

System 691

Chapter 691: Iron Butcher Heavy Armor Horse Armor

"Any problems?"

Ehrello and Yimini exchanged a glance.

Ultimately, both of them said in unison, "No problems, Master Lynn."

Lynn nodded, "Very good."

In his view,

whether or not there were problems, what he wanted was the attitude of Ehrello and Yimini, the two foremen of the workshops.

After trying and forging, if any issues arise, they can always discuss them with him.

He would also do his utmost to assist the two workshops.

However, if they hesitated before even beginning,

it would only affect the subsequent forging and woven production!

Lynn's gaze once again turned to Red, and he said,

"Soldiers and warhorses don heavy armor, like a moving iron tower! I call it — the Iron Butcher!"

The few people standing beside Lynn looked surprised upon hearing this.

The Iron Butcher, huh?

After sending everyone off, Lynn strode out of the weaving workshop.

In this world where cavalry is the main force,

forging heavy armor is naturally crucial.

The soldiers' heavy armor and the horses' armor.

With enough armored cavalry, it would be enough to sweep across the Garonia Continent!

However,

Lynn also understood,

the difficulty level within this task.

Firstly, in terms of equipment production, there is immense difficulty.

The heavy armor and horse armor for the armored cavalry require skilled blacksmiths to apply their forging techniques to forge each piece of Zha armor plate.

This process requires a tremendous amount of time and effort from blacksmiths.

Secondly, there are also material constraints.

Each set of heavy armor and Makai requires a massive amount of iron ore to be smelted and extracted into iron blocks!

In other words,

he has an open-pit iron mine and a coal mine currently being excavated.

Otherwise, wishing to start forging heavy padded armor by buying iron ore would be nothing but wishful thinking!

Additionally, it requires a large amount of leather to make reins, saddles, and other leather goods.

Under the condition that all leather relies on livestock provided by animal husbandry,

it is not easy to find a substantial amount of leather.

Then, the equipment for armored cavalry also has high requirements.

Armored cavalry needs to be equipped with high-quality saddles, stirrups, reins, and so on.

This allows the cavalry to perform their best in battle!

Next comes the requirement for cavalry personnel.

Armored cavalry not only requires cavalry to have a high level of riding skill, being able to skillfully maneuver heavily-armored warhorses,

but also requires them to remain flexible and mobile in various terrains and combat scenarios!

The most critical thing is,

the cavalry must possess strong physical fitness, mental resilience, and fighting spirit!

Setting aside mental resilience and fighting spirit for now,

if the cavalry didn't have strong and powerful bodies, they simply couldn't wear the heavy padded armor, which weighs seventy pounds.

Let alone wielding the winged spear and one-handed sword to kill enemies!

Lynn quickly contemplated in his mind.

On his territory now, men with such physical qualities add up to only about fifty!

While forging and producing heavy armor horse armor, he also needs to enhance the cavalry's physical training.

And purchase more Badan pure-blood warhorses!

At this thought, Lynn couldn't help but sigh.

To build a formidable armored cavalry, it's a long and tough road ahead.

However, no matter how difficult it is, everything has already begun.

The samples of heavy armor and horse armor are already forged and produced.

There are also three hundred warhorses from the Badan Empire!

As Lynn pondered, he arrived at Jose's Bow and Arrow Workshop.

At this moment, Jose was walking through the workshop, his eyes scanning each apprentice.

Lynn also glanced over.

At this moment, the Bow and Arrow Workshop was already engaged in large-scale production of the Zhuge Crossbow.

However, due to labor restrictions in the Bow and Arrow Workshop,

the production progress was not very fast!

Lynn did not enter the workshop, but after taking a few more glances from outside, he left directly.

Producing the Zhuge Crossbow is not like clearing weeds and cultivating land in farming.

It's not just about having lots of strength to do it.

This is a technical task!

Only Jose has a unique talent in making bows and arrows.

After watching him personally demonstrate the production of a crossbow once, he can develop and produce it by following the blueprint.

The other workshop apprentices don't have this talent!

They can only wait for Jose to teach each step, so they become familiar with the production process.

Only then could the Bow and Arrow Workshop possibly begin large-scale production of the Zhuge Crossbow!

Lynn walked past the entrances of several workshops bustling with activity.

His heart was full of anticipation.

As long as he has these handicraft workshops and enough time,

there is a promising future!

Pressing down his slightly restless thoughts,

he left the workshops. After hesitating for a few seconds in his mind, he headed towards the Mutated Wild Boar Farm outside the town.

With a thought, Lynn opened the Heavenly Artifacts interface and began to review it.

[Breeding: Level 2 (308/500)](+)

So far,

out of the nine great skills, only Breeding remains to advance to level 3.

This occasion is perfect for raising and observing how forest pigs mutate while continuing to gain Breeding skill experience.

Lynn walked across a lime stone path, passed through a plot of farmland, and arrived at the entrance to the pasture.

After assigning two hundred slaves to Guy as labor,

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The busy atmosphere in the ranch finally eased.

One by one, the ranch workers, assisted by Guy and a few helpers with Breeding skills.

Were working in an orderly manner.

After instructing a few ranch workers, Guy seemed to have noticed Lynn's gaze.

He turned around and just happened to see Lynn walking into the ranch.

Guy, without any hesitation, strode forward and came to Lynn's side.

Guy asked respectfully, "Master Lynn, have you returned from your journey?"

Lynn heard this and was not surprised at all.

After all, he had left the town riding a horse with dozens of guards.

Naturally, many people would have seen him.

As Lynn walked toward the nearby pens, he spoke, "I'm back."

"How's the situation in the ranch now?"

Guy, following beside Lynn, responded.

"Master Lynn, after that batch of poultry and livestock sent by Wesley, the production capacity of the ranch has qualitatively leaped!"

"Whether it's domestic pigs or dairy cows and goats, or some small poultry!"

"As long as you give me enough time, grain, and workers."

"I can definitely use these poultry and livestock, through continuous breeding, to create a large ranch that can meet the regular meat consumption needs of all the townsmen!"

"Even letting pregnant women and children drink milk and eat eggs!"

Lynn, seeing Guy's confidence, nodded, "Very good!"

"Aside from meat, I also need a large amount of leather, wool, and so on."

Guy replied with a smile, "Of course, Master Lynn."

After taking a tour, Lynn left the ranch and went to the neighboring Wild Boar Farm.

A few breeding workers were pouring cooked pig feed made from distiller's grains, bran, and rice husks into the troughs.

Clap, clap~

The forest pigs lowered their heads and gorged themselves without any reservation.

They didn't care at all as Lynn and Red's group walked into the farm.

Lynn's gaze swept across the thirty forest pigs.

Was it his imagination?

He had only left for a dozen days, and these forest pigs, originally slender and tall with long limbs, seemed to have gained weight?

This growth speed was simply too fast!

Lynn understood that this was naturally due to the small Magic Array in the farm.

Seeing Lynn's gaze, Guy, who was following, spoke with some doubt, "Master Lynn, these forest pigs have been bred for almost half a year without gaining weight."

"After moving to this farm, both their food intake and weight started to soar."

"I even feel that if they keep growing like this, they might reach a thousand pounds!"

Lynn spoke, "Not only that! If we ensure they are well-fed, perhaps they could grow to three thousand pounds!"

Guy's eyebrows instantly raised, filled with shock, "Three thousand pounds?"

That's simply too exaggerated!

Soon, Guy understood.

Master Lynn had arranged for Flint, the dwarf, to come near the ranch.

He even had a strange standardized farm constructed.

With half-meter-thick red brick walls and separate pens divided by iron fences.

Adding to the peculiar patterns on the ground and the stone that seemed to emit a faint glow...

Even if he didn't understand the complexity, he could guess the extraordinariness of it.

Guy slightly nodded, no longer asking any questions.

Seeing a ranch worker once again carrying a few buckets of pig feed forward, intending to continue feeding.

Lynn, without any hesitation, reached out and took it.

In the surprised gazes of several workers.

Lynn skillfully poured the pig feed from the wooden bucket into the trough.

Red and Guy were already accustomed to such sights.

As the food in the trough increased, the forest pigs ate even more vigorously.

The sound of clapping echoed continuously throughout the farm.

[Breeding Experience +1]

[Breeding Experience +1]

[Breeding Experience +1]

...

Seeing the experience increase little by little, Lynn conveniently had the ranch workers put down their wooden buckets.

He took over the task of pouring and feeding.

Until a few minutes later.

After one round of feeding was completed, the round-bodied forest pigs were walking around the pen.

As they walked, they smacked their lips.

Obviously, the midday meal left them fully satisfied.

Lynn put down the wooden bucket he held and roughly estimated the food intake of these forest pigs.

Compared to before, their full capacity had at least doubled!

However, Lynn thought and felt relieved.

Bear in mind, these forest pigs could, under the empowerment growth of the small Magic Array, reach around three thousand pounds.

Their usual food intake was surely far above that of ordinary domestic pigs.

After feeding, Lynn wiped the sweat from his forehead.

Feeding poultry and livestock, though not a heavy physical task, still consumed a lot of energy.

Moreover, with the considerable waste produced by forest pigs in the pens.

The labor of a ranch worker wasn't as simple as imagined.

With a change of thought, Lynn looked at Guy and asked, "Seal, is the White Spirit Night in free-range mode now?"

What he thought of, was naturally the White Spirit Night that emerged from the darkness during his last forest exploration.

Guy didn't hesitate, nodded in reply, "Yes, Master Lynn."

"Although the White Spirit Night was raised by us, they are after all wild wolves."

"I worry they might harm the townsmen and livestock, so they are free-ranged in the forest."

"Recently, I saw them leading five or six wild wolves running along the forest edge..."

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"Seeing those wild wolves' demeanor, I feel like they're treating White Spirit Night as their leader?"

Lynn nodded.

He had seen the same scene before.

After talking with Guy for a while, Lynn dismissed him to continue busying himself with the ranch affairs.

As for the "Mutated Wild Boar Farm" beneath his feet, it's still just a simple breeding farm right now.

The supporting training facilities are being constructed by builders and peasants under Jode's leadership.

However.

Lynn is not in a hurry.

Whether it's training warhorses or empowering the breeding of forest pigs, both require a cycle.

Moreover.

He's still lacking trainers with experience in training warhorses!

Everything can only progress slowly.

Standing outside the farm, he looked far into the distance at Jode, who was building fences.

Only then did Lynn withdraw his gaze and walk out of the farm, heading towards the town.

After walking a short distance along the lime road, Lynn stopped at the roadside.

He stooped down and looked at the patches of barley in the field.

It was already late May, with three days to go until June.

Compared to spring barley, the winter barley, planted for a longer time, had already completed its basic growth.

Because Gavin and Wilbur led the farmers in watering and fertilization.

The stalks were sturdy, standing at least ninety centimeters tall.

Each barley plant bore lush leaves.

Some stalks had grains that emerged from the previously hidden flag leaves.

Now, the spikes were fully visible.

The spikes were flat, measuring about ten centimeters long, and bore many small flowers.

Lynn carefully counted the flowers; each spikelet had five or six small flowers.

Come early June, barley would transition from the booting stage to the flowering and pollination stage.

The flowers on the spikes gradually opened, revealing anthers and stigmas.

Pollen would be spread via wind or insects to complete the pollination process.

After that, through the filling stage in late June and the maturity stage in mid-July.

The one hundred thousand mu (Chinese acre) of barley fields would be ready for harvest!

He had roughly estimated before.

Even if the soil fertility was limited, with a yield of only one hundred eighty catties per mu.

This hundred thousand mu could still yield at least eighteen million catties of barley!

Thinking of this.

Lynn felt inexplicably expectant.

Only with sufficient food could he boldly recruit more people!

Otherwise.

Like previously recruiting over six thousand peasants from the Three Great Estates, along with numerous poultry and livestock.

If it weren't for Boer and Grayson, among other merchants, constantly transporting food to his territory.

Relying on the limited amount of food stored in the castle's warehouse.

Surely couldn't sustain the daily consumption of the territory's over fifteen thousand people until the barley in the fields matured and was harvested.

Fifteen thousand people, along with poultry and livestock, and warhorses needing fine feed!

Even at the least, averaging three cattles per person.

Would require forty-five thousand cattles of food every day!

For a territory wholly reliant on merchants to trade and transport food, this is a massive consumption.

A slight miscalculation.

Resulting in a food shortage, one or two days might pass unnoticed.

But beyond three days, chaos would surely erupt in the territory.

Driven by instinctual needs, the townsmen would start raiding all edible resources in the territory.

Until that point.

Pledges, territorial laws, loyalty...

All would vanish like smoke!

For the townsmen, a lord who can't solve even their basic needs.

How could they persist at their workstations?

For surely, food is the utmost priority!

Therefore.

He didn't hesitate to trade fine salt, glazed glass, and alcohol with the merchants.

At twice below market price.

The open-pit salt mine, under current extraction methods, could last for decades or even hundreds of years.

As long as his territory maintains stable development, he can continuously assign townsmen for extraction!

Glazed glass and alcohol, need not speak further.

With technology, he could persistently keep both workshops producing.

The raw material for glazed glass is essentially sand!

The Aladia River is never short of it.

Gin, beer's primary raw material is merely barley.

For these two commodities, even describing them as inexhaustible is apt.

With temporarily inexhaustible economic goods from the territory in exchange for scarce food.

Even at the lowest trading prices.

He still believes it's an incredibly good trade!

Pressing down his thoughts, Lynn continued observing the crops and walked to the cotton fields enclosed by tree branches.

Lynn bent to inspect.

From sowing the cotton seeds to now, two months had passed.

Seedlings had sprouted from the ground, with green cotyledons spreading out for photosynthesis.

Providing energy and nutrients for the seedlings' growth.

Some healthier cotton seedlings had already produced three or four true leaves.

With the assistance of true leaves, the growth rate of seedlings would quicken.

From May's seedling stage, to July's budding stage, then to August's boll-setting stage.

Finally, the bracing stage in October.

Cotton bolls mature, shells crack open, revealing white cotton inside, ready for harvest!

Fortunately, upon acquiring cotton seeds, he promptly planted them.

Otherwise, even with the "Special Seed Store," and spending energy stones for cotton seeds.

He couldn't plant at present!

Farming requires timeliness.

Otherwise.

Sayings like 'Man misses the land for a moment, land misses the man for a year' and 'Do not violate the farming season' wouldn't exist.

After checking the cotton, Lynn walked over to the fenced potato fields.

Like the cotton, the potatoes grew splendidly.

They remained in the seedling stage.

Each seedling had three to five pinnate leaves, vibrant green.

Surface covered in fine hairs.

Though the roots breaking through the soil were slender, they were remarkably tough, delving deep into the ground.

The spread leaves intensely photosynthesize, providing nutrients for the plant.

Lynn scanned the field.

Whether in the potato or cotton fields, he saw no weeds.

Clearly.

Gavin and Wilbur led the farmers to care well for these fields.

As Lynn gazed.

Footsteps of someone running sounded from afar.

Lynn turned to see Gavin, panting heavily.

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Seeing Gavin gasping for breath in front of him, Lynn furrowed his brows slightly.

"What's wrong? Why the rush?"

Gavin, having quickly calmed his breathing, flashed an awkward smile.

Scratching his head, he explained, "Master, there's nothing wrong..."

"I just saw you wandering in the fields for a while, thought there might be an issue with the crops..."

Seeing Gavin's sincere expression, Lynn couldn't help but roll his eyes at him.

Lynn spoke to Gavin, "There's no problem with the crops."

"On the contrary, you are taking good care of the fields!"

Hearing Lynn's praise, Gavin couldn't help but smile, "Master, you flatter us."

"Taking care of the crops is simply part of our responsibilities."

Lynn nodded, "Very good."

"Perhaps the workforce caring for the fields isn't quite adequate right now."

"In a few days, after the expansion of the Red Brick House residential area is complete, I'll allocate more people to help you."

A look of joy immediately appeared on Gavin's face.

"That's wonderful, Master Lynn!"

Lynn replied, "My plan is to set the number of farmers to two thousand."

"You and Wilbur will lead them, tending to the entire area of fields and crops."

"Moreover, future cultivation and planting will all be done by you!"

Previously, to clear enough fields for planting,

he had to pause other production industries or transfer half of the workforce from other industries for land cultivation and planting.

Such an approach indeed allows a large area of land to be planted within a limited time.

Yet it also has significant limitations.

Once planting begins, other industries stall or progress slowly.

Therefore.

He had thought this through earlier.

Deploy farmers with Level 1 and Level 2 Planting skills specifically for land cultivation.

Whether it is spring sowing, autumn sowing, or intermediate plowing,

they will handle everything!

Let professionals do professional work.

Thus.

The farmers can repeatedly engage in the same labor, improving their farming proficiency.

And it can also ensure the production efficiency of other industries.

A win-win situation!

Most crucially.

The newly cleared fields are about to enter the three-field system!

Simply put.

The 100,000 acres of fields are divided into three parts: spring planting, autumn planting, and fallow land.

After two years of continuous cultivation, each piece of land can lay fallow for a year, completing a cycle every three years.

With current fertilizers, at most, they are compost made from piled and fermented manure and weeds.

Whether it is compost or the fertility of a plot of land, it is limited.

Therefore.

To effectively utilize the land's fertility, the land's usage rate must be increased.

Lynn also considered using a two-field system.

But using the three-field system reduces the fallow land from half to a third compared to the two-field system.

The utilization rate of the land also increases from half to two-thirds.

Moreover, the three-field system allows for twice-yearly harvests, through planting different crops and crop rotation.

This can somewhat reduce the risk of agricultural disasters and poor harvests.

Like last year's winter snowfall — if the three-field system were in use, the winter barley planted outside the territory would not have suffered such extensive damage.

Most importantly.

The three-field system allows for effective labor arrangement!

Farmers' work like plowing, sowing, and harvesting is distributed more evenly throughout the year.

Never again will there be periods of no rest during the busy season and nothing to do during the idle times.

Gavin nodded and said, "Master, however you arrange it, we will do as instructed."

Lynn acknowledged, gave Gavin a few more instructions, and then dismissed him.

It's now the intermediate plowing period in the fields.

He still needs to lead the newly arrived farmers in their work.

He watched Gavin walk away into the distance.

Lynn withdrew his gaze and headed back towards the town.

A few minutes later.

Lynn returned to Lord's Square, shifted his steps, and turned.

He made his way to the rear of the town, where the Red Brick House residential area was under construction.

Amidst respectful greetings of 'Lord,' Lynn arrived at the construction site.

In his view, the Red Brick Houses had already risen from the ground.

After every ten connected Red Brick Houses, there was a red brick ground about two meters wide.

To make the lighting and ventilation between each row of Red Brick Houses more unobstructed,

he even specifically asked Clive to slightly widen the streets.

Because of the large population and to facilitate horse carriage passage in the future,

Lynn also specially left a main road more than five meters wide in the new Red Brick House residential area.

Lynn walked around the construction site.

The majority of the Red Brick Houses were already built.

In about a week or so, once the furniture needed for the houses is made and moved in,

the seven thousand new peasants and slaves can start moving in.

Seeing wave after wave of workers at the construction site, Lynn couldn't help but sigh in his heart.

Although building the Red Brick House residential area is meant to provide townsmen with better living conditions,

such a massive infrastructure project is truly too taxing and laborious.

As for the cost and labor, those are manageable.

Both materials and labor belong to him.

The main concern is the time and effort expended.

If these more than six thousand laborers, who spent nearly a month building the Red Brick Houses, had been used elsewhere,

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He could easily lay wooden tracks throughout the territory.

Making it possible for the hand-operated mine carts to reach all the mineral resources within the domain.

Alternatively.

Limestone roads could be laid across the forest, reaching the saltpeter caves and natural soda deposits.

Or perhaps.

All six thousand peasants could be handed over to Avery.

Let him lead these laborers to construct an Outer City outside the Inner City!

After all, the safety of the territory is paramount!

However.

Thinking it over, Lynn realized that wherever these peasants are allocated.

There's no real issue.

It's simply a matter of order and choice.

Building red brick houses is equally crucial.

Watching the construction site briefly, he already had a rough plan in mind.

In no more than seven days, these six thousand laborers could be freed up and redeployed across various industries!

Later, Lynn left the construction site.

Glancing at the sky, it was still only early afternoon.

Lynn walked with Red and a few others towards the Aladia River dock.

Following Lynn and Red's guards were some familiar faces.

Lynn hardly needed to speak.

One or two alert guards had subtly stepped back to prepare fishing gear for Master Lynn.

Walking through a red brick road, as they approached the riverbank near the dock.

The guard, carrying chairs and bait, caught up just in time.

Lynn looked at the two with satisfaction and sat down unceremoniously on the wooden chair.

That's more like it!

Every day busily gaining skill experience, organizing town folk for various tasks.

Lynn even felt he had never enjoyed himself properly!

After being a lord for so long, he finally felt the benefits a 'lord' should have.

He took out a fishing rod from his backpack, hooked the bait, and cast it into the river.

With a 'ding', the bait fell into the water.

Only a piece of cork remained floating on the river's surface.

Watching the cork bobber, Lynn felt his somewhat restless heart gradually calm down.

Through fishing, one gains fish, energy stones, and skill books; that's part of it.

Lynn enjoyed, more so, the serene atmosphere of fishing.

With the river breeze blowing by, a gentle coolness and comfort greeted him.

Flowing water, due to differing directions, caused tiny whirlpools on the river's surface.

Leaves drifting by were instantly caught in them.

After a few spins, they flowed towards the distance.

Perhaps due to the rocks at the riverbank's edge, occasional 'bubbling' sounds of water arose.

While Lynn was fishing, time passed swiftly.

Until dusk fell.

Only then did Lynn satisfactorily pack away his fishing rod into his backpack.

Contently, he rose from the wooden chair and started returning to town with Red and the others.

In just an afternoon.

He had caught nine river fish!

Despite not catching fish weighing over ten pounds this time, he didn't gain a new skill book.

But obtaining ninety energy stones was a decent haul!

As for the river fish caught, Lynn had already instructed the guards to take them back to the castle ahead of him.

This evening, the chef could make a pot of fresh fish soup!

Perhaps because he returned earlier.

Lynn didn't see Kuisi setting the food on the dining table.

So.

He went to the open-air terrace and leaned back in the wooden chair.

Looking out, he admired the distant horizon, where the setting sun was slowly descending.

With a movement of the hand, he picked up the glass of gin poured by Red and took a small sip.

A sense of warmth spread instantly throughout his body.

Until the sun descended past the skyline, leaving only a golden hue illuminating the entire sky.

Lynn finally withdrew his gaze.

With a thought, he opened the resident information column to check.

After some filtering, detailed information outlines of residents appeared before Lynn's eyes.

Since he wanted to choose two thousand people as dedicated farmers to take care of the farmland.

He naturally needed to select farmers with the planting skills!

Fortunately, with the 'filtering' function, all it needed was a thought.

The detailed information outlines of town folk with planting skills.

Would automatically be sorted from high level to low level.

If he had to inquire and filter each townsman individually.

It would certainly take ten days or half a month.

Moreover.

It could easily lead to omissions, with townsmen slipping through the cracks.

After filtering for a while, Lynn quickly selected two thousand farmers.

Five or six even had Level 3 planting skills!

Though, he didn't plan to summon these farmers right away.

Despite Gavin and Wilbur only having Level 2 planting skills.

They were more knowledgeable about the current farming techniques and planting methods within the territory.

After selecting farmers, Lynn's thoughts continued to turn.

Proceeding to filter for townsmen with different skills.

Lynn discovered.

Of the six thousand peasants recruited.

And the batch of slaves sent by Grayson.

Only a few possessed Level 2 and Level 3 skills.

The skills they owned were merely ordinary farming and handicraft skills.

The notion of selecting management talents among them had to be temporarily abandoned.

After more than half an hour.

From the guest hall behind, Kuisi's voice of reminder was heard.

"Master, dinner can be prepared."

Lynn closed the panel and glanced back.

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Fully focused on filtering the townsmen, he didn't notice that Kuisi had returned to the castle and had already prepared dinner.

Lynn responded, stood up from the wooden chair, and walked toward the reception hall in the back.

Sitting at the head of the dining table, Lynn glanced around the table.

Apart from some cuts of meat, there was also a pot of fresh fish stew.

At Lynn's command, Red and Kuisi sat at the table, and the three of them ate dinner together.

Outside the castle, nightfall gradually descended, enveloping the entire world.

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Meanwhile, on the other side.

Sheer cliffs towered on both sides, with rock layers clearly visible.

As if God had cleaved them open with a mighty axe, spreading from the center toward both sides...

The rocks, over long geological changes, had been eroded by wind and rain into bizarre shapes.

Like a fierce beast, like a stooped elder...

Inside the canyon, there was a constant, never-ending wind.

Strong air currents howled through the canyon, making a series of woeful sounds...

This was the Windmill Ridge Canyon, over five hundred miles away from Triumph City.

In the lee behind the giant rocks, a tent swayed constantly in the valley winds, making rustling sounds.

It also billowed the Armor worn by the four soldiers guarding the entrance.

Inside the tent.

Mark Ducas, dressed in Leather Armor, sat in front of the stove.

His eyes stared straight at the chunks of charcoal burning freely in the stove.

His face was gloomy, the flames flickering in his eyes, yet his gaze did not waver at all.

Time ticked away, moment by moment.

Soon.

Along with the sound of galloping horses gradually approaching.

Several horse neighs sounded outside the tent, coming to a halt.

Mark Ducas naturally heard this sound, and he lifted his gaze to the curtain at the entrance of the tent.

After the sound of footsteps, a reporting voice sounded at the curtain.

"Marquis, Lord Lawrence requests to see you..."

Before the guard outside could finish his report, a hand had already lifted the curtain.

"Get out of my way!"

"I'm Lawrence. If I want to see Mark, I'll see him directly; I don't need you to report!"

Mark, still seated on the wooden chair, looked directly as Lawrence entered the tent with a Godfrey.

With a wave of his left hand, Mark dismissed the four guards accompanying Lawrence.

Lawrence strode over to Mark.

As he approached, he spoke, "Mark! Do I have it wrong about you?"

"When I risk my life for the Ducas Clan, not even planning to come back alive."

"Why have you been sent by Mitchell to this godforsaken place?"

"Even though this is the main route to Triumph City, don't you feel you've been exiled?"

Mark furrowed his brows slightly, staring at Lawrence in front of him.

"What are you trying to say?"

Lawrence let out a cold snort, "What do you think I want to say?"

"If you can't handle being the Marquis of Ducas, then step down gracefully."

"Let me, Lawrence, show you how to be this Marquis!"

Standing at the entrance, Godfrey felt the atmosphere in the tent starting to turn confrontational.

He couldn't help but furrow his brows.

This scene, he had witnessed more than once.

Previously each time he saw it, these two brothers would end up fighting.

But now it's different.

Now, Mark is the Marquis of Ducas!

He holds absolute power over Lawrence's life and death.

Even though, Lawrence is Mark's half-brother!

Mark continued to stare at Lawrence, speaking calmly.

"Just you?"

Feeling the aura emanating from Mark, Lawrence's mouth slightly opened.

In the end, he halted his speech.

He stepped forward a few paces, moving a wooden chair from beside the stove.

Placing it next to the stove, his body moved, sitting on the wooden chair.

Lawrence looked at Mark across, his tone more composed.

"When I learned the Sword and Shield Corps were stationed at Windmill Ridge Canyon, I didn't even go home, came straight over."

"I was away for quite a while, not very aware of the current situation in the Karedi Empire."

"But Mark, I can clearly tell you."

"If the Sword and Shield Corps soldiers continue to guard the godforsaken Windmill Ridge Canyon."

"The Ducas Clan will have only two paths!"

"First, Mitchell and Caesar completely tear their faces, and two great powers start to wage war."

"If the Duke of Red Dragon chooses to enter Triumph City from Windmill Ridge Canyon."

"Then the entire Sword and Shield Corps will become the iron-hoofed victims of the Red Dragon Cavalry Corps!"

Mark didn't speak.

Lawrence didn't mind and continued to speak.

"Second, no one stays in Triumph City, stays by Mitchell's side, planning strategically..."

"This time, the Sword and Shield Corps is stationed at Windmill Ridge Canyon."

"Next time, it might be attacking the Duchy of the Red Dragon!"

"To prove the Ducas Clan's loyalty to Mitchell, more than three thousand Sword and Shield Corps soldiers have been sent out!"

"Even I, Lawrence Ducas, almost died in the Duchy of the Red Dragon!"

"Isn't that enough to show loyalty?"

Mark responded softly, still without any indication.

Lawrence immediately furrowed his brow and asked.

"Tell me, what other strategies do you have?"

Before Mark could speak, Godfrey, standing at the curtain, stepped forward.

"Lords, I have some ideas, may I speak?"

Chapter 697: I Want to Expand the Army (4)

Mark looked up at Godfrey and spoke.

"Knight Commander Godfrey, you have been a long-time household attendant of the Ducas Clan, feel free to speak."

Lawrence also turned his gaze toward Godfrey.

Godfrey stepped forward and stood before Mark and Lawrence.

He spoke calmly, "Your Excellencies, I believe leaving Triumph City at this time is actually a good thing!"

Lawrence, somewhat surprised, echoed Godfrey's words, "A good thing?"

Mark did not speak, waiting for Godfrey's explanation.

Godfrey, without any hesitation, began to explain.

"Currently in Triumph City, both His Highness Mitchell and His Highness Caesar are busy wooing various lord nobles."

"If we remain in the city, we are bound to end up caught in the schemes and calculations of both sides."

"Even if the Marquis has made his stance clear by siding with His Highness Mitchell."

"However, if someone wants to frame the Marquis and arouse His Highness Mitchell's suspicion, it is not difficult..."

"It's just a matter of forging a document or letter!"

Mark nodded in agreement, "Indeed, continue."

Lawrence, after pondering a moment, also nodded in agreement.

Godfrey acknowledged and continued, "Now, the Marquis has received instructions from His Highness Mitchell to leave Triumph City and garrison at Windmill Ridge Canyon."

"Doesn't this just mean we stay away from their machinations?"

"As Lord Lawrence mentioned, as long as the two princes have not completely torn apart, the Red Dragon Cavalry Corps will not attack Triumph City."

"This means that the soldiers of the Sword and Shield Corps stationed at Windmill Ridge Canyon are in a relatively safe position."

"No matter what changes occur in Triumph City, we can always say: stationed by order!"

Godfrey's words did not stop there.

"And the most important point... I do not know what kind of garrison order His Highness Mitchell gave to the Marquis."

"Or one could say, His Highness Mitchell merely requires the Sword and Shield Corps to garrison Windmill Ridge Canyon."

"But did not require the Marquis to be stationed here as well..."

Upon hearing this, Mark's eyes brightened.

Godfrey naturally noticed the brightness in Mark's eyes; he bent slightly and spoke humbly.

"Your Excellencies, the above are merely Godfrey's humble opinions."

"The specific situation still requires your Excellencies to decide."

Mark looked at Godfrey, full of admiration and said, "Knight Commander Godfrey, you truly are the advisor my father once had; you spoke to the point and hit the nail on the head..."

"A simple few words, and it suddenly became clear to me!"

Godfrey bent again and responded, "The Marquis overpraises."

Mark pondered for a moment.

His gaze shifted, looking at Lawrence across from him.

Before Mark could speak, Lawrence, who had already understood, asked first.

"What do you need me to do? Just say the word!"

Mark smiled serenely, "Then Lord Lawrence, from this moment on, you will take charge of garrisoning Windmill Ridge Canyon."

Lawrence replied casually, "In leading troops to battle, my abilities are above yours."

Mark instructed, "And one more thing!"

"No bringing any distracting women into the camp!"

Lawrence's mouth opened slightly, but considering the current situation, he ultimately chose to relent.

Seeing Lawrence fall silent,

Mark stood up from the wooden chair and strode toward the tent's entrance.

As he reached the curtain, he paused.

Mark addressed Godfrey, saying, "Knight Commander Godfrey, the Ducas Clan requires your loyalty!"

"Just as you loyally served my father before!"

Godfrey knelt with his right leg, performing a standard knight's pledge of loyalty.

"Of course, my Lord Marquis."

Mark continued, "Knight Commander Godfrey, I need you to follow me back to Bordeaux City, to participate in the Ducas Clan's future development discussions!"

Godfrey responded, "As you wish."

Mark nodded, "Very well."

At the tent entrance.

Lawrence stood still, watching Mark mount a warhorse, along with Godfrey and a squad of cavalry, as they galloped away from the camp.

A strange smile appeared at the corner of his mouth.

...

For the next consecutive week.

Lynn busied himself with the ranch and the wild boar farm.

Animal herding, daily feeding, the construction and repair of pens, and so on.

[Breeding Experience +1]

[Breeding Experience +1]

[Breeding Experience +1]

...

His [Breeding] skills experience was rapidly increasing.

With a thought, Lynn opened the [Heavenly Artifacts] panel and glanced at it.

[Breeding: Level 2 (418/500)] (+)

He was not far from reaching Level 3.

At this point, the entire Karedi Empire had already entered early June.

The average daily temperature had already reached the twenties.

During the day, as the sun shone, the temperature gradually rose, warm and pleasant, perfect for daily labor.

Due to the marine climate, the temperature difference between day and night was small.

Even at night, there was no biting cold.

While Lynn was improving his [Breeding] skill proficiency.

The red brick house residential area at the back of the town was finally completed!

After the registration led by Kuisi and Petra along with a group of townsmen,

over seven thousand peasants and slaves moved into the red brick houses.

Looking at the Lord's Square, where six thousand townsmen were gathered, their faces beaming with excitement and joy,

Lynn raised his hand slightly, and the six thousand townsmen quickly quieted down in response.

Chapter 698: I Want to Expand the Army (5)

They widened their eyes, waiting for their Lord to give them instructions.

Feeling the once noisy Lord's Square quickly become quiet, Lynn nodded with satisfaction.

His gaze swept across the crowd, and he said in a deep voice: "Ladies and gentlemen, you have been in the territory for more than a month."

"I presume you are already familiar with the lifestyle and work pattern of this territory."

The townsmen nodded but did not say a word.

Lynn continued: "Therefore, I will not waste words with you."

"I want to expand the army!"

"I need a thousand strong men to join the ranks of soldiers."

"Under the leadership of Lord Rose, you'll undergo physical training, weapons training, and even riding skills training!"

The townsmen raised their eyebrows, their faces full of surprise.

Some of the townsmen's gazes shifted.

They looked at the team of tall and sturdy soldiers wearing standard plate armor and holding long spears, standing not far from Lynn.

Instantly.

Their eyes were full of admiration and envy.

A large portion of these people were peasants.

Let alone becoming full-time soldiers, even becoming guards or followers was something beyond their reach.

Generations in slavery meant that even if they bore children, those children would also be slaves!

But now.

Their Lord, standing on the platform ahead, loudly told them.

A thousand soldiers would be selected from among them!

This meant they had a chance to change their status!

Because.

They had already heard from literate townsmen.

Becoming a soldier and killing enemies could earn military merits!

Merits could be exchanged for land!

Or even a government position!

Seeing the eager expressions on the townsmen's faces, Lynn loudly questioned.

"Who is willing to become a soldier to protect this territory?"

"To risk their heads, shed their blood, and even die in battle?"

A somewhat robust middle-aged man stepped forward, "Lord, I am willing!"

As his voice fell.

Another young man also stepped out from the ranks.

"I am willing too!"

With these two men volunteering to stand up.

One after another, men began shouting their responses.

Gradually, they formed a unified response.

Lynn raised his hand again, and the excited voices gradually quieted down.

Lynn addressed the crowd: "Very well!"

"Next, Lord Rose and Centurion Earl will lead the soldiers to select you!"

"If chosen, you can refuse if you are unwilling."

"This territory will never forcibly conscript troops like other lords!"

Having said this, Lynn's gaze turned to look at Rose and Earl standing not far away.

Lynn did not need to speak.

Understanding the signal, Rose led Earl and a team of soldiers into the crowd at the Lord's Square.

The selected townsmen, whether joyful, confused, or thoughtful...

Yet not one chose to refuse!

Lynn stood on the platform, surveying the scene.

Even though there were six thousand townsmen here, they were nothing but peasants.

Constant hunger was the norm!

To pick tall and strong men from these townsmen, it could only be said the man was extraordinarily gifted.

The other selected soldiers were merely the tallest among the short.

These soldiers, let alone wearing Iron Butcher Heavy Armor,

even if they wore Composite Armor, running a few kilometers might overwhelm them.

For now, they could only be selected, led by Rose for physical training, and increase their food intake at every meal.

To thus enhance and improve their physical fitness.

Lynn couldn't help but sigh again in his heart.

Creating an armored cavalry units had too many limitations!

An hour later.

Rose, having completed the selection, returned to Lynn's side.

Rose spoke: "Master, a thousand soldiers have been selected."

Lynn glanced at the five rows of townsmen standing at the edge of the Lord's Square.

He responded, "These soldiers are too skinny."

Rose turned to look, nodding silently.

Lynn continued: "Train these soldiers under your guidance, and I will instruct Kuisi to arrange for workers to increase the amount of meat in their food."

"During meals, assign personnel to ensure they eat until they can't anymore!"

Hearing this, Rose and Earl's brows naturally raised.

It was their first time hearing such instructions from Lynn.

However.

They both understood.

As a soldier, without the strength to wear armor and wield a weapon,

going onto the battlefield would be sending them to their deaths!

Lynn said: "Regarding armor and weapons, I will expedite the forging and production from the Blacksmith Workshop and Textile Workshop."

"When the time comes, I will notify you to lead the team over to collect them."

"As for the Red Brick House accommodations at the military camp, you can have Avery select a team of one hundred."

"Have him build more Red Brick Houses behind the city wall."

Avery's Stonemason Workshop was already near the city wall.

Having him arrange personnel to build would save time and effort!

Rose respectfully responded: "Yes, Master."

With the soldier selection completed, Lynn immediately dismissed Rose and Earl.

To have them take the thousand soldiers back to the military camp at the city wall for the next phase of their training tasks.

Lynn continued to divide jobs for the remaining five thousand townsmen.

Chapter 699: I Want to Expand the Army (6)

The first batch, a selection of thirteen hundred townsmen with farming skills and experience, was handed over to Gavin and Wilbur.

Together with the existing seven hundred farmers, a team of two thousand farmers was formed.

From now on, the reclamation, planting, and care on the territory would be entirely their responsibility.

The second batch, five hundred townsmen were selected for logging and paving!

From the open-pit iron mine, they started laying roads toward the natural alkali deposits and saltpeter caves deep in the forest.

Despite the difficulties, it's necessary to ensure subsequent transport and smooth roads.

Even if some manpower and material resources are required, it must be done.

Fortunately.

With the water power of the Aladia River and the existence of the Noel Ship.

The necessary raw materials for road paving can be transported.

The third batch, one hundred people were selected to go to the excavation points of the natural alkali deposits and saltpeter caves.

Build red brick residential areas, kitchens, wells, and bathrooms, and other public facilities needed for living.

To ensure the daily lives of the workers.

The fourth batch, one hundred people were selected to go to the glass workshop, brewing workshop, fishery workshop, and miscellaneous workshop respectively.

Expand the production scale of the workshops and improve production efficiency.

Especially the glass workshop and brewing workshop.

They can be said to be the largest economic sources on the territory, besides the fine salt produced by the salt factory.

The last time Grayson came, he confirmed a long-term cooperative trade contract with Audrey.

The fifth batch, Lynn selected two hundred townsmen each to go to the woodworker workshop, bow and arrow workshop, and shipyard!

Previously, to make small boats, he had to divide the apprentices in the woodworker workshop in half and use them separately.

The woodworker workshop made large siege machinery, and the shipyard made Noel ships.

Now that there's enough labor, naturally, the labor gap needs to be filled immediately.

The same goes for the bow and arrow workshop.

While making standard longbows, they also need to make Zhuge crossbows.

Watching teams of townsmen, led by guards, go to various different posts.

On Lord's Square, surrounded by bustling figures, Lynn couldn't help but raise an eyebrow.

Industries in the territory that lacked labor, he basically dispatched a team of labor to supplement.

There are still three thousand four hundred people waiting for his allocation.

Is this what an abundance of labor feels like?

In the fifth batch, Lynn again drew out a thousand people, divided into two teams of five hundred, to the blacksmith workshop and textile workshop.

Given the limited forging skills, he can only expand the forging and production speed of the two workshops by increasing the number of laborers.

In the sixth batch, fifteen hundred people were selected.

They were divided into teams of five hundred each to go to the open-pit iron mine, coal mine, and salt mine for excavation.

The seventh batch, another four hundred people were selected.

They were sent to various mines, responsible for transporting all the territory's ores.

Seeing the remaining thousand people, Lynn directly had the guards take them towards the direction of the city wall.

He handed them all over to Avery for the construction of the outer city!

Until the last batch of townsmen left Lord's Square, Lynn felt slightly relieved.

The population on the territory is increasing.

When these five thousand townsmen go to their respective posts, production efficiency may not show much improvement at the beginning.

However.

As they become familiar with their work and learn the essentials of labor.

Then, the development of the entire territory will see a quantitative boost.

It's important to know.

Labor is the core element and fundamental power of development!

Previously, he thought of letting the newly arrived townsmen first undergo the corresponding skills training.

But he found that the territory lacked the teaching resources for training!

The six scholars brought by Tate can learn the corresponding skills first and then teach the townsmen.

But these scholars have already formed fixed thinking patterns in their own minds.

Instead of having these scholars change themselves to accept new things and then teach.

It's better to let these townsmen start working directly.

After all, practical experience is the best teacher for anyone.

With six thousand laborers arranged, Lynn was thinking about whether to continue fishing.

In the distance.

A convoy of carriages traveled along the limestone road, approaching.

With a thought, Lynn opened the holographic map to take a look.

At the forefront of the convoy was Hunter, mounted on horseback.

The owner of the Fisherman's Wharf in Kakasong City and the Riverside Rest Tavern.

Lynn stood still, waiting for Hunter's arrival.

After a dozen minutes.

The convoy finally arrived at Lord's Square.

Hunter, dressed in satin, leapt down from his horse.

Upon seeing Lynn, he quickly stepped forward.

Coming to a few meters beside Lynn, Hunter showed a smile, his words filled with respect: "Master Lynn, long time no see."

Lynn returned a smile, "Yes, I apologize, Mr. Hunter."

"The last time you came, I happened to be out due to some matters and couldn't receive you personally."

Hunter slightly bowed, "Master Lynn, you are too kind."

"With Mr. George there, engaging in trade activities, I am already very satisfied."

Lynn nodded.

After the pleasantries, Hunter wasted no time and began to explain.

"Master Lynn, this time I brought a large shipment of linen cloth for you."

"I wonder if you're willing to trade?"

Lynn's gaze turned to behind Hunter.

Ten carriages, each almost fully loaded.

But because they were covered with oilcloth, he couldn't see the goods in the carriage compartments.

Lynn replied, "Of course, Mr. Hunter, name your price!"

Hunter didn't hesitate, "Medium-grade linen cloth, totaling thirty thousand yards, the current market price is slightly over nine pence per yard."

"Master Lynn, you can give me nine pence."

Lynn opened the market and prices to take a look.

What Hunter said was indeed accurate.

However.

Due to the rising grain prices, compared to the previous price of eight pence per yard.

The price of linen cloth has also been affected.

Lynn said, "No problem, Mr. Hunter."

"If exchanged for Lexus Gin, I can offer you one thousand three hundred and fifty pounds!"

Hunter's face showed a smile, "Master Lynn, besides exchanging for gin, I also want to purchase a large batch of beer!"

"With the weather getting warmer, more and more people are coming to Kakasong City."

"I need to stock up on more beer for summer sales."

"Moreover, Master Lynn, you might not know, but the gin from your brewing workshop is now widely favored by everyone!"

"Even some lord nobility from other cities are willing to ride carriages to my tavern to taste the scarce gin!"

Subsequently.

Hunter took out a bag of gold pounds, purchasing twenty thousand pounds of beer.

Once the transaction was confirmed, and under George's arrangement, a group of townsmen began unloading the goods.

Seeing the figures of townsmen carrying goods, Lynn spoke to Hunter.

"Mr. Hunter, there's something I need to discuss with you."

Hunter raised an eyebrow, "Master Lynn, feel free to instruct!"

Chapter 700: First Night Rights

Lynn looked Hunter straight in the eye and spoke in a deep voice.

"Mr. Hunter, you know my territory is in a remote corner."

"Aside from merchants like you coming to my territory, hardly anyone comes here!"

Hunter nodded slightly at Lynn's words.

This place backs onto the boundary line between the Karedi Empire and the Elfini Empire.

If it's not remote, it'd be a miracle!

In the next moment.

He felt he had already guessed what the lord in front of him was about to say.

Lynn continued: "Therefore, I know very little about information outside my territory."

"Just like you said earlier, the noble lords really enjoy the gin from my brewing workshop."

"If you hadn't told me, I might never have known!"

Hunter smiled slightly and continued to listen.

"So, Mr. Hunter, my idea is to use your tavern to build an intelligence gathering center."

"I can assure you in advance that this will not affect your business."

"In fact, I can even provide you with an annual sponsorship fee!"

Lynn's idea was.

It would suffice to arrange personnel to go to Hunter's tavern and use the gathering ability of the tavern staff to collect information.

It wouldn't even require Hunter's cooperation or help.

Just as he had guessed in his heart.

Hunter's face did not show much surprise.

He gave a slight smile and replied: "Master Lynn, you are too kind."

"This is no issue at all for my tavern or for me."

"You are entirely welcome to arrange the appropriate personnel to come to my tavern."

"Incidentally, my tavern is about to enter a busy season for drinks, and I'm planning to hire five employees."

"If you don't mind, I can employ them at my tavern."

"Their identities can be concealed, making it easier to collect more information!"

At this juncture,

Hunter changed the subject, speaking earnestly: "However, Master Lynn, I have an unspoken request!"

Lynn nodded, "Feel free to speak, Mr. Hunter."

Without hesitation, Hunter said: "I need to become the exclusive distributor of your brewing workshop's drinks!"

As a trading partner, he could naturally agree to the terms set by Master Lynn.

On the surface, Master Lynn was merely discussing the arrangement of personnel to gather intelligence.

But.

No one could guarantee what kind of crises and dilemmas could emerge!

In the worst-case scenario, a whole troop of soldiers might surround the tavern and level it to the ground.

As the owner of a tavern and a businessman, he naturally required a corresponding return.

And that was becoming the exclusive distributor of drinks in Master Lynn's territory!

Lynn looked at Hunter with some surprise.

Previously, for the rapid development of his territory, he had promised this exclusive sales right to George.

Now George had already become his household attendant.

Lynn nodded and said: "No problem at all, Mr. Hunter."

"From now on, you are the exclusive distributor of my territory's drinks."

"No matter what benefits or promises other merchants offer, I will not sell the drinks to them!"

Upon receiving a definite response from Master Lynn, Hunter's smile grew even more pronounced.

"That's excellent, Master Lynn."

Lynn habitually extended his right hand, and seeing this, Hunter grasped it wittingly.

Lynn said: "Pleasure doing business with you, Mr. Hunter."

What Lynn valued was the location of Hunter's tavern and the dense flow of personnel.

Through the word of mouth of those coming and going, various useful pieces of intelligence could be gathered.

Even while in his territory, he could maintain control over the developments beyond his domain.

Protecting against potential crises.

As the tavern owner, Hunter valued the drinks from his brewing workshop.

He wanted to control the exclusive sales of drinks to earn more profit.

The essence of trading is just that.

Each party gains what they need.

Lynn had also considered this before.

After discussing it with Hunter, he knew the intelligence gathering personnel would be known to Hunter.

But on second thought.

Hunter demanded the exclusive distribution rights for his drinks, and as long as Hunter wanted to continuously purchase drinks from his brewing workshop

He would have to ensure the safety of the intelligence-gathering personnel.

Simply put.

Hunter and he were now tied to the same fate!

Hunter came quickly and left quickly.

Once all the linen cloth was offloaded by the townsmen from the carriage,

and after the townsmen loaded all the drinks onto the carriage,

Hunter led his caravan back the way they came.

Watching the carriage team disappear into the distance, Lynn finally withdrew his gaze.

The intelligence gathering center had been settled.

Now, what remained was arranging personnel to go to Hunter's tavern.

Qualified intelligence collectors must possess strong information-gathering abilities!

First, they need to maintain keen observation in various situations, able to notice details others overlook!

For instance, the defense layout of Kakasong City, the state of the army's equipment, the movement of crowds on the street, the conversations in taverns, etc.

Most people, without special training, cannot achieve this ability.

Secondly, they need to be adept at establishing relationships and communicating with people from different classes.

From the nobility, merchants, to the commoners and servants, they can interact with them and obtain intelligence.

Then, they need to find ways to infiltrate the target organization or region.

For example, merging into enemy troops, infiltrating castles, or entering important institutions like churches and monasteries to gather core intelligence from the inside.