Boer's broken words came out, "Child... when you've done something wrong, you must face punishment."

"It's okay, it's okay, once you sleep, it won't hurt anymore..."

Mike's grip on Boer's hands weakened and finally fell to his sides.

Boer released Mike and once again looked toward Lynn, his words filled with apology, "Master Lynn, Boer leaves himself to your punishment!"

Chapter 396: Gold Pounds, Grain, and Women

Mike's body lay on the ground, blood flowing.

Boer knelt, fists clenched, head bowed, perhaps due to the intense pain in his knees.

Or perhaps it was because of Mike's death that Boer's body trembled slightly.

Lynn said solemnly, "Mr. Boer, you may rise."

"You have already paid the price!"

Upon hearing this, Boer slowly stood up.

Looking at Lynn before him, Boer gratefully said, "Yes, Master Lynn."

"Then let's leave first..."

Lynn nodded.

Boer bent down and used both hands to slowly lift Mike's body from the ground.

With heavy steps, he walked toward the waiting carriage caravan.

Until the caravans headed off into the distance.

Lynn withdrew his gaze, contemplating in his mind.

The siege battle was becoming known to more and more people, making his territory increasingly dangerous.

However.

He also understood that as more merchants arrived for trade, carrying large quantities of grain and batches of slaves here.

This piece of land would eventually be known to more people.

He couldn't ensure that everyone who visited this territory would choose to keep silent.

The only thing he could do now was to continually strengthen the armed forces of the territory.

Relying on the walls and the defenses currently under construction to fend off threats.

...

As the ice layer on the ground gradually lessened.

Boer gave the order for everyone to mount the carriages and horses.

The sky gradually darkened.

They had to quickly head to the next camp where they could stay.

Otherwise, once the temperature fully dropped, neither people nor horses could endure it.

Passing through the forest lined with limestone roads, it wasn't long before the caravan arrived beneath the city wall.

Rose glanced at Boer's caravan and then commanded the soldiers to open the heavy iron gate.

Buzz~

The wooden gate, measuring several centimeters thick and covered with a layer of iron, emitted a heavy sound each time it opened and closed.

Under Boer's appreciative gaze towards Rose, the iron gate swung open.

Boer led the caravan out of the city wall, galloping towards the distant wilderness.

Buzz~

The heavy closing sound echoed once more.

Clang~

As the iron gate clattered shut, beneath the city wall, apart from the sounds of soldier training, no other noises remained.

On a low hillside.

Figures of four or five cavalymen stood atop.

At the front, the middle-aged man draped in a wool cloak kept his gaze fixed on Boer's caravan as it receded.

Nearby, a young man in leather armor drove his horse over to the middle-aged man's side and asked, "Godfrey, would you like me to lead some men to intercept them?"

Godfrey replied blandly, "No need, just an ordinary businessman."

Shifting his gaze, Godfrey looked toward the distant city wall.

Despite being three thousand meters away, he could still make out the towering wall!

He couldn't judge its exact height, but he could distinctly perceive that its height was no less than that of Bordeaux City's outer wall!

Godfrey clearly saw figures busy digging and working on the open ground outside the city wall.

As an experienced knight, Godfrey naturally understood that those people were constructing defenses!

Moreover.

On the desolate land several kilometers away from the city wall, a team of a dozen members was surveying the surrounding environment.

Godfrey speculated they were site selection...

Desolate land, observing the surroundings, and outside the city walls—it's likely they were selecting sites for watchtowers.

Godfrey looked unwavering; he spoke, saying, "Give me the map of Kaldi!"

The young man who previously spoke promptly retrieved a roll of parchment from the leather pack bound to the horse.

Godfrey reached out to take it, unrolling it slowly, and his gaze quickly searched the map.

As he continued searching, Godfrey's brow furrowed more prominently.

Murmuring to himself, he said, "Strange... no markings on this map... no houses, no city walls..."

Which implies that the territory developed only recently?

The version of the map he had was a mere three years old.

The vast domain of the Karedi Empire meant map-makers didn't visit this southern boundary region.

Resulting in that territory not being marked on the map.

It was indeed a possibility.

But, from the outline and color of the city wall to the ongoing excavation and construction of defenses.

It didn't resemble a territory passed down for centuries!

If it had truly been inherited for such a long time, how could he have never known?

Did Marquis Ducas recently ennoble someone as a lord?

No one could answer him.

Godfrey found himself deeply curious about that territory and its lord behind it.

What kind of presence could construct a wall as tall as Bordeaux City's in such a short time?

In the next moment.

A bold thought crossed Godfrey's mind.

Could the collaboration between the Iron Blood Brotherhood and the Storm Mercenary Corps be due to their coveting that territory?

Coveting the territory, assaulting the walls, then annihilating all the lords behind the walls?

This could explain why all the manor lords in Morgan Town were unaware of the Bandit Corps' whereabouts?

If all these speculations prove accurate...

Godfrey still has one last doubt in his mind.

What kind of existence lurks behind the walls that entices the bandits to covet?

Chapter 397: Gold Pounds, Grain, and Women (Part 2)

What the bandits care about—Gold Pounds, food, and women.

Food and women, he could eliminate directly.

Having speculated to this point, Godfrey felt a vague sense that he had grasped something...

His eyes turned, looking at the man beside him, "Danke, take some men to catch up with the carriage team that just left and see what goods are loaded on their wagons!"

"Remember, it's just a routine inspection, don't alarm them!"

The young man addressed as Danke raised his eyebrows and promptly responded, "Yes, Lord Godfrey."

Immediately.

Danke led four soldiers and chased in the direction the carriage team had gone.

Godfrey, mounted on his horse, looked into the distance before retracting his gaze and heading towards Morgan Town.

Behind him, several soldiers urged their horses forward to quickly follow.

...

Under the night sky.

A bonfire was burning fiercely, casting light that illuminated the entire cave.

The space inside the cave was not very large but enough to accommodate Boer's entire carriage team for a temporary rest.

Sheltered from the wind, it had a continuous dripping spring for drinking and cooking food.

The light of the bonfire shone on Boer's somewhat solemn face.

His gaze was fixed on the red-hot coals in the fire, as if pondering something.

At this moment.

The sound of galloping hooves reached Boer's ears.

He immediately snapped out of his thoughts and looked towards the guards patrolling outside the cave.

After clearly seeing the figures rushing over from afar, a guard quickly ran into the cave to report to Boer, "Master Boer, a small group of soldiers on horseback is approaching!"

Boer's brow furrowed slightly.

Soldiers?

Why would soldiers appear here?

A bad premonition arose in Boer's heart.

He stood up from beside the bonfire and walked towards the cave entrance.

He gazed into the distance.

Sure enough, as the guard said, a small unit of cavalry dressed in leather armor was heading towards the cave.

Two minutes later.

The cavalry arrived at the cave entrance.

A young soldier nimbly dismounted and walked towards Boer and his group.

His gaze swept around as he asked, "Who are you?"

Boer's face quickly donned a humble smile, explaining, "Sir, I am Boer Hansen, a trader from Morgan Town, and also a registered merchant with the Kakasong City Merchant Guild."

"This is my registration document, sir, you can take a look..."

While speaking.

Boer took out a piece of parchment from his bosom, bearing registration information and the Merchant Guild's seal.

Danke reached out to take it, glanced over it, and then handed the parchment back to Boer.

His gaze passed Boer and landed on the wagons in the cave, asking, "Boer Hansen, what goods are you transporting in your wagons?"

"With the Morgan Town bandits not yet eradicated, all people outside need to be inspected."

"Even if you have a Merchant Guild registration document, you still must be inspected!"

Without waiting for Boer to respond, Danke stepped into the cave.

The four soldiers behind him immediately followed.

Boer's heart tightened slightly as he accompanied them, explaining, "Sir, these goods are..."

Clang!

The sound of swords being drawn echoed in the cave.

Boer and his guards all wore stern expressions.

Though it was their first time accompanying Boer to trade beyond the city wall territories.

They knew very well the importance of fine salt!

If soldiers saw it, the consequences would be unimaginable...

Some of the guards' right hands even gripped their sword hilts.

At Boer's command, they would draw their swords without hesitation.

Fortune favors the bold!

A tenth of the profits was enough incentive for them to willingly take this risk.

Besides, no one would know what happens in this wilderness.

As the soldier said—the bandits were not yet eliminated!

Watching the five soldiers approach the wagons, Boer halted his steps, the expressions in his eyes changing rapidly.

With the help of other soldiers, the linen tarp covering the goods was pulled open.

Dozens of packed bags came into Danke's view.

Without hesitation, Danke drew the longsword and inserted it into the bag.

Boer's face turned increasingly stern.

The right hand hanging by his side tightly clenched.

The guards behind Boer also tightened their grip on their sword hilts.

When Danke withdrew the sword, the blade was coated with a thin layer of crystalline particles.

Danke raised his eyebrows, pinched a few grains with his left hand from the sword, gently smelled them, and then placed them in his mouth.

"Fine salt?"

Hearing Danke's inquiry, Boer hurriedly explained, "Yes, sir."

"These are all fine salt, purchased from Kakasong City, for selling in various villages and towns..."

Danke paid no heed to Boer's explanation and continued to inspect.

Danke looked again into the mouth of the bag pierced by the sword, and indeed saw a layer of fine crystalline particles!

Understanding what was inside the bag, Danke wiped the sword clean on his leather skirt.

Clang~

The metallic sound of friction sounded again as the sword was sheathed.

Danke turned his gaze to Boer, saying, "Be careful."

"Such a large quantity of fine salt must be worth a lot, and with the bandits' whereabouts unknown now."

"If you encounter a bandit corps, these few dozen guards wouldn't even satisfy their teeth."

Chapter 398: Gold Pounds, Grain, and Women

Listening to Danke's words, Boer's heart was somewhat astonished.

This soldier was only conducting an inspection?

He even reminded him to be safe?

This...

Boer hastily responded, "Thank you for the reminder, Master, thank you..."

Danke nodded repeatedly, and just as he was about to order the others to leave, he noticed Boer discreetly slip a Gold Pound into his left hand.

Giving Boer an approving glance, Danke called out to the four soldiers, "Continue the patrol."

At the mouth of the cave, Boer and his guards watched as the five cavalry figures gradually faded into the distance.

The smile on his face slowly disappeared.

Luckily, these soldiers did not see Mike's corpse.

Otherwise, there would be no way to explain it.

More worrying than Mike's body was the fine salt from Master Lynn's territory.

Now, all he could do was hope the soldiers believed his words.

If they continued to pursue, it wouldn't be long before they reached Master Lynn's territory.

As for killing the five soldiers on the spot...

Boer had considered it, but ultimately abandoned the thought because of the soldier's reminder.

He didn't know the strength of these soldiers.

If he could kill them all, so be it.

If even one managed to escape, the consequences would be unimaginable.

Because on the leather armor of these soldiers, Boer clearly saw the emblem of a greatsword and shield crossed.

They were soldiers from the Sword and Shield Corps of the Ducas Clan!

The newly appointed Guard Captain Leander stepped forward to Boer and inquired, "Master Boer, what should we do now?"

Boer glanced at Leander, and with a solemn voice said, "Set off! Leave Morgan Town overnight, and head to Kakasong City!"

Leander responded, "Yes, Master Boer."

Immediately, Leander looked behind him and shouted, "Everyone, pack up immediately and prepare to set off!"

Watching the guards and coachmen, who had rested for less than an hour, preparing to set off again, there was a hint of weariness on their faces.

Each time goods were transported, it consumed a significant amount of physical and mental energy.

Especially in such a cold winter.

However.

Survival was more important than exhaustion.

Although Kakasong City was also under the territory of Marquis Ducas.

Kakasong City had Fisherman's Wharf, and if necessary, he wouldn't mind taking a long merchant ship to temporarily avoid trouble.

At least.

These soldiers would not get the precise location of the territory from his lips!

Half an hour later, the freshly set-up tents were packed away, and the campfires on the ground were extinguished with dirt...

The convoy braced against the cold winds and the approaching dusk, continuing their journey.

As the convoy crossed an open wasteland and entered the forest where Boer was previously captured by bandits.

The open wasteland once again became desolate.

Aside from the cold wind swaying the withered grass.

And the occasional 'woo woo' sound of the wind, no other figures could be seen.

...

Under the night sky of Morgan Town.

Aside from a few figures and some horse riders hurriedly rushing through the streets.

Few people were around.

The winter wind was too chilling.

The townsmen preferred to curl up at home, warming by a wood or charcoal fire.

When several horses passed through the streets, stopping in front of a three-story building.

Danke leaped off the horse and handed it to the soldier behind him, then pushed open the wooden door and entered the building.

After a brief search, not seeing Godfrey, Danke went up to the second floor.

Looking around, Godfrey, sitting in front of a burning red pot of charcoal, came into Danke's view.

Without hesitation, Danke approached, but before he could speak, Godfrey spoke first, "No rush, warm yourself by the fire first."

"Although we are in the Kakaladi Empire, I didn't expect this border area to be so cold!"

Danke was a bit puzzled but followed Godfrey's words.

"Yes, Master, it's starting to ice up outside again."

Godfrey gave Danke an approving glance.

Just as Danke finished speaking, footsteps sounded next door, approaching.

Recognizing the familiar weight and rhythm of the steps, Danke instantly understood.

A few seconds later.

A figure turned the corner; it was Lawrence Ducas!

Danke immediately stood up, moved behind Godfrey, and bowed to show respect.

Lawrence glanced at Godfrey and Danke, then casually said, "I'm going to rest on the third floor. Unless it's urgent, do not disturb me!"

Godfrey respectfully replied, "Yes, Master!"

Lawrence acknowledged and proceeded toward the staircase to the third floor.

But shortly after.

Sounds of playful chatter came from the room on the third floor.

"Beauty, haven't seen you for a few hours and you seem even more refined? So fair..."

"Huh? You're new here, right? I thought you looked unfamiliar..."

"Then tonight, you'll accompany this commander..."

"..."

Godfrey turned to Danke, "Have a seat."

Danke hesitated for two seconds, then finally sat to Godfrey's right.

Godfrey picked up the iron tongs beside him and added some charcoal to the fire pit.

While arranging the charcoal, he said, "No need to speak yet, let me guess what's on the carriage first..."

Danke, once tense, immediately relaxed.

Such was Godfrey, always able to easily relieve his tension from facing Lawrence.

Chapter 399: Gold Pounds, Grain, and Women (Part 4)

Moreover, just with a sudden change in the way Godfrey spoke, he could relax.

Godfrey glanced at Danke, his words plain: "Fine salt?"

Hearing those two words come out of Godfrey's mouth, Danke's eyes widened instantly.

He hurriedly said, "Sir... how did you know?"

Whether before coming to Morgan Town or after arriving, as a knight's follower, he had always been with Godfrey.

It was only recently, during a brief investigation of that convoy of wagons, that they were separated.

But.

Even though he hadn't started reporting, how did Godfrey already know?

Seeing Danke's surprised expression, Godfrey glared at him.

"As a knight's follower, your horsemanship, swimming, swordsmanship, hunting, poetry reading, and even archery are all very skilled."

"Only in chess have you not been able to get the basics... do you know why?"

Danke was taken aback, inquiring, "Why?"

Godfrey said disappointedly, "Chess is a game that requires strategy and intelligence."

"Through chess, one can cultivate logical thinking, analytical ability, and decision-making skills."

"Just like you asked how I knew... with logical deduction, you can deduce eight out of ten, with the remaining two needing only validation."

Danke remained silent, listening quietly.

Godfrey patiently explained to Danke, "While observing on the hill, that convoy of wagons entered with all wagons fully loaded."

"But upon exiting, only two or three wagons were loaded with tarpaulin-covered goods."

"What does this mean?"

Danke pondered for a few seconds, ultimately shaking his head.

Godfrey sighed and explained, "This means that the value of the goods in those two or three wagons equates to a fully loaded convoy!"

"The goods being transported out are of high value!"

Upon hearing this, Danke's eyes lit up.

"Currently, what are the high-value goods?"

"Gold, silver, coal, salt mines, or more precious and rare magic ore."

Godfrey continued, "The city wall was just recently built, indicating that the territory is still developing and lacks a large workforce and tools."

"Among these ores, which can be mined without a lot of tools and labor?"

Listening to Godfrey's explanation, Danke understood profoundly, firmly stating, "Salt mine!"

"Salt blocks are the easiest to mine, and if there's an open-pit salt mine, it's even easier."

Godfrey nodded, "Exactly."

"Having a salt mine is one thing, but what's surprising is the salt-making technique to process it into fine salt..."

Until Danke returned, recounting his deduction to a considerable extent.

Godfrey finally understood why the bandit corps were rampaging near Morgan Town.

Just as his speculation suggested.

The bandit corps coveted the salt mine behind that territory!

Therefore, the Iron Blood Brotherhood Bandit Corps and Storm Mercenary Corps joined forces.

Even Aiden Morrison, whom he visited, likely harbors designs on that territory too.

That's why he initially called the Iron Blood Brotherhood Bandit Corps to join forces.

Later, due to unequal distribution, the two sides might have ended up at odds, with the Iron Blood Brotherhood Bandit Corps backstabbing them!

Overthrowing and occupying his manor.

Aiden had to enlist the Iron Thorns Mercenary Corps to disperse the bandit corps.

As for how the Iron Blood Brotherhood and Storm Mercenary Corps vanished into thin air from Morgan Town...

Godfrey speculated they were annihilated by the armed forces behind the city wall!

Otherwise, there would be no trace of information!

Godfrey still recalled rumors that Morgan Town's bandit corps had expanded to over fifteen hundred members...

If annihilated by the lord's forces behind the wall, what sort of armed forces does that wall conceal?

Even.

Deep within Godfrey, arose a desire to enter the wall and meet that lord.

Even calculating by the construction time of the wall and the time on scholars' parchment maps.

It's been just three years at most.

In three years, they built a stone wall over ten meters high!

Completely isolating the outside world from the territory beyond the wall, forming its own... kingdom?

The term "kingdom" seemed apt to Godfrey.

After building that wall, as long as there's no army invasion, no powerful extraordinary beings.

That wall could shield at least eighty percent of the crises!

Then relying on the steep mountains, the wall's strength, and the value of fine salt, they could frantically develop and expand!

Plus, outside the wall, they're digging trenches, constructing watchtowers...

Evidently, the construction of that wall was not merely lucky or coincidental.

The lord behind the wall has their own intelligence network and is aggressively gathering external intelligence.

They already know a crisis is approaching, preemptively building defensive structures!

With such strong decision-making and execution abilities.

How could Godfrey not be curious?

Seeing Godfrey silent, Danke also remained quiet, letting the campfire warm his somewhat stiff body.

Compared to the quiet of the second floor, the third floor was already filled with the sounds of bodies colliding.

And accompanying came the unmistakable moans of voluptuous women.

Chapter 400: Gold Pounds, Grain, and Women (Part 5)

...

The next morning.

After breakfast, Lynn sat beside the fireplace burning with charcoal.

In his hand, he held a small stone mill.

His left hand held the mill, and his right hand held the grindstone, moving back and forth, the grindstone grinding on the stone plate.

Crack~crack~

A faint cracking sound continuously emanated from it.

[Medical Experience +1]

[Medical Experience +1]

[Medical Experience +1]

...

Outside the castle, it was drizzling.

Though not heavy, in temperatures around freezing, even light rain was intolerable.

Thus.

Lynn allocated the townsmen who needed to work outside to various workshops.

Temporarily boosting manpower for the production in the workshops.

As for him, he had Old John bring some dried herbs to be ground into powder.

Not only could they be used for future treatment needs, but he could also grind medical skills experience.

A dual benefit.

While grinding the herbs in his hand, Lynn opened the weather forecast panel.

In the next few days, the weather and temperature were expected to remain around freezing.

However, as Lynn checked, his brows furrowed.

In a week, the temperature would drop to minus five degrees, accompanied by heavy snow.

Minus five degrees, the wheat seedlings could still withstand.

But snow was a fatal threat to the wheat seedlings.

After heavy snow, when the snow melts, and the temperature drops, ice will form!

This will cause fatal frost damage to the budding wheat seedlings.

Although the planting of winter barley was done by strip sowing.

There are ridges on both sides of each ridge, where melted ice water can flow through...

But it will still have an impact.

Precautionary measures must be taken against the incoming heavy snow weather.

He didn't want the millions of pounds of winter barley planted to yield nothing!

Lynn looked at a guard, "Go get Wilbur and Gavin!"

The guard responded and withdrew.

Until a dozen minutes later.

Several somewhat hurried footsteps sounded from the distant stairs.

Led by the guard, Gavin and Wilbur arrived at the hall and approached Lynn.

Standing five or six meters in front of Lynn, Gavin and Wilbur bent slightly, respectfully saying: "Master."

Lynn asked, "How many farmers are under your command now?"

Gavin and Wilbur exchanged a glance, and Gavin explained: "Master, there are two hundred."

"Because it's winter now, the rain has caused the soil to form blocks, so we arranged for them to do soil loosening work..."

Lynn nodded.

Recently, other industry developments had been ongoing, leaving no time to tend to the wheat seedlings in the fields.

But fortunately, with Gavin and Wilbur, plus it's winter now, there isn't much labor needed for care.

So he didn't have to worry too much.

Lynn spoke to the two: "You did well."

"But starting today, there are other tasks you need to do."

"In seven days, there will be a heavy snowfall. I need you to lead your 200 farmers to keep the wheat seedlings warm and moist!"

Gavin and Wilbur asked, puzzled: "Warm and moist?"

Lynn nodded, "Yes, cover the wheat seedlings with gathered weeds, at least five centimeters thick."

The weeds and wild grass cleared from nearly fifty thousand acres of wasteland had long been collected.

Whether used as fodder for the pastures or straw for livestock rest, it was a good choice.

Now, these weeds and wild grasses can naturally be used to keep the wheat seedlings warm.

Gavin and Wilbur responded in unison: "Yes, Master."

After listening to Master Lynn's instructions and advice, the two retreated and left the hall.

Not until reaching the first-floor corridor did Gavin and Wilbur remember what Master Lynn had just said.

How did Master Lynn know there would be snow?

And precisely in seven days?

However, recalling Master Lynn's precise prediction of rain last time, this prediction of snow wasn't surprising either.

Gavin and Wilbur calmed down.

After arranging the farming matters, Lynn returned to the grinding of herbs.

[Medical Experience +1]

[Medical Experience +1]

...

Time was swiftly passing.

Until afternoon, the drizzle in the sky finally stopped.

All the townsmen who joined the handicraft workshops left and returned to their positions.

Lynn walked through the town.

Watching the townsmen begin to busy themselves.

Yet, when they saw Lynn with Red, they stopped and bowed to Lynn.

Lynn nodded in return and walked past.

He arrived at the open square in front of the town.

Jode was leading a hundred townsmen, carving statues.

Several erected wooden frames surrounded the stacked granite.

Jode, along with a few apprentice sculptors, each bound with a thick hemp rope, stood on the granite, carving the initial shapes.

On the granite, there were numerous white markings.

Clearly, these were preliminary sculpting lines drawn by Jode.

Given that it's the early stage, even apprentice sculptors without experience wouldn't make major mistakes or errors by following the lines.