

System 551

Chapter 551: Territory Emblem: Dragon (4)

"Because they are just ordinary people, they don't know how to express their admiration for Master Lynn, they can only work hard within their own abilities."

Red, who had always been by the side of Master Lynn, naturally didn't know the inner thoughts of these townsmen.

But as the steward of the entire town, she was well aware of it.

Because the vast majority of minor matters were handled by her.

Red did not speak, which was a tacit agreement to Kuisi's words.

...

Compared to the laughter and cheer at the bonfire banquet in Lynn Territory.

On the other side.

In a field of wild grass.

A team of ten riders and thirty to forty people were slowly moving.

The leather armor on their bodies was tattered and stained with blood, their hair disheveled, and their faces full of desolation.

Each step forward seemed to exhaust all their strength.

Godfrey, riding on his horse, slightly pulled the reins in his hand, and looked back at the rear.

He couldn't help but sigh.

Over three thousand soldiers of the Ducas Clan Sword and Shield Corps set off from the Marquisate in Morgan Town, traversing mountains and valleys, infiltrating the Duchy of the Red Dragon.

In just one or two days, only less than a hundred were left!

The Sword and Shield Corps soldiers did not die in a charge against the enemy.

Yet, they will forever remain in the Duchy of the Red Dragon as rebel infiltrators under Duke Cangyu.

Even their names will be forgotten!

Moreover.

After experiencing this, even if they survived, they could never forget it for the rest of their lives.

Taking a deep breath of the scent of trampled grass, he nudged the belly of the horse, coming to the front of the team.

He approached the young man wearing high-quality leather armor, riding a pure-blood warhorse, and Godfrey spoke.

"Master, in another day we will reach the Marquisate."

The young man, Lawrence, also had a face full of desolation.

He turned his head to glance at Godfrey and replied, "I know."

Godfrey continued, "The scouts at the back have been returning reports, showing that we have clearly escaped the pursuit of the Red Dragon Riders."

"Master, the soldiers are extremely exhausted after days of retreat; they need a short rest."

"To avoid detection, I suggest we cross the border first, head to Morgan Town, and then from Fisherman's Wharf in Kakasong City, take a longboat back to Bordeaux City..."

Lawrence did not speak, but rather pondered Godfrey's suggestion.

Half a minute later.

Lawrence spoke up, "Alright, let's do as you said."

Godfrey responded, "Yes, Master."

Godfrey tugged at the reins in his hands, allowing the horse under him to leave Lawrence's side, and turned around.

He shouted to the soldiers around him, "Everyone, lift your spirits!"

"The Commander has given orders; we will cross the border overnight, return to the Marquisate, and then you can rest."

With the words falling.

Sparse replies followed one after another.

"Yes."

"Yes~ Thank you, Commander."

"..."

Listening to these replies, Godfrey sighed inwardly without choice.

At this moment.

Captain Danke rode up beside Godfrey.

He glanced at Lawrence's figure moving farther ahead and asked, "Sir, did the Comman... did the Commander agree?"

Godfrey nodded, "This is the best route back, the Commander would certainly agree."

Danke's face relaxed, watching as soldiers walked past them one after another.

Danke sighed, "We are about to return to the Marquisate."

"But it's a pity for the three thousand Sword and Shield Corps soldiers who died..."

"Their families still naively think they just went to the Southern Border Land to fight bandits."

Godfrey did not respond to Danke's words, he said, "Captain Danke, just do your own duty!"

"Observing the big picture, making decisions, and considering casualties is the responsibility of the big figures!"

Danke's face tightened, and he quickly replied, "Yes, Sir Godfrey."

...

On the other side.

Frank Manor Castle.

In a spacious master bedroom on the second floor.

Several bodies stood silently in front of the double-door wooden doors.

They did not speak, just waited silently.

Krueger, leaning against the wall, had an expression of complete boredom.

His greedy gaze roamed over the curvaceous figure opposite.

Dense shoulders were bare, and her delicate skin glistened under the light.

A tight low-cut long dress outlined a proud curve.

Voluptuous breasts almost spilled out, the hem barely covering her rounded hips...

Looking at Janet, Krueger's mind was filled with fantasies.

Time ticked by bit by bit.

After an hour.

The double wooden doors opened from inside, and an elderly man in a gray-white robe stepped out.

Janet immediately stepped forward to inquire of the elder.

"Dr. Schulz, how is my grandfather?"

Schultz looked at Janet, then at Joao, Krueger, and Philis who gathered around.

He spoke hesitantly, "Miss Janet, young masters..."

"Master Jonas is elderly and his body is already frail."

"Plus this time he was overly angered, causing inner emotional turmoil..."

"Perhaps, he will find it very difficult to walk again."

Joao and Philis showed no change in expression.

On Krueger's face, there was an obvious gleeful malice.

Janet's brows furrowed, and she quickly inquired, "Dr. Schulz, so my grandfather..."

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Dr. Schulz responded, "He can only live bedridden now."

"Take good care of him, don't let him endure too much hardship..."

"I am an old acquaintance with Jonas Manor Lord, if there is any need, you can send someone to Kakasong City to find me anytime."

Janet gratefully replied, "Alright, Dr. Schulz, I'll have a guard escort you back."

Dr. Schulz glanced at Krueger and the others, then stepped out of the doorway.

The guard drove the carriage, sending Dr. Schulz away.

Janet knocked on the door before entering, walking into Jonas's master bedroom.

Joao and the other two followed behind and entered.

Janet strode to the bedside, sitting on the edge of the bed.

Looking at Jonas lying on the large bed, she spoke with concern.

"Grandfather, are you feeling better?"

Standing behind Janet, Joao and the others also looked at Jonas.

Seemingly hearing Janet's call, Jonas, who was resting with his eyes closed, slowly opened them.

He tried to open his mouth with difficulty, but no matter how hard he tried, no sound came out.

In an instant.

Janet's eyes started to shimmer, her voice tinged with tears.

"Grandfather, don't speak, just rest well for now."

After letting out a few difficult murmurs, Jonas slowly closed his eyes again.

Though his breath was faint, it was still long-lasting.

Janet covered Jonas with the quilt, stood up, and spoke to Joao and the other two.

"Uncles, shall we go outside?"

Joao and the others nodded.

On the corridor outside the door, Janet gently closed the door.

Janet spoke first, "Uncles, what should we do now?"

"Uncle Eduardo is dead, and Uncle Simoni is dead too!"

"Even I, as a woman, can see that someone is hunting the descendants of the Frank Clan!"

"Now Grandfather Jonas has also fallen..."

"Shouldn't the Frank Clan do something about it?"

Joao remained silent.

Philis also stayed silent.

Their eyes turned to Krueger.

Krueger only shrugged, speaking helplessly, "You think I have a solution?"

After those words.

The four of them fell into silence once more.

A moment later.

Janet sighed softly, saying, "Uncles, you should rest early."

"Grandfather can't get out of bed now, so I'll take care of him..."

"As for everything else, Janet is powerless..."

Janet bowed slightly, saluting the three, then re-entered the room.

Philis glanced at Ruan and Krueger, then left on his own.

Just as Joao was about to leave, Krueger's voice reached his ears.

"Brother Joao, do you have time... to talk?"

Joao glanced at Krueger, "Alright."

The two walked shoulder to shoulder toward the open-air courtyard outside the castle.

Krueger looked around to ensure no one else was present.

He got straight to the point, "Eduardo and Simoni are both dead."

"Is the next one me, or Philis?"

Joao's face showed no surprise, but he calmly asked back.

"So, you think I arranged for people to intercept Eduardo, and also arranged for an assassin to kill Simoni?"

Krueger raised his eyebrows, continuing to question, "Isn't it?"

"Don't just stop at those two... Even Everett's cause of death, isn't it also closely related to you?"

"I clearly remember, because Everett was the eldest son, capable, and beloved by Jonas."

"You, thinking your father's love was taken away, did not get along well with Everett since childhood."

"If I remember correctly, once you even pushed Everett off the castle walls, didn't you?"

"Facing Old Jonas's questioning, you said he accidentally fell himself?"

Hearing this.

Joao's expression changed, he spoke in a low voice, "Those were matters of childhood!"

"Besides, Everett has been gone for years, and it's all long past."

Joao shifted the topic, "Is there anything else?"

"If not, I still need to take people for an inspection!"

After just a couple of seconds, seeing Krueger not speaking, Joao stepped away briskly.

Watching Joao's departing figure, Krueger's face, which had been casual, turned serious.

From Joao's words and expressions, he felt no ambition for power.

But.

If it isn't Joao wanting to become the Frank Manor Lord, then who could it be?

Philis, who only knows farming?

He might be good at farming.

But using plots to become the Manor Lord of Frank Manor?

Krueger didn't believe Philis had that ability!

Besides, who else could there be?

The remaining few, just six or seven to eleven or twelve-year-old underage brothers?

Or...

Is the real mastermind behind it all the niece he's fantasized about hundreds of times—Janet?

...

In the blink of an eye, three days passed.

The townsmen, having completed tilling and planting, returned to their posts, resuming production.

In the castle.

Lynn sat on the Lord's throne, having opened the [Holographic Map], was analyzing the personnel composition of the territory industry closely.

The total population of the territory was now nine thousand people.

Some elderly townsmen balanced out with the newborns.

Starting from the Handicraft Workshop District.

Firstly.

Ehrello, with six Blacksmith Workshops, had already increased his workforce to twelve hundred people!

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Plus the 200 apprentices led by Flint in the Blacksmith Workshop...

And the Textile Workshop currently assisting in the production of Composite Armor, 600 people!

The labor force here amounts to 1,800 people, nearly a fifth of the territory!

However, Lynn also understands.

To quickly produce a large number of armor and weapons, the investment in labor is essential.

Lynn feels that with the increasing number of townsmen on the territory, he has to recruit more and more soldiers to expand the army.

He even needs to invest more labor into the Blacksmith Workshop and the Textile Workshop...

The Woodworker Workshop has 300 people, the Stonemason Workshop 800 people, the Brewing Workshop 100 people, the Glass Workshop 100 people, the Fishery Workshop 100 people, the Shipyard 50 people, and the Stone Carving Workshop 100 people.

Lynn needs Colin to lead the 300 people in the Woodworker Workshop to create large machinery, which is a reasonable labor investment.

The 800-person Stonemason Workshop led by Avery recently completed the construction of Weng City.

They are now working on the lookout tower outside the city, as well as the subsequent two Outpost Fortresses.

The Stonemason Workshop, not only undertakes the quarrying, transportation, and construction of stones...

people is not too many!

As for other workshops, they are all maintaining the normal operation of the workshops.

There is no situation of excessive labor.

Even.

He also needs to dispatch more labor to the Shipyard!

Now that the spring plowing and planting have ended, he needs to consider accelerating the urgent construction of the territory and improving production efficiency.

Increase labor at the Shipyard to produce small ships and utilize the water power of the Aladia River!

Lynn calculated in his mind.

The total number of labor in the entire Handicraft Workshop District is as high as 3,350 people!

Secondly.

The territory's canteen has 100 chefs and assistants, the hospital 50 people, the school 300 children, the farm 100 people, the Papermaking Workshop 100 people, the Red Brick Factory 100 people, the Salt Factory 600 people, and 1,500 people for the three major mineral extractions!

The total reaches 2,850 people.

Finally.

The 2,000 soldiers and guards on the territory, along with those responsible for skiff transport, rail transport, cart transport, etc.

make up the 9,000 people in the entire territory.

After confirming there are no omissions, Lynn finds out.

These 9,000 laborers offer very little room for him to maneuver!

After recruiting 500 soldiers.

Almost all the townsmen are in appropriate and necessary positions.

Lynn can't help but sigh in his heart.

There is still not enough labor!

To have more labor, expand the scale of the Shipyard, and start producing small ships.

He can only delay temporarily, waiting for merchants to transport more labor to his territory.

Besides that, there is external warfare and plunder!

Or... hire more Free People from Morgan Town or Kakasong City!

At this moment.

Footsteps sounded from afar.

A guard quickly walked up to Lynn and reported: "Master, the merchant Alan has arrived in the town with Warhorses."

"He is being received by Mr. George."

"Mr. George said your decision is needed..."

Lynn replied, "I understand."

Just now he was thinking about the restriction on heavy cavalry due to the lack of Warhorses.

Unexpectedly, Alan has already arrived with Warhorses at his territory.

Lynn stood up from the Lord's seat, walked through the reception hall, descended the stairs, and made his way to the town.

Under the townsmen's respectful gazes, Lynn passed through rows of Red Brick Houses and arrived at the Lord's Square.

Turning his gaze.

George was standing with Alan, talking from time to time.

Upon seeing Lynn's arrival, George immediately stepped forward to greet him.

Approaching Lynn, George called out, "Master."

Lynn asked, "Is there any problem with the transaction?"

George quickly explained, "Master, this time Mr. Alan has brought quite a number of Warhorses."

"I feel it would be more appropriate for you to handle the transaction and decision-making."

Lynn nodded and walked towards Alan not far away.

Alan took a courteous step forward to greet him as well.

A professional smile appeared on Alan's face, and after giving a merchant's bow, he began to speak.

"Master Lynn, long time no see."

Lynn returned the smile, "Indeed, it has been a long time, Mr. Alan."

"George mentioned you brought a large shipment of Warhorses?"

Upon hearing this, Alan began his introduction without any unnecessary words.

"Yes, Master Lynn."

"Knowing the urgent need for warhorses in your territory."

"I stayed in the Badan Empire this winter, visiting various large ranch owners there."

"To transport more horses, I even spent a great deal on buying three long ships for the transport."

"This time, I have brought you 100 Warhorses, Master Lynn!"

Lynn's gaze followed the direction of Eira's extended right hand.

Sturdy and tall figures stood firm on the Lord's Square.

The continuous neighing of the horses echoed from among them.

As Lynn's gaze swept over, panels displaying the horses' information materialized before him.

[Badan Warhorse]: Upper-Class Warhorse, offering excellent speed and maneuverability, among other attributes.

Though they are not top-tier like Mo Ying.

It is quite decent to have so many Upper-Class Warhorses.

Scanning the area to ensure no injured horses were present.

Lynn then turned his attention back to Alan and asked.

"Mr. Alan, I'll take all the Warhorses. Quote me a price."

Receiving Lynn's affirmative response, Alan's smile grew even more pronounced.

"Master Lynn, just like before, Twenty Gold Pounds per horse!"

"For 100 Upper-Class Warhorses, a total of 2,000 Gold Pounds!"

"What do you think of this price?"

Lynn quickly calculated in his mind.

2,000 Gold Pounds is 480,000 pence!

At the price of six pence per pound of fine salt... that's 80,000 pounds of fine salt.

With a thought, Lynn opened the [Resource Management] panel and took a look.

Luckily, there was ample of fine salt in reserve.

Lynn calmly stated, "I can exchange for you 80,000 pounds of fine salt at six pence per pound!"

Hearing Lynn's words, Alan couldn't help but bow again and repeated the merchant's bow.

"Thank you, Master Lynn. You are the most generous lord I've met!"

Lynn nodded, "Mr. Alan, you are being too polite."

"You've gone through the trouble of bringing the Warhorses to my territory, so naturally, I must show sufficient sincerity."

The market price for fine salt outside the territory.

Perhaps due to the onset of spring, is currently at eight pence.

As long as Alan can export all 80,000 pounds of fine salt.

Minus transport costs, time costs, and market entry tax, there is at least a one-penny profit.

80,000 pounds of fine salt equates to 80,000 pence!

Transporting 100 Warhorses from the Badan Empire to his territory can yield over 300 Gold Pounds in profit!

Alan is, naturally, more than willing!

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Aside from the hundred warhorses, there were ten four-horse drawn carriages driven in by Alan, loaded with bulging goods.

A total of sixty thousand jin of barley!

Once the deal was confirmed, George was tasked with arranging personnel for unloading and loading, while Lynn led Alan toward the tavern.

As they walked, Alan spoke, "Master Lynn, I assume I am not the first member of the Brown Clan to come to your domain for trade, am I?"

Lynn glanced at him and replied, "Indeed, you are not."

Alan's question was quite tactical.

Of course, Alan asked this to gauge information about Grayson from Lynn.

But just by affirming from Lynn that he was not the first, Alan could confirm his suspicions.

Alan seemed to sigh before continuing, "Having a caring sister, and someone as esteemed as you, Master Lynn, while being so diligent and hardworking..."

"It is only reasonable if Grayson becomes the patriarch of the Brown Clan."

Lynn looked at Alan for a moment and asked, "Mr. Alan, from your tone, are you planning to give up the fight for the patriarch's position?"

Alan's expression changed instantly, and he declared firmly, "That's impossible!"

"The only way I will give up the patriarch's position of the Brown Clan is over my dead body!"

"I have my reasons for having to become the patriarch of the Brown Clan!"

Lynn said nothing, merely listening in silence.

Whether it was the Alan in front of him, or Grayson, both seemed determined to become the patriarch of the Brown Clan!

Grayson wanted to reform and reorganize the Brown Clan.

But for what reason did Alan want to?

And as Grayson mentioned, there was another family merchant vying for the patriarch position...

Kari?

Lynn did not sense her determination.

Instead, Kari seemed more interested in seeking a marriage partner?

To free herself from the Brown Clan?

Or perhaps it was Zod who had visited his domain.

Of course.

These were all matters of the Brown Clan and had little to do with him.

What Lynn needed was for these merchants to continuously transport goods to his domain.

Whether it was to exchange for fine salt, glazed products, or alcohol!

They reached the tavern.

Lynn and Alan sat across from each other at a round table.

By their side, Red, who had transitioned from Lynn's personal guard to attendant, poured the gin for the two.

Alan, a bit surprised, picked up the glazed cup, eyeing the golden liquid within.

Before he could inquire, Lynn took the initiative to explain.

"The liquor is distilled spirits brewed in my Brewing Workshop, and the glazed cup is crafted in my Glass Workshop."

Listening to Lynn's calm introduction, Alan was quite amazed in his heart.

"Master Lynn is truly a remarkable person!"

Although he had only traded with Lynn a few times.

Every visit to Lynn's domain brought a refreshing new experience for him.

After some compliments, Alan raised the glazed cup and drank it in one gulp.

A surge of warmth flowed and spread through his body, his eyes suddenly shining brightly.

Alan exclaimed in surprise, "Master Lynn, this liquor is..."

Lynn explained once more, "It's Lexus Gin, distilled spirits named after the brewer in my Brewing Workshop."

"Mr. Alan, the gin has a high alcohol content, and it's easy to get drunk."

Alan knowingly nodded, repeating Lynn's words.

"Lexus Gin, distilled spirits..."

Repeating it a few times, Alan praised, "It's truly excellent liquor!"

Under Lynn's gaze, Red understood and poured more drinks for the two.

After a few drinks, Alan, seated on the high stool, began to sway.

His words started to slur...

"Master Lynn, do you realize how much pressure there is as a cross-regional traveling merchant...?"

"Not only worrying about potential issues with goods during transport!"

"For instance, warhorses... some couldn't adapt to the maritime environment during shipping, refused to eat feed or drink water, and ended up emaciated during the journey..."

"To prevent affecting other warhorses, I had no choice but to painfully throw them into the sea..."

"Also, worrying about arriving at the destination only to be betrayed by the lord!"

"For example, a transaction was agreed upon, with set prices, only for the lord to refuse the shipment upon arrival!"

"That's a fatal blow to a merchant."

"Even if you find someone else to trade with later, the time wasted, fees for long-term docking, time costs, etc., are irrecoverable."

At this point, Alan gave a burp.

He looked at Lynn with gratitude, saying, "Thankfully, Master Lynn, you're different from them."

"Regardless of what goods I bring over, Master Lynn, you accept them all."

"Even willing to exchange my goods for fine salt at a price lower than the market, allowing me to earn more profit."

"Master Lynn, to be honest with you, if it weren't for the huge profits."

"I really wouldn't want to transport any warhorses or grain to your remote domain."

"It's only because Marquis Duca sent Sword and Shield Corps soldiers here to suppress outlaws."

"Given the ferocity of the Iron Blood Brotherhood Bandit Corps, aside from a few of us money-grabbing Brown Clan merchants..."

"Other guild merchants truly wouldn't want to come here..."

Lynn recalled slightly in his mind.

Indeed, it was just as Alan said.

The merchants who came to his domain, aside from George and Boer, local merchants by virtue of proximity, had visited his domain.

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All the other merchants were from the Brown Clan.

As merchants, what they value most is profit, of course.

If there is something they value more than profit, it is naturally their lives.

Thinking of this.

Lynn felt relieved about the decision not to haggle back then.

Profit is the best driving force for merchants.

Sitting on the chair and relaxing for a moment, Alan exhaled a breath of alcohol.

The daze in his eyes gradually faded away.

Alan glanced at Lynn, his mouth full of reminders as he spoke.

"Master Lynn, war is approaching."

"If you know more merchants, quickly have them purchase more grain for you!"

Lynn frowned slightly and questioned, "Mr. Alan, what do you mean by this..."

Alan sat up straight and explained, "I don't know if you're aware, but I can inform you of what I know about the Karedi Empire."

"More than a month ago, a unit of the Feiyu Army dispatched by Grand Duke Cangyu of the Karedi Empire infiltrated the Duchy of the Red Dragon!"

"They wantonly burned, killed, and looted, leaving corpses scattered everywhere in their wake!"

"The number of townspeople slaughtered reached as high as—fifty thousand people!"

"Although not long ago, the Grand Duke of the Red Dragon dispatched the Red Dragon Riders to pursue and kill, a small Feiyu Army unit of dozens still managed to escape."

"The most crucial point is that the dead townspeople are beyond saving."

"The Grand Duke of the Red Dragon is enraged."

"Leading a group of Red Dragon Riders, he charged straight towards the Royal City of Triumph!"

"All to demand an explanation from Charlemagne VI."

Lynn did not speak, listening quietly.

Alan continued, "As for what happened after the Grand Duke of the Red Dragon and the Red Dragon Riders arrived in Triumph City, my intelligence network has yet to give me a response."

"But I heard that the Grand Duke of the Red Dragon boasted wildly—'Since you, Charlemagne VI, can't manage your people, I, Roland Gabriel, will!'

"In a single sentence, the already tense imperial situation was further inflamed."

Lynn nodded, gratefully saying, "Thank you, Mr. Alan, for the reminder."

He naturally knew that the Feiyu Army infiltrated into the Duchy of the Red Dragon by Grand Duke Cangyu, as Alan mentioned, was precisely the Lawrence Sword and Shield Army that left Morgan Town!

Just as he had previously guessed.

Lawrence, who went to the Duchy of the Red Dragon, was indeed stirring the pot for the Karedi Empire!

Or rather, aiming to ignite the torch of imperial authority warfare throughout the Karedi Empire.

Hoping to escalate the conflict between the two Grand Dukes and spread the war across the entire Empire.

However.

Analyzing Alan's words...

The Grand Duke of the Red Dragon is only furious.

He has not launched an all-out invasion or waged war against Grand Duke Cangyu or Prince Mitchell!

As all the grain was unloaded from the carts.

As eighty-two thousand pounds of fine salt were loaded onto the carts.

Alan, with his cart team, drove out of the small town.

Watching Alan disappear into the distance, only then did Lynn retract his gaze.

Whether it was the warhorses and grain Alan transported for him or the intelligence regarding the Karedi Empire he brought, all were extremely useful.

Allowing him, whose intelligence network is not yet fully established, to learn more about the current situation of the Karedi Empire.

Lynn also understood.

No matter how the situation of the Karedi Empire outside his territory changes.

It has little to do with him right now.

The only thing this territory needs to do now is to continue rapid development!

The development of the territory had already been arranged by Lynn.

Together with Red and a few guards, he once again went to the embankment beside the Aladia River, continuing to fish for Energy Stones.

...

Five days passed in the blink of an eye.

Through fishing, Lynn obtained nearly a thousand Energy Stones and a book of Mining Mastery skills.

Only then did Lynn understand.

Fishing not only provides combat skills but also offers a chance to obtain survival skills.

Unfortunately.

He could not pass these skill books to others for learning.

Otherwise, he could have used the skill books obtained through fishing to cultivate various talents.

With two thousand Energy Stones, Lynn pondered for a moment and ultimately decided to keep them for emergencies.

After all, to assign points, it only takes a thought.

It can be done at any time.

On the embankment of the Aladia River.

Lynn had just lifted a three-pound river fish from the water.

As Red unhooked the fish, the sound of hurried footsteps came closer from afar.

Lynn turned his head to see, and it was Colin from the Woodworker Workshop.

Lynn asked in puzzlement, "Is there something at the Woodworker Workshop that needs you to run over?"

Arriving beside Lynn, Colin, slightly breathless, said.

"Master... There is indeed something."

"The crossbow cannons... the crossbow cannons have been completed. Please come to inspect and test them!"

Glancing at the gradually dimming sky, Lynn nodded.

"Let's take a look!"

Handing the fishing rod to Red, Lynn and Colin headed back to the small town.

Passing through a red brick house, they arrived at the Woodworker Workshop.

Just stepping out, a completed crossbow cannon first came into Lynn's view.

A sturdy wooden base sat firmly on the ground, supporting the massive body of the crossbow cannon.

Two robust twisted leather straps were taut, ready to release.

The crossbow arm was like a giant steel arm, the bowstring as tight as a full moon, with an empty net bag capable of holding various projectiles, stones, long spears, and so on.

Turning the winch, the operator can save a lot of effort and draw the bowstring more rapidly!

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As long as this crossbow cannon is transported to the city wall, if there is an enemy attacking the wall, it will definitely become a powerful weapon for defending the city!

Lynn couldn't help but nod in satisfaction.

While Lynn was observing the crossbow cannon, Colin stood quietly by the side, waiting without any interruptions.

Stepping over, he came to his side.

After a few minutes, Lynn spoke: "A very impressive crossbow cannon."

Colin spoke with a respectful tone.

"Master, the testing area is just behind the workshop. Do you need me to have them transport the crossbow cannon there?"

Lynn replied: "Yes, transport it over and let's see the power of this crossbow cannon!"

Colin responded: "Yes, Master."

At Colin's call, dozens of carpenter apprentices came forward.

With uniform shouts, the apprentices slowly lifted the crossbow cannon.

With careful reminders, they headed towards the back of the woodworker workshop.

Behind the workshop was a large area of undeveloped wasteland.

The crossbow cannon was placed on a leveled piece of land.

In the distance, the wasteland showed traces of soil dented by fallen stones.

Clearly.

The previous catapult test also took place here.

Lynn glanced around and then turned his gaze back to Colin.

"Load the stone projectiles first and check the range and power of the shots."

Colin quickly complied, summoning the carpenter apprentices to begin loading the stone projectiles.

Under the busy efforts of the apprentices, one stone after another was placed into the rope netting.

As a few other carpenter apprentices turned the winch,

With the sound of the crossbow cannon's leather bowstring tightening, the bowstring was secured in place.

Everything was ready.

Colin and the apprentices uniformly looked at Lynn.

Naturally understanding the meaning in their eyes, Lynn called out.

"Without a target, adjust the angle and shoot in the furthest direction!"

"Fire!"

With Lynn's order, the carpenter apprentices responsible for the projection promptly released the firing mechanism.

The locked bowstring rapidly rebounded under powerful torsion, propelling the stone projectiles from the net pouch swiftly forward.

Stones weighing over ten kilograms each arced through the air.

Finally, they landed heavily in a patch of wild grass.

What followed were muted thuds.

Lynn said nothing as he strode towards the position where the stones landed.

Treading through the wild grass sprouting tender shoots, Lynn stood beside each stone projectile.

Perhaps due to the softness of the soil, or perhaps due to the power of the crossbow cannon,

the stones were embedded directly into the soil by over ten centimeters!

This was because the soil provided tension, absorbing and distributing the force when the stone projectiles struck.

If it struck a soldier, their armor would be dented instantly, flesh mangled!

Even if it were the city wall, it would shake and crack!

Lynn's gaze shifted back to where the crossbow cannon was placed.

The distance was roughly about two hundred and fifty meters!

Loading stones weighing fifty pounds and still able to project such a distance, it had already met his expectations.

According to the knowledge and memories acquired in his mind, a well-performing crossbow cannon's maximum range is only about two hundred and eighty meters when projecting with fifty-pound stones.

It can fire long spears up to five hundred meters.

Just like the previous catapult.

Although it did not achieve optimal performance, Colin and the others followed the blueprint meticulously.

Before this, they had no experience manufacturing large devices.

They didn't even know what a catapult or a crossbow cannon was.

Being able to produce such large devices in a short period, he was naturally satisfied.

Lynn turned his gaze to Colin and spoke: "The stone's shooting range and power are quite decent."

"Continue, test the data for the long spears!"

Colin sensed a change in Master Lynn's tone and felt slightly relieved.

Clearly, Master Lynn was quite satisfied with the initial test of this crossbow cannon.

Colin responded: "Yes, Master."

Immediately, Colin called out to the carpenter apprentices to start the long spear test.

Shooting long spears is similar to shooting arrows.

The long spears must be placed on the crossbow cannon's launch track, aligning the spear's center of gravity with the crossbow's firing axis.

And the tail of the spear must closely adhere to the bowstring!

While the carpenter apprentices were busy, Lynn returned to the side of the crossbow cannon, waiting for their operation.

Soon after.

The long spear was installed on the crossbow cannon, and the winch had already lifted the bowstring, making it taut.

Without needing the gaze of Colin and others, Lynn called out: "Fire!"

With the experience from earlier, the carpenter apprentices once again released the firing mechanism.

The tightly adhered bowstring at the tail of the long spear instantly rebounded.

The mounted long spear, with this force, instantly disappeared from sight.

With great speed, it shot forward into the air.

As it passed, the long spear emitted a distinct "buzzing" sound.

Much like the stone projectiles, the spear also traced a curve and eventually plunged, with its sharp and sturdy spearhead piercing fiercely into a patch of wild grass.

Lynn stepped forward.

A few minutes later, he stood beside the spear.

But.

The spear, more than two meters long, was embedded halfway into the soil.

Lynn extended his right hand to grasp the spear, attempting to pull it out.

Perhaps because it was too deeply embedded.

Chapter 557: Stay With Me Tonight _4

Lynn discovered that he actually couldn't pull it out!

Immediately, he increased the force with his right hand.

Only then did he manage to extract a half-stained wet long spear from the soil.

The spearhead, which was several dozen centimeters long, had likely struck a rock in the soil and was now twisted and deformed.

Glancing at the position of the ballista, Lynn nodded in satisfaction.

Using the ballista to launch long spears indeed allowed them to shoot farther than stone projectiles.

At least upward of 450 meters!

Moreover, the power of the long spear was even more terrifying.

With such power, even if the enemy soldiers were wearing heavy armor, they would be pierced by the ballista's long spears!

The only drawback was that the attack target of the long spear was singular.

However.

It could be combined with the catapult for complementary use.

Lynn looked at Colin, praising him: "Well done, Colin."

"However, I still have to tell you that there isn't much time for your Woodworker Workshop to rest."

"I need the Woodworker Workshop to maintain the production of siege equipment."

"And I need you to allocate half of the personnel from the Woodworker Workshop to the shipyard to start building the Noel ship!"

Colin had no doubts, speaking determinedly: "I understand, Master Lynn."

This arrangement had already been hinted at by Master Lynn before.

Therefore, Colin was not surprised.

Lynn nodded, saying, "Then start reallocating personnel. I'll take you over and demonstrate how to build the Noel ship myself."

Receiving Lynn's directive, Colin bowed slightly before stepping back.

He walked towards the group of carpenter apprentices and began arranging the tasks within the Woodworker Workshop.

Half an hour later.

Colin led one hundred and fifty carpenter apprentices to Lynn's side.

Colin bowed, saying, "Master, the personnel arrangement is complete, and we can set off now."

"Moreover, the remaining personnel in the Woodworker Workshop can still maintain the production of siege equipment."

"The only deficiency is that it will reduce the speed and efficiency of production."

Lynn nodded, "I understand."

There wasn't much he could do about the lack of labor for now.

He could only wait for Grayson to arrive and transport the slaves acquired from Audrey's purchase of glazed glass.

With those words, Lynn started to walk, leading the group out of the Woodworker Workshop.

With puzzled gazes from some townsmen, they headed toward the shipyard at the dock.

As long as the production of siege equipment entered the process, even if it was a bit slow, it wasn't a major issue.

However.

The expansion of the shipyard and the construction of small ships, crucial to the water transportation of the territory, must be prioritized swiftly.

Passing through the Handicraft Workshop District, walking along the lime-covered paths.

Lynn and the group arrived at the shipyard.

Looking into the distance.

Lynn could clearly see the Aladia River in the distance, where on numerous skiffs, townsmen were collaborating to fish using nets.

With the temperature rising each day and the weather fine, it was perfect for fishing labor.

Retracting his gaze, Lynn scanned the shipyard.

The materials for making ships were all in place.

Without further words, Lynn found a fifteen-meter-long oak, to serve as the keel for the Noel ship.

Placing it on the workbench, he picked up an axe and began chopping.

Thunk, thunk, thunk ~

One chop after another landed on the oak in front of Lynn, producing a series of sounds.

[Production Experience +1]

[Production Experience +1]

[Production Experience +1]

...

Bit by bit, the experience started to increase.

The knowledge and memory of building the Noel ship also began to surface in Lynn's mind, quickly integrating.

Until two hours later.

The knowledge of constructing the Noel ship had already merged thoroughly in Lynn's mind.

The speed of Lynn's hands became increasingly adept.

While continuing operations, Lynn explained in person to Colin and the others.

"To build a qualified Noel ship, the keel is crucial."

"It's usually selected from firm, straight, and uniformly-grained oak!"

"Similar to the oak logs I've selected."

Concerned about disturbing Master Lynn, Colin and the others said nothing.

They nodded appreciatively to indicate they understood.

Lynn continued speaking: "After selecting the oak, the first step, of course, is rough processing. Remove bark and branches so it roughly forms the shape of a keel."

"After that, proceed with fine processing."

"Use an iron planer and other tools to make the keel's surface smoother and the dimensions more precise."

"At the same time, chisel out mortise and tenon joints on the keel for installing the ship's bow post, stern post, and connecting the keel wing plates as needed."

"This process requires skilled craftsmanship and experience..."

"You can learn on-site now, and I'll be at the shipyard as well. If you have questions, feel free to ask."

Colin and others nodded again.

As Lynn continued his operating and production, time flew by quickly.

Not until nightfall.

Lynn finished making the entire fifteen-meter oak keel.

Placing it at the shipyard's ventilated section for further drying treatment.

He informed Colin and the group to continue the next day, then dismissed everyone.

Building a small ship already requires a long time.

A small longboat about ten meters long, mainly for nearshore activities or river navigation.

Chapter 558: Spend the Night With Me (5)

The structure of the ship is relatively simple, and the craftsmanship requirements are not too high, with relatively low material demand.

With sufficient material preparation and a skilled team of craftsmen, it still takes at least a month!

If Lynn were to make it by himself, it would take as long as two to three months!

If the size of the longship is even larger.

Such as a small warship with a length of at least seventeen meters and width of three meters, capable of carrying fifty crew members.

The ship's complexity increases when considering navigation performance and combat needs.

The construction time then rises to eight to nine months!

There's no need to mention the time required for medium-sized or large longships.

The total completion time would require at least two to three years!

Therefore.

Even if a lot of manpower and resources are invested now, Lynn grits his teeth to make early arrangements.

As for the waterfall beneath the territory.

As long as he can find enough sulfur, along with saltpeter and charcoal, to make explosives.

It is not an impossible task to handle it.

Leaving the shipyard, Lynn returned to the castle.

Enjoying the dinner that Kuisi had already cooked.

Kuisi helped Lynn cut the beef while asking.

"Master, it's already spring now, and summer is around the corner."

"Do we need to prepare suitable clothes for the townsmen?"

Chewing the beef in his mouth, Lynn pondered slightly.

After a moment.

He swallowed the beef and said, "First, gather statistics on the townsmen lacking clothes."

"Everyone, regardless of gender or age, gets one set."

"But there's one thing, Kuisi, that you must pay attention to."

Kuisi paused her actions, listening to Master Lynn's instructions.

Lynn continued, "All the clothes should be made as spring and autumn linen robe and pants."

Linen robe and pants can be worn in both spring and autumn, offering some degree of wind and cold protection.

In summer, wearing long robes and pants could be too hot, possibly leading to heatstroke?

The townsmen can completely take off the layers, leaving only a thin piece or go bare-chested.

The hundred acres planted with linen seeds need to wait until about August to be harvested.

Moreover, there's limited linen cloth transported by merchants.

He doesn't have enough linen cloth to make two sets of clothes for the townsmen.

Kuisi answered upon hearing, "Okay, Master."

After finishing dinner under Kuisi's service.

Lynn went to the study, leaning over the walnut wood desk.

Previously, he had promised the scholar Clive Rich to draw a design of a 'dragon'.

This would help design the armor pattern and the territory's emblem!

Until late at night.

Only then did Lynn put down his feather pen.

He glanced at the paper with the initial contour of the 'dragon' design, nodding in satisfaction.

With two or three more sketches, it can be finished.

Stretching, Lynn returned to the master bedroom, lay down on the comfortable large bed, and drifted off to sleep.

...

The night grew late.

Everything was silent.

On another side under the night sky, in a forest near the mountains.

At this moment, it was bustling with activity.

A group of men and women dressed in various outfits sat around a campfire.

At this moment.

A spy quickly ran into the camp from outside.

The spy rode straight in, directly beside a middle-aged man leaning against tiger fur.

Despite the two scantily clad and attractive women leaning next to the middle-aged man.

The spy did not spare them a glance, reporting directly.

"Leader Lopez, that woman has come again!"

Upon hearing the spy's words, Lopez's eyes lit up.

The right hand originally resting on the woman's soft front instantly pushed the woman away.

"Get out and don't delay my big business!"

Under the dissatisfied murmuring of the two women, their figures retreated.

Lopez sat up, looking at the spy, "Bring her in."

Upon receiving the order, the spy promptly retreated.

Watching the spy leave, Lopez's mind instantly conjured up the figure that haunted his dreams.

A surge of inexplicable evil fire and desire emerged.

The impatient Lopez seemingly sensed something.

He turned his gaze towards the camp's edge.

There.

Under the spy's guidance, a tall and voluptuous woman with guards entered under the campfire's glow.

Dressed in leather armor, her posture was upright.

The leather armor tightly hugged her, outlining a full and rounded chest curve.

The slender waist and full hips formed a sharp contrast, showcasing a perfectly shaped figure...

Watching the leather-armored woman stride toward him, Lopez's brows raised involuntarily.

Not only was Lopez.

Originally indulged in the campfire's scenic display, everyone's eyes were drawn to the leather-armored woman.

Lopez grinned, revealing a confident smile.

"Miss Janet, you're coming to my camp so late because you miss me?"

Looking at Lopez's yellowing and decaying teeth, Janet remained impassive.

She calmly said, "Leader Lopez, I think you should be very clear about my purpose for coming here."

Lopez shrugged, replying, "Of course I know."

"Upon receiving your command, the first order of business is to storm into Frank Manor and kill your uncle Krueger and Philis!"

"Miss Janet, am I right?"

Janet nodded, saying, "At most five days!"

Chapter 559: Spend the Night With Me (6)

"Five days later, I need you to set up an ambush around the perimeter of Frank Manor and remain hidden."

"As for when to attack, I'll have someone give you the order!"

Lopez grinned and replied, "No problem at all, Miss Janet!"

"However..."

Originally feeling relieved, Janet heard this unexpected reversal.

Her eyebrows furrowed slightly, asking, "However what?"

"Leader Lopez, you aren't thinking of breaking our agreement, are you?"

Lopez's face turned serious as he hurriedly said, "Miss Janet, what do you take our Iron Thorns Mercenary Corps for?"

The surrounding mercenaries, their eyes filled with greed, looking at Janet, also became serious.

The next second.

Lopez revealed a cunning smile, "Sorry, Miss Janet."

"Our group wouldn't care even if it was an agreement with God."

"In fact... when I sleep at night, I have to guard against these beasts trying to ambush me and take my place!"

The mercenaries' serious expressions instantly turned into laughter.

Janet's eyebrows knitted even deeper.

She glanced around at the surroundings.

The Iron Thorns mercenaries now seemed like beasts that had found prey.

An inexplicable pressure rose in Janet's heart.

Janet took a deep breath, meeting Lopez's gaze directly.

"Leader Lopez, what do you want?"

Upon hearing Janet's words of compromise, Lopez nodded with satisfaction.

"That's more like it, Miss Janet."

"I don't want much... just more money!"

"Double the original agreed price."

"Miss Janet, it's only a double increase, which isn't a lot for the largest manor in Morgan Town, Frank Manor."

Janet was silent.

After a few seconds, Janet said solemnly, "Okay."

"However, the additional amount will be paid only after the deed is done."

Lopez thought for a moment and nodded, "No problem, I trust Janet's character."

"And then..."

Janet's face turned icy, glaring at Lopez.

"Leader Lopez, don't go too far."

"Iron Thorns Mercenary Corps isn't the only corps in Kakasong City!"

Lopez laughed, "Miss Janet, no need to be tense."

"The second condition is very easy for you to fulfill."

Janet remained silent.

Lopez's greedy eyes scanned from Janet's long legs up to the exposed whiteness and cleavage.

He was unabashed, "After it's done, I need you to spend a night with me!"

Seeing Janet's lack of response, Lopez continued to explain.

"Miss Janet, just one night, only one night."

Boger, standing behind Janet, frowned slightly.

He tightened his grip on the sword hilt.

As long as Janet gave the word, he would charge at Lopez without hesitation.

Janet inhaled the dusty air and said, "As long as it gets done!"

"Janet can fulfill any of Leader Lopez's requests."

"Not just one night, even three days and nights, Janet is willing!"

Upon Janet's affirmative response, Lopez showed a smug smile.

The mercenaries erupted into envious and excited cheers.

Lopez nodded, "No need, no need..."

"Three days and nights, I fear you'd drain me dry, haha!"

A few minutes later.

Under the greedy gaze of many, Janet took Boger and exited the camp.

Boger looked back, confirming no one was following.

He asked, "Miss, this..."

Janet replied, "Let's leave first before discussing further!"

Boger understood and nodded.

The two mounted their horses, drawing the reins, urging the horses forward.

Amid the horses' neighs, they headed towards the distant darkness.

At the edge of the campfire's light, Lopez watched the two riders gradually disappear.

His playful smile slowly faded.

A man approached Lopez, asking.

"Lopez, just let them leave like that?"

"If you want to toy with that woman, you could do it right now..."

Lopez glanced at the crew-cut man beside him and spoke disdainfully.

"Uss, that's the most you'll ever aspire to in life!"

The short-haired man Uss looked slightly startled.

Lopez continued, "As long as there's money, aren't women plentiful?"

"Of course, I admit Janet is indeed more attractive than many women."

"But compared to a woman, a manor with thousands of peasants and tens of thousands of acres of farmland is obviously more tempting."

"The Karedi Empire... is about to enter an era of chaos!"

"We must seize a position during this turmoil..."

Uss nodded with some understanding.

...

Until they had left those woods far behind.

And entered the boundary of Frank Manor.

Only then did Janet slow her horse down.

Boger also reduced his horse's speed, coming alongside Janet.

He hesitated, saying, "Miss, this..."

Janet's expression was calm as she spoke, "No need to worry."

"Between Lopez and me, it's just a verbal agreement."

"Both Lopez and I know this."

"As I am using him, he is also using me!"

"His ambition is not just gold pounds and me..."

"As for how the agreement is fulfilled, it depends on Iron Thorns Mercenary Corps' strength!"

Lopez's intentions were obvious in her view.

He wanted her request to gain entry into Frank Manor.

At the right moment, dominate and replace the entire Frank Clan!

Seeing Janet's resolute expression, Boger said no more.

As the two rode through the estate.

A squad of torch-bearing cavalry approached from afar.

Leading them was Joao!

Joao scanned Janet briefly and spoke to the cavalry.

"You, go patrol elsewhere!"

Chapter 560: Kill Them All

Two days later, early morning.

After breakfast, Lynn headed straight to the shipyard with Red.

For at least the foreseeable future, he would spend every day at the shipyard.

Upon Lynn's arrival at the shipyard.

Colin and a group of apprentices had already cleaned up the messy shipyard and were waiting.

Amidst the orderly shouts of greeting from Colin and the carpenter apprentices.

Lynn continued the teaching of the Noel Ship construction, starting with the production of the ship's bow and stern posts!

Similarly, he selected sturdy oak, and with an axe and iron saw, processed it into specific shapes.

The bow post is crafted with a forward tilt, which helps guide the ship through the waves and reduces resistance, increasing navigation efficiency.

The stern post, located at the aft, is closely connected to the keel, providing crucial support to the stern.

It balances the ship's weight and stresses, also maintaining the overall balance and stability of the structure.

Preventing the ship from falling apart during navigation.

Once the bow and stern posts were completed, the drying process of the oak keel was also finished.

With the assistance of several carpenter apprentices, the connection of the keel and the bow and stern posts began.

Next was the rib production.

Lynn again selected oak, starting to cut it into the needed lengths.

By applying heat, the oak planks are softened and bent into shapes consistent with the curvature of the ship's hull.

They are fixed with clamps and left to cool and set.

According to the small Noel Ship in Lynn's mind, measuring ten meters long and five meters wide.

Around thirty ribs are needed for the hull, not a large number.

While waiting for the ribs to cool and set.

Lynn led the carpenter apprentices to begin processing the planks.

The plank processing involved cutting the oak into boards and then using an iron planer to smooth the surface.

This process, the carpenter apprentices had done countless times before, becoming highly proficient.

Having them join in could further increase production efficiency.

As Lynn continued cutting oak boards, his "Production" skill experience continuously increased.

During the busy intervals, while catching his breath, Lynn thought and opened the "Heavenly Artifacts" panel.

"Production: Level 2 (409/500)" (+)

Lynn felt that once this small Noel Ship was completed, his "Production" experience would reach Level 3!

Although somewhat slow, as long as effort is put forth, results can be seen, and skill levels can be improved.

The construction of the Noel Ship was not something that could be achieved overnight.

As the carpenter apprentices processed the planks, Lynn called out to everyone.

"Everyone, that's it for today. You can stop working and head off to eat."

Upon hearing Master Lynn's instruction, the carpenter apprentices couldn't help but exclaim.

Experiences like this were not new to them.

But each time, an uncontrollable joy rose in their hearts.

It's worth knowing that other lords would wish their free people or peasants to work tirelessly without food or drink!

Under the grateful gazes of the carpenter apprentices, Lynn also left the shipyard.

Seeing the carpenter apprentices' loyalty nearly at a hundred percent.

Lynn felt a surge of satisfaction.

As night gradually descended, if he wanted the apprentices to continue working, they would have to light torches.

But the lighting capacity of torches was limited, as was the apprentices' work efficiency; it could even pose life hazards.

Rather than have them complain about working through the night, reducing loyalty.

It was better to let them stop working and eat before nightfall!

Not only could it increase loyalty, but it also allowed them enough time to build families and have children.

Passing by the red brick houses, Lynn and the others reached the front of the town.

Colin guided the apprentices into the dining hall.

Meanwhile, he sat on a bench at the Lord's Square, watching the townsmen returning from outside the town.

As time continued to pass.

It was already April.

The daily sunrise and sunset were no longer as they were in winter.

Days grew longer, and nights fell faster.

Moreover, the temperature had already risen.

Even in the early morning and evening, it reached around sixteen to seventeen degrees.

By midday, it went up to twenty-five or twenty-six degrees.

This meant.

He could adjust the working hours of the townsmen on the territory.

From winter's nine-to-five.

To a nine-to-six, eight-hour workday.

Amidst expressions of "Master Lynn" from townsmen who had finished dinner.

Lynn nodded and gestured before heading back towards the castle.

As he ate the dinner Kuisi prepared, he listened to her report on the day's events in the territory.

Placing the meat from knife and fork onto Lynn's plate, Kuisi spoke.

"Master, everything in the territory is proceeding normally, you don't have to worry."

"I've taken care of some small matters on your behalf."

Lynn nodded.

With Kuisi around, he indeed had little to worry about.

Half an hour later, after dinner, Lynn asked Kuisi to prepare hot water for the bath in his private room.

Lynn entered the study, sat at the walnut desk, picked up a quill pen, and continued drafting the territorial emblem 'Dragon'.

In the absence of wars, the territory's development was proceeding methodically.

Furthermore.

The townsmen's work was the same, day in and day out.

...

Under the night sky.

Roaring sounds echoed intermittently in the darkness.