

System 731

Chapter 731: I've Decided to Start a War

With that, he filled all the remaining nine carts.

Once the deal was settled, George was instructed to arrange personnel for unloading and loading.

Lynn, accompanied by Boer, went to a nearby bench to sit down.

Watching the backs of the townsmen starting to carry barley, Lynn asked Boer.

"Mr. Boer, besides Frank Manor's forcible taxation on merchants, is there anything unusual in Morgan Town?"

Boer recalled, "Unusual..."

"Speaking of which, something does come to mind."

"I've seen Joao Frank with soldiers in the market district of Kakasong City several times."

"I saw him speaking with some foreign iron merchants."

"If nothing unexpected happens, Frank Manor is likely purchasing a batch of weapons and armor!"

Lynn nodded silently.

Whether it's Morgan Town or Kakasong City, there are very few blacksmiths.

Usually, there are only one or two blacksmiths in a small town.

Moreover.

These one or two blacksmiths specialize only in making agricultural tools.

It's vital to know.

Not all lords are like him, possessing six iron smelting furnaces and six blacksmith workshops.

Along with seventeen hundred blacksmiths and apprentices!

A terrifying number.

If other manor lords want to purchase large quantities of weapons or armor.

They can only go to Kakasong City's market district to custom order or buy from foreign merchants.

Lynn understood that Frank Manor was preparing for war!

Seeing Lynn didn't inquire further, Boer pondered again.

"Other things..."

Boer's eyes brightened and continued, "There's one more thing, Master Boer."

"Viscount Jon Zuck of Kakasong City returned to Kakasong City some time ago."

"But a few days ago, he received a summons from the Ducas Clan's messenger."

"Viscount Jon Zuck led a large number of soldiers from his city to Windmill Ridge Canyon!"

"Not just him, many nearby lords and manor lords also received the messenger and responded to the summons..."

"They all took their soldiers to Windmill Ridge Canyon!"

Lynn mused, then asked Boer curiously, "Did Frank Manor not respond to the Ducas Clan's summons?"

Boer replied seriously, "Yes, Master Boer."

"Frank Manor cited the attack by the Three Great Estates claiming its military power was damaged, refusing the Ducas Clan's summons."

Lynn nodded again.

Frank Manor's refusal was anticipated by him.

Not to mention just having experienced the joint attack of the Three Great Estates.

Even if everything were as usual, Frank Manor would likely refuse.

The location of Morgan Town is too far from Windmill Ridge Canyon.

At least a thousand kilometers away!

For horses to make the journey, it would take over a month.

Let's not mention whether horses and soldiers could withstand such a long journey.

Even if they reached the battlefields, they would be devoid of combat strength.

Merely delivering their heads across a thousand miles, claiming battle honors.

Yet Lynn thought further.

Since Frank Manor did not respond to the Ducas Clan's summons for military aid.

Instead forcibly taxing, controlling townsmen, recruiting soldiers, and enhancing military strength...

Frank Manor...

No, more accurately, that ambitious woman Janet wanted to do something.

Lynn wouldn't have to guess to know.

Naturally, it was to break through his walls and seize his territories!

And become the sole lord controlling Morgan Town!

But quickly.

Another thought came to Lynn's mind.

The messenger from the Ducas Clan did not come to his territory!

To know, the knight commander Godfrey beside Lawrence had visited his territory.

Godfrey did not inform Lawrence of the existence of his territory.

Could it be he didn't inform Mark Ducas either?

Or maybe, Lawrence and Mark are already aware of his territory's location.

But Marquis Mark simply doesn't care?

Or perhaps.

Mark is preoccupied with the imminent battle for Imperial Authority, not having the mind to concern himself with him?

Lynn couldn't decide.

The only thing he could confirm was.

The spies dispatched hadn't returned with intelligence.

To inform him that the Ducas Clan's Sword and Shield Corps soldiers were deploying, preparing to overwhelm his territory!

No matter the reason.

As long as the Ducas Clan's Sword and Shield Corps soldiers aren't overwhelming.

He has more time for development!

This is good news for him and his territory!

While Lynn and Boer were talking, teams of townsmen expertly carried on.

Bag after bag of barley was unloaded from the carts.

Placed onto flatbed two-wheeled carts, and then transported by two other townsmen to the distant castle warehouse for storage.

Lynn shifted his thoughts and asked Boer beside him.

"Mr. Boer, have you seen carrier pigeons in Morgan Town or Kakasong City?"

Boer raised an eyebrow in slight confusion, "Carrier pigeons?"

"Apologies, Master Lynn, I'm truly not knowledgeable in this area..."

"In Morgan Town, I haven't seen any carrier pigeons."

"But, I can inquire for you when I deliver this batch of fine salt to Kakasong City."

Lynn nodded, "Then I'll trouble Mr. Boer."

Lynn confirmed.

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Pigeons have already been trained by many people and put to use in information transmission.

However, the existence of pigeons is not abundant.

Only some Great Noble Lords, as well as trainers with certain skills and experience, possess pigeons.

Last year, Boer was just a basic agricultural traveling merchant.

It's quite normal not to understand this aspect.

Boer lowered his head slightly and responded, "Master Lynn, you're too kind."

"Just a trivial matter, as long as it can help you, Master Lynn."

Lynn pondered for a moment.

Until a few hours later.

All the barley was unloaded, and fifty thousand pounds of fine salt were loaded onto the carriage.

The transaction was complete.

After bidding farewell to Lynn, Boer mounted his horse and left Lord's Square with his caravan.

By this time, it was already dusk.

About an hour until nightfall.

Although Lynn tried to persuade Boer to stay, Boer was determined to leave.

According to Boer, he needed to quickly sell off the fine salt he had on hand.

Lynn had no choice but to give up persuading him, watching as Boer's caravan gradually disappeared.

In the end, vanishing into the shadow of the mountain that shielded the setting sun.

Lynn remained seated on the bench, his gaze shifting as he watched the townsmen forming queues to return to the town.

Lynn raised an eyebrow.

Perhaps Boer wanted to leave the town before the townsmen finished work.

This way, the caravan wouldn't occupy the limestone road and block the townsmen's smooth return.

The sunset bathed everything in golden light.

Covering the lush crop plants in the cultivated land with a layer of gold.

Golden light, emerald plants, a gentle breeze...

The barley farmland looked like a golden ocean.

Lynn admired it all from afar.

In his mind, he contemplated how to deal with Morgan Town and Frank Manor.

He had agreed to Janet's request for military assistance to Frank Manor.

Naturally, to obtain more labor and grain!

In providing military aid to Frank Manor and during the final stages.

He indeed could easily demolish Frank Manor.

However, thinking about some unforeseen circumstances that might arise...

For instance, should Kakasong City's Lord Nobility come and find the manor in Morgan Town long vanished.

Or, like last time when Lawrence led the Sword and Shield Corps here...

He needed a local manor lord to handle the aftermath and respond to events post-war!

Even if it means giving Frank Manor the chance to develop, it's worth it.

Because he had incorporated all the serfs, grain, and various items from the Three Great Estates.

He also needed a lot of time to consume and integrate them.

For instance, to ensure housing for six thousand serfs.

He had to let these six thousand serfs spend a month to construct numerous red brick houses.

Had there not been stored cereals grain and meat in the Three Great Estates' warehouses.

A month would have been enough to deplete all the previously stored food.

Thankfully, his territory endured.

However.

Frank Manor exercised power excessively with its claim over Morgan Town...

If it were just the free people of the town.

Or unrelated merchants.

That'd be fine.

But if they attempt to impose taxes harshly and deter merchants who initially planned to come to his territory...

Lynn wouldn't mind deploying an army to obliterate Frank Manor!

From Boer's expression just now, he sensed endless complexity.

Being trapped yet afraid to ask for help.

Ultimately choosing to endure silently.

Before.

Boer faced sieges and attacks from bandits; with limited ability, he could only choose to defend the walls.

But now.

Considering the soldiers, armor, weapons, and those massive siege engines in his territory.

He was absolutely confident!

To destroy Frank Manor at an extremely minimal cost!

Smoothing the way for merchants like Boer in the future who come to his territory!

But before that.

He needs to conduct a thorough assessment of current military strength.

Lynn's gaze shifted, looking at the few guards beside him.

"Return to the castle and inform Steward Kuisi to prepare more meals."

The guard who received Lynn's instruction quickly responded and hurried towards the castle.

"Go to the wall and summon Rose and Wesley."

Another guard fetched a horse, mounted it, and headed towards the distant woods.

"The three of you, go to the Handicraft Workshop District and summon Ehrelo, Colin, Yimini, and Jose."

"Also, Flint—if he refuses, just say there will be no more gin supplies."

"Yes, Master."

The last guard quickly bowed and walked briskly towards the distant Handicraft Workshop District.

Instructions completed, Lynn exhaled a breath.

Unless necessary.

He didn't want to initiate war proactively!

His current territory still has many things to attend to, developing step by step.

Land cultivation and planting.

Apart from the already cultivated fields, there's also two hundred thousand acres of wild grassland, waiting for townsmen to cultivate.

Given land and fertilizer fertility limitations.

Before producing more efficient fertilizers using natural alkaline minerals and other substances.

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To increase crop yields, the three-field system must be adopted.

With 300,000 acres of arable land, it is perfect for cultivating two plots while resting one, allowing for cyclical sowing.

Widen the roads.

Compared to the previous lime roads, the current state of carriage use and population makes them far too narrow.

On the lime roads, only one carriage can pass!

When the carriage passes, pedestrians have to walk to the very edge.

Or even stand in the nearby fields to make way.

In order to make transportation smoother, townsmen must be arranged to widen the roads.

The outer city in front of the city walls needs personnel for construction.

The wooden tracks of several major industries within the domain need to be laid.

...

Temporarily suppress the thoughts of territorial development in my mind.

These can only be approached slowly, step by step.

Lynn continued to enjoy the distant sunset.

Until the sky gradually dimmed.

Only then did he rise from the bench, leading Red back towards the castle.

Passing through the town and by numerous red brick houses, Lynn returned to the castle.

Just then.

Kuisi was leading a few maids, lighting the tall oil lamps beside the walls.

Upon seeing Lynn, Kuisi handed the torch in her hand to the maid beside her.

She stepped over to Lynn.

Upon reaching Lynn's side, she slightly bent and explained.

"Lord, as per your instructions, I've asked the kitchen to prepare extra food."

"Besides food, is there anything else that needs to be arranged?"

Walking in the reception hall, Lynn glanced at Kuisi, thought for a few seconds, and replied.

"Prepare some gin, to satisfy their cravings."

Kuisi bowed, "Alright, Lord, I'll go right away."

Lynn pondered for a moment, passed through the reception hall, and came to sit at the main seat of the dining table.

Turning his gaze, Lynn looked through the floor-to-ceiling glazed windows out to the castle.

The sky had already become completely dim and dreary.

Fortunately, with the illumination of oil lamps, the spacious reception hall didn't seem dark.

Instead.

Under the flickering glow of the oil lamps, there was a unique ambiance.

Time passed quickly.

In the reception hall, apart from Lynn seated at the main table and Red standing behind him.

And the occasional maid passing by.

Almost no other figures were visible.

The castle area is originally where the lord and his family live.

Even the foremen of various workshops in the domain can only reside in the residential area behind the castle.

Without urgent matters or a summons from the lord, they cannot enter and exit freely.

Hence, the inside of the castle appeared somewhat quiet.

Lynn didn't mind.

Compared to the bustling market, he preferred staying in a quiet environment.

It allowed him to better contemplate future developments and how to face external territorial situations.

As Lynn was pondering.

The sound of footsteps echoed from the staircase opposite him.

The sound wasn't very loud, and one could even sense some cautious trepidation.

Lynn looked up.

In the distance on the staircase, Flint's half-exposed head and eyes were observing the scene in the reception hall.

Lynn raised his eyebrows, feeling somewhat helpless inside.

Aren't dwarves always fond of lively gatherings and banquets?

Why does Flint seem a bit socially anxious?

Last time, when invited to a dinner party, this guy flatly refused.

This time he managed to come.

Clearly, it was because he used the trump card — cutting off gin supply!

Lynn said, "If you don't want to drink gin in the future, you can leave."

Flint, who was about to withdraw his head, suddenly furrowed his coarse eyebrows.

He stepped up, walked into the hall.

Crossing the reception hall, he approached Lynn, muttering as he walked.

"Lord, you misunderstand this old man."

"This old man came here because your guard summoned me, out of respect for you."

"Not at all because of gin!"

Lynn glanced at Flint and said, "Oh, so that's the case?"

"I misunderstood Master Flint, then starting today, the brewing workshop will no longer provide gin for you."

"We can use it for sale, earning an extra income!"

Flint startled, quickly said, "That won't do, Lord."

"Without gin, let alone teaching apprentices, this old man doesn't even have the strength to walk or swing a hammer."

Lynn playfully looked at Flint and questioned, "Master Flint, didn't you just say it wasn't for gin?"

Flint's face was full of embarrassment, "Gin is for better work, Lord."

"You wouldn't want this old man to have two hundred apprentices in the blacksmith workshop go untrained, would you?"

Hearing this, Lynn couldn't help but once again give Flint a glare.

This guy, he even knew how to use blacksmith apprentices to threaten him.

However, Lynn understood.

This was merely a joke.

At this moment.

Another set of footsteps echoed again from the distant staircase.

Lynn turned his head to look.

It was Rose and Wesley returning from the castle's outer city.

And behind them followed Colin, Ehrelo, Yimini, and Jose, several foremen.

Everyone came to stand in front of Lynn, they all bent respectfully and spoke.

"Master!"

"Lord~"

Lynn glanced at them and said, "Sit down."

"It's been about half a year since our last gathering."

"Now while things are relatively quiet, it's just right for a gathering."

Rose Wesley and the others exchanged a few glances, didn't say much further.

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Each person searched for a wooden chair and sat down on either side of the dining table.

At that moment.

Kuisi, accompanied by her maid, brought up portions of food and placed them on the dining table one by one.

Looking at the steaming dishes, Lynn said, "Everyone has been busy all day, let's save the conversation for later."

"Let's eat first."

Upon hearing Lynn's words, those who were eyeing the food and swallowing their saliva showed expressions of relief.

Although their status was now above that of ordinary townsmen,

they were once just ordinary people.

When hungry, you eat; when sleepy, you sleep.

And their clothing, food, housing, and transportation were not much different from the ordinary townsmen outside the castle.

They all ate the big-pot meals served in the canteen.

Now, seeing the table laden with well-cooked, flavorful, and aromatic food, they naturally couldn't resist the hunger within their bodies.

Following Lynn's guidance, Ehrelo and the others expressed their gratitude, "Thank you, Master, for your hospitality."

Lynn glanced at Kuisi, who immediately understood and arranged for the maid to assist with the dining.

Kuisi walked to the table, picked up a bottle of gin from the tabletop, and began to pour drinks for Lynn.

Similarly, each of the others had a maid beside them, devotedly attending to their needs.

Watching the golden liquid flow from the bottle and fall into the glazed cup,

and smelling the rich aroma of the drink,

everyone's eyes widened with anticipation.

In the last banquet, they had already savored the taste of gin.

However, they could distinctly feel,

that this time the aroma of the gin was even stronger and more intense.

Especially Flint, who couldn't take his eyes off the gin in the glazed cup.

That appearance could almost be described as being addicted to alcohol.

Once the gin was poured into the glazed cup, Flint didn't hesitate at all, swiftly grabbing the cup.

He downed the gin overflowing from the cup in one gulp.

As his Adam's apple rolled with a 'gulp,' the gin had already been swallowed by Flint.

Feeling the pleasant sensation within his body, Flint's face was full of joy.

As the effects of the gin gradually dissipated, he turned his gaze to the maid standing beside him.

The maid, caught under Flint's gaze, blushed slightly and had no choice but to start pouring wine again.

Lynn spoke to the maid, "Let him do it himself."

Upon hearing this, the maid gratefully glanced at Lynn and responded, "Yes, Master."

After speaking, the maid placed the gin bottle on the table in front of Flint.

Seeing this, Flint's face broke into a wide smile.

It was exactly what he wanted, as he had been dissatisfied with the slow pace at which the maid poured the wine.

Under Kuisi's service, Lynn began to enjoy today's dinner.

While chewing the food in his mouth, Lynn's gaze swept across the faces around the dining table.

Perhaps because of their previous banquet experience, they weren't too nervous this time.

With Rose and Wesley sitting straight, and Ehrelo and Jose not concerned about dining etiquette,

Colin and Yimini were calmly eating their dinner.

However, no matter the comparison.

Compared to Flint, whose face was flushed from drinking, they seemed more composed and normal.

Although Flint kept belching, he showed no signs of drunken disorder.

Until half an hour later.

Lynn, feeling eighty to ninety percent full, put down his knife and fork.

He picked up the glazed cup on the table and drank the remaining gin in one gulp.

Received a napkin from Kuisi and wiped his mouth clean.

Lynn's gaze turned again to the people at the table.

The others also put down their tableware, waiting for their Master Lynn to speak.

Their Master Lynn had gathered these workshop foremen at the castle.

But not all the workshop foremen.

They naturally speculated that there were important matters to be discussed with them.

Lynn, without unnecessary words, addressed them, "Ladies and gentlemen, the reason I had the guards summon you is indeed because there is an important matter I need to announce to you."

"Although you don't participate in the decision-making of the territory, as the few managers in the territory."

"You have the right to know the future development direction of this territory."

Ehrel Colin raised his eyebrows slightly, his eyes revealing some surprise.

Lynn continued, "This afternoon, merchant Boer Hansen arrived at the town and once more delivered fifty thousand pounds of barley to me."

"To be honest, up till now, I've almost lost count of how many times Boer has come to trade within the territory."

"Boer is undoubtedly one of the best trading partners of this territory and myself."

Several people nodded in agreement, though noncommittally.

They are workshop foremen, usually busy working within the workshops.

Yet, they still often see Boer arriving at Master Lynn's territory either in the morning or evening.

Brandishing torches, braving the black night, they left.

Lynn continued, "However, Boer has encountered trouble!"

"He informed me that Frank Manor has taken control of all Morgan Town, strictly forbidding Free People from leaving, and even enforced heavy taxes upon him."

"Transit tax, education tax, and even property tax."

"Property tax! It's blatant robbery against Boer!"

"It's fishing with the pond drained!"

Those seated at the table fell silent.

They could vaguely speculate on what their Master Lynn was preparing to discuss.

Lynn's gaze swept across the assembly, "If it had happened just once, it would have been okay."

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"However, Frank Manor wants to impose a property tax on all passing merchants, essentially looting them!"

"This will undoubtedly cause merchants who come to my territory to feel resentment, even fear."

"Therefore!"

"We must solve the troubles and obstacles on the road for the merchants coming to this frontier area to trade!"

Lynn's voice grew louder and more resonant.

The crowd, infected by his words, couldn't help but turn their gaze toward Lynn.

Lynn said in a deep voice, "Therefore, I have decided—to declare war."

"Declaring war on Frank Manor!"

The crowd's expressions were solemn.

They had no doubts, nor did they voice any opposition.

Because they understood.

Their Master Lynn had already considered all factors before making any decision.

All they needed to do was to act according to orders!

Seeing the crowd remaining silent.

Lynn's gaze moved, first landing on Rose and Wesley.

He asked, "Do you have any objections?"

Rose and Wesley, with solemn and stern expressions, responded, "No objections."

Lynn nodded, his gaze turning to Ehrelo and Yimini.

Both swiftly responded in unison, "No objections!"

Lynn acknowledged and then looked at Flint, Colin, and Jose.

All three answered, "No objections!"

Lynn nodded in satisfaction, "Very good!"

"However, before starting the war, I need to account for the current armed forces in the territory."

Lynn's gaze once again turned to Rose, "Rose, report."

Rose stood up directly and began to report, "Master!"

"As of now, excluding Captain Red's territorial guard, the total number of soldiers is two thousand seven hundred and fifty!"

"Among them, there are three hundred heavy cavalry, two hundred heavy infantry, three hundred and fifty light cavalry, five hundred archers, and four hundred and ten light infantry."

"There are a thousand soldiers undergoing physical and weapons training."

Lynn nodded.

The vacancies were due to the Bandit Corps' attack and defense battles, the destruction of Morrison Manor, and military support to Frank Manor, resulting in the sacrifice and death of soldiers.

Lynn asked Rose, "When can the training of a thousand soldiers be completed?"

Rose frowned slightly, thought for a few seconds, and said, "If it's just the use of weapons, shield defense methods, and basic physical training."

"It will take at least one or two more months!"

At this point.

Rose paused, explaining, "Master, basic training is not difficult; the challenge lies in their poor physical condition..."

"Many men are physically weak, get winded after running a few miles, and can't stand straight."

"Not to mention asking them to wear armor and carry weapons for high-intensity physical training."

"They need a process to adapt and strengthen their bodies..."

Lynn acknowledged.

The thousand newly recruited soldiers were all peasants from the Three Great Estates.

Even though they were picked as the tallest from among the short.

But their physical condition was still very poor.

However.

By providing better meals for a few months to these soldiers.

And with Rose's various training, their physical abilities would gradually improve.

Lynn continued to ask, "How many sets of armor and weapons are still needed for the soldiers in the barracks?"

Rose did not hesitate, "Including the newly recruited thousand soldiers and previous vacancies, a total of one thousand four hundred and fifty sets."

"I just conducted the statistics two days ago, so I'm very clear."

Lynn nodded, gesturing for Rose to sit down.

His gaze shifted, looking at Ehrelo and Yimini beside him.

Ehrelo and Yimini stood up in unison.

"The current warhorses are limited, so I don't need you to fully forge heavy armor and horse armor. Assemble a team of blacksmith apprentices to handle the forging."

"I only need you to quickly forge and assemble one thousand four hundred and fifty sets of composite armor!"

"Equip all the soldiers with weapons and engage them in training, allowing their bodies to adapt to the armor and weapons."

Both replied in unison, "Yes, Master."

Lynn said with a shake of his head, "I don't need empty promises."

"Tell me, for one thousand four hundred and fifty sets of armor and weapons, how much time do you need from me?"

"How soon can I see these armaments?"

"I know you've been leading the apprentices in high-intensity forging and assembling."

"These days may have been tough."

"But I can only tell you, there's no other way!"

"For this territory to survive in the coming turmoil, for all the townspeople to maintain their current way of life."

"You both know well what kind of life you've lived before!"

"I won't elaborate anymore!"

"Your Blacksmith Workshop and Textile Workshop can only work tirelessly, forging and assembling, manufacturing armor and weapons!"

Hearing Lynn's words, Ehrelo and Yimini's expressions were full of complexity.

Ehrelo took a deep breath, suppressing the grievance in his heart, and answered loudly, "Master, the current total workforce of the Blacksmith Workshop is seventeen hundred people!"

"Among them, five hundred are the peasants you recently reassigned over."

"They lack experience and concepts in forging and production, requiring training and guidance before they can have the ability to forge armor plates."

Lynn nodded, continuing to listen to Ehrelo's recounting.

Only by explaining the production capacity and difficulties can he know.

Otherwise.

With the Blacksmith Workshop's current workforce of seventeen hundred, maintaining the original production levels.

Lynn could completely assume they were slacking off.

Ehrelo continued, "That is to say, the Blacksmith Workshop currently produces fifteen thousand armor plates daily."

Lynn said nothing, but turned his gaze to Yimini, asking.

"Foreman Yimini, on average, how many armor plates are needed for a set of composite armor, excluding the helmet and chest armor made by sand box casting?"

Yimini immediately responded, "Master, on average, about nine hundred pieces."

"Because the current armor plates are somewhat different from the initial ones."

"The size of the plates has become smaller, and the plates on the composite armor are denser, allowing soldiers more flexibility."

Lynn nodded, calculating in his mind.

"Roughly estimating, with the Blacksmith Workshop producing fifteen thousand armor plates daily, and each set of composite armor requiring nine hundred plates."

"Sixteen sets of composite armor can be produced daily, based on the required amount of armor plates!"

Ehrelø concurred, "If excluding the cast chest armor and helmet, indeed so, Master."

Lynn said, "In other words, for one thousand four hundred and fifty sets of composite armor, the Blacksmith Workshop would need three months to produce the required armor plates?"

"Foreman Ehrelø, isn't that a bit too long?"

"Hmm?"

Chapter 736: This Will Be a War of Liberation

Lynn's inquiry was not loud, yet it reverberated throughout the entire reception hall.

It wasn't just Lynn's gaze.

Seated at the dining table, the eyes of Rose and Wesley, Colin and Yimini.

Even Flint, holding a glazed wine bottle, looked curiously at Ehrelø.

The previously relaxed and leisurely banquet atmosphere gradually became heavy.

An invisible pressure weighed down on Ehrelø.

Not just because of their gazes.

More so because of the lordly aura that Master Lynn unintentionally exuded at that moment.

That aura quickened his heartbeat and breathing.

Ehrelø inhaled a sharp breath, making his voice calm and steady.

"Master, according to your calculations, it would indeed take three months."

"However, the blacksmith workshop now has seventeen hundred people."

"As I continually teach and improve their forging skills."

"The production of one thousand four hundred and fifty sets of composite armor will definitely take less than three months!"

Lynn stared directly at Ehrelø and said in a deep voice, "I need an exact time."

Ehrelø furrowed his brows tightly and fell silent, seemingly deep in thought.

A few seconds later.

Ehrelø suddenly lifted his head, meeting Lynn's gaze, and replied.

"Two months! Master, I need two months!"

Lynn nodded, "Very well, I will give you two months."

"If, after two months, I don't see one thousand four hundred and fifty sets of armor and weapons."

"You, as the foreman of the blacksmith workshop, can step down and go dig in the open-pit coal mines."

"You can return when I say you can."

Ehrello was taken aback, but he made no excuses.

He firmly and resolutely responded, "Yes, Master!"

The others seated beside him had varied expressions.

From the questions just now, they too felt Lynn's oppressive presence.

With the command of the lord.

Everyone must exert their utmost effort to complete their mission.

Signaling that Ehrello could sit down, Lynn turned his gaze to Yimini next to him.

Aware it was her turn, Yimini immediately stood up, waiting for Master Lynn's words.

Lynn looked directly at Yimini and began, "Foreman Yimini, the blacksmith workshop needs to forge one thousand four hundred and fifty sets of composite armor plates."

"This means your weaving workshop also has one thousand four hundred and fifty sets of composite armor to assemble and fabricate."

"However, fortunately, the weaving workshop does not need to produce weapons."

"Let's hear it, how much time do you need from me?"

Yimini made no excuses and promptly replied, "Two months' time."

"As long as the blacksmith workshop completes the corresponding armor plates and delivers them to the weaving workshop in batches."

"At most, in two months, we can complete the assembly."

Lynn nodded, needing no inquiry about the consequences of not completing the task.

Yimini promptly said, "If the fabrication is not complete in two months."

"I too can go and do the mining!"

Lynn replied, "Very well."

"The blacksmith workshop and weaving workshop, I give you both two months."

Similarly, he let Yimini sit down.

He then looked at Flint, whose face was flushed, "Sir Flint."

About to drink the gin in his glazed cup, Flint hurriedly set the cup down.

"Lord."

Lynn said, "Your abilities are strong, whether in [forging] or [construction]."

"I have always respected people with technical skills."

"Even though I acquired you from a slave merchant at great expense."

"I have nonetheless provided you with superior living conditions."

Flint blinked his bulging eyes, neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Lynn continued, "Let's temporarily set aside enchantment enhancement."

"Of course, as ordinary people, they do not have the ability to learn it."

"However, I need you to bring up all two hundred of your blacksmith apprentices."

"Make them true blacksmiths."

"At the very least, in the future they should independently forge sets of armor!"

Flint nodded in understanding, explaining, "Lord, I too need only two months."

"Two months later, I will have two hundred blacksmith apprentices present their learning outcomes."

"Two hundred sets of scale armor with chain liner!"

Lynn nodded in satisfaction, "Very good."

"Likewise, if not completed, I will cut off your supply of gin, Sir Flint."

Flint's mouth opened slightly, about to speak.

But feeling Lynn's direct gaze, he ultimately gave up.

Even though he usually argued with Lynn, now was obviously not the right time.

Having lived over a hundred years, Flint did not intend to challenge the lord's authority on such a formal occasion.

Flint lowered his head in acknowledgment.

Lynn's gaze shifted once more, landing on Jose.

"Foreman Jose."

Jose, who had been keeping his head down, heard Lynn call his name.

He immediately got up from his wooden chair and respectfully responded, "Lord, Jose is here."

Lynn acknowledged, "Tell me about the current production progress of the Bow and Arrow Workshop."

Jose did not hesitate, "Master, currently the Bow and Arrow Workshop has a total of three hundred people."

"To improve production efficiency, I have divided them into teams."

"Initially, the first hundred people, because they have the corresponding production experience and techniques, I have let them continue making standard longbows."

"According to the current production efficiency, the hundred people can produce ten qualified standard longbows in a day with assembly line work."

Chapter 737: This Will Be a War of Liberation (Part 2)

Lynn scanned his thoughts.

Producing ten qualified longbows a day is already an efficient output.

Jose continued speaking.

"The two hundred people you've just dispatched, sir, are under my leadership to produce crossbows."

"However, the production process of crossbows is too intricate and clever. To enter mass production, more time is needed..."

Jose seemed to have remembered when Lynn inquired several other foremen.

He quickly added, "But don't worry, sir."

"In a month at most, I'll be able to teach them hands-on how to start producing crossbows."

Lynn nodded, "Very good."

Whether it's standard longbows or [Zhuge Crossbows], he needs the bow and arrow workshop to carry out production.

And must be assembled into the hands of the soldiers.

The standard longbow has a long range, with an effective range of over two hundred meters.

Fast shooting speed, an experienced archer can shoot six to ten arrows per minute.

Strong penetration, the triangular armor-piercing arrow launched by the standard longbow can even penetrate most armor, leather armor, cloth armor, and armor, etc.

Low cost and easy production; the production materials for the standard longbow are relatively easy to obtain.

On the premise of having production technology, only wood and hemp ropes, etc., are needed for mass production.

As for the [Zhuge Crossbow], the range is medium to close, but its ability to fire consecutively is strong, and it can continuously fire multiple arrows.

It can empty the arrows in the arrow quiver in a short time, forming dense firepower output.

High accuracy, with the crossbow's small size, soldiers can easily control the direction of the arrows launched, improving hit rate.

Easy to carry, whether cavalry or infantry, they all can carry and use them.

The combination of both, before the two armies engage closely, is enough to deliver devastating blows to the enemy forces, significantly weakening enemy power!

However.

Just as Jose said,

[Zhuge Crossbow] is not easy to produce.

To achieve mass production, more time should be given to him.

After asking Jose, Lynn turned his gaze to Colin.

Colin stood up calmly and steadily and bent over to explain.

"Sir, currently I hold the position of foreman for both the woodworker workshop and the shipyard."

"Excluding the production of furniture and tools needed for the territory, the woodworker workshop is fully engaged in the production of large-scale equipment."

"During this period, fifty winch Wolf Fang Clubs have been made and installed on the city walls and Weng City."

"Two gates' Semen Knife Cars have also been completed according to the gate dimensions."

"Now the woodworker workshop's focus is on crossbow cannons and catapults."

"Five catapults have been produced, and four crossbow cannons."

Listening to Colin's orderly explanation, Lynn nodded.

Colin continued: "And then the shipyard."

"By mid-June, the second small ship, Noel Ship, can undergo sea trials."

"If there are no accidents, it can be put into transportation use."

Lynn nodded again.

Whether it's the woodworker workshop or the shipyard, as long as Colin is present.

He need not worry about production progress.

Lynn couldn't help but praise, "Very good."

"However, waiting for Avery to complete the construction of two outpost fortresses outside the territory."

"I'll have him build an outer city."

"Hence, more Wolf Fang Clubs, catapults, and crossbow cannons are needed."

"The woodworker workshop needs to speed up progress!"

Colin bent over and nodded, "I understand, sir."

Lynn's gaze shifted from Colin and swept across the people sitting at the dining table.

After some inquiries.

Lynn collected the military might of the territory and the current production progress in the workshop entirely in his mind.

Confirming there are no omissions.

Lynn said, "Today's banquet meeting shall end here."

"You may leave and rest."

Upon receiving Lynn's instructions, everyone rose from their seats, respectfully addressing Lynn.

"Thank you for your hospitality, sir."

"Then we shall take our leave."

"Sir, rest early..."

Lynn nodded, likewise rising from the main seat at the dining table, looking at Rose and Wesley.

"You two stay a moment."

Rose and Wesley did not hesitate to respond, "Yes, sir."

Lynn stepped toward the outdoor balcony of the reception hall.

Rose and Wesley followed closely behind.

After Red opened the balcony door, Lynn strode out.

Instantly, a comfortable night wind blew from afar.

Blowing Lynn's black hair and the robes he wore.

Perhaps because of the distant location in the reception hall, where oil lamps and candles are burning, the air is not very ventilated.

Upon reaching the balcony, standing beside the stone railing, with both hands bracing on it.

Lynn felt a lot more comfortable and smooth in breathing.

Rose, Wesley, and Red following Lynn felt the same.

The expression shook, and they involuntarily took a few extra breaths.

Lynn's gaze looked at the Lord's Square in the distance.

There, a built bonfire was burning fiercely.

Wisp after wisp of fire sparks and smoke spiraled upward into the sky in the night wind.

Fire sparks ultimately disappeared.

Around the bonfire were the townsmen sitting or standing and a group of children playing.

Lynn, back to Rose and Wesley, said.

"I want to launch an attack on the Frank Manor; what are your thoughts?"

Rose and Wesley exchanged a glance, hesitated to speak.

Chapter 738: This Will Be a War of Liberation (3)

Lynn continued, "Speak freely."

"They have their experience and advantages in workshop production."

"But in marching and warfare, your ideas are still needed for reference."

At this point.

Rose stopped wasting words and spoke bluntly, "Master, I wasn't present at Frank Manor during the last military aid."

"Therefore, I think it's more appropriate for Wesley to offer his opinion."

Lynn still didn't turn around and responded.

"Alright, Wesley, share your thoughts."

Wesley, standing next to Rose, had long brown straight hair tied up at the back of his head.

In his brown eyes, he seemed to be pondering.

Lynn did not press Wesley but let the night wind blow as he quietly waited.

After half a minute.

Wesley finally looked at Lynn and respectfully responded.

"Master, I believe your decision is correct."

"Just as you said earlier, Frank Manor controls the entire Morgan Town, acting recklessly."

"This is bound to affect the merchants coming to your territory later."

"This time, it's about collecting various taxes from the Boer merchants, which might not have a significant impact."

"At least the transported goods have safely reached your territory."

"But next time, no one will know what consequences will arise!"

Turning around, Lynn nodded as Wesley spoke.

This was also one of his concerns.

If a Manor Lord or Lord observes the Great Lord's laws and regulations.

Whether they are free people or traveling merchants, they can receive appropriate protection.

However.

Now, the entire Karedi Empire is about to face war.

The system established by the Karedi Empire or the Ducas Clan can hardly constrain or influence the Manor Lords and Lords.

All the regulations are nothing more than empty talk.

Wesley continued, "Master, rather than waiting for unknown situations to arise, causing adverse effects."

"It would be better to take the initiative and nip the danger in the bud."

"Moreover, during the last military aid to Frank Manor, I roughly observed Frank Manor's castle."

"Their manor walls are not high, at most six meters with battlements."

"Apart from simple rolling wood and stones as defensive weapons, no arrow towers were built, nor any large-scale fortification equipment."

"Although Master, you currently have more soldiers than the combined forces of the Three Great Estates."

"But with the catapults and crossbow cannons you have now, attacking Frank Manor is not difficult!"

"However, in besieging a city, unavoidable soldier casualties will occur..."

Lynn murmured.

His gaze shifted to Rose, "Regarding siege, do you have any good strategies?"

Rose, who had been standing by listening, looked at Lynn and responded, "Master, whenever it comes to sieging, the attacking side is always at a disadvantage."

"Even if the enemy only has a five- or six-meter-high city wall, even if they only have simple rolling wood and stones."

"For the attackers, it's a fatal blow!"

"Because as soldiers climb the cloud ladder, they must hold steady and keep balance to prevent falling from the shaking ladder."

"At the same time, they need to hold shields to defend against possible arrows or other ranged weapons."

"At this time, they can easily suffer heavy casualties."

"Therefore, to siege often requires several times more troops than the defenders."

"If it's not absolutely necessary, my advice is not to engage in a siege!"

Wesley also nodded in agreement.

Seeing no further comment from Lynn, Rose tentatively asked, "Master, if possible, can we attack Frank Manor's soldiers on an open plain?"

Lynn's brow raised slightly, and he instantly thought of a strategy from the Thirty-Six Stratagems.

"Lure the tiger away from the mountain!"

Hearing the four words suddenly spoken by Lynn, Rose and Wesley were momentarily stunned.

The two repeated Lynn's words in confusion, "Lure the tiger away from the mountain?"

Lynn acknowledged, "I've thought of a way to attack Frank Manor."

Rose and Wesley exchanged glances again.

Lynn spoke solemnly, "You two may go rest now."

"However, before dawn tomorrow, I need you to gather the soldiers."

"I want to see a ready-to-march army waiting beneath the city wall."

Rose and Wesley's expressions were shaken.

Lynn continued, "At dawn tomorrow, march with me!"

Rose and Wesley responded firmly, without hesitation, "Yes, Master."

With those words, the two no longer had much doubt.

As long as Lord Lynn had a plan.

As generals, they only needed to follow orders.

Watching them leave, Lynn turned his body and looked once more at the distant night sky.

Presently, Frank Manor indeed controls the entire land and labor of Morgan Town.

The land is crucial for a Manor Lord.

This includes arable land, pastures, forests, and so on.

The Manor Lord can organize peasants or hire free people for farming and breeding.

Producing grains, vegetables, meat, wool, and various agricultural products.

Some of these products are used to satisfy the Manor Lord's needs and the living needs of castle personnel.

The rest can be brought to the market to sell for money or trade for other goods.

Chapter 739: This Will Be a War of Liberation (4)

It is one of the main sources of income for the Manor Lord.

And on the other hand, the source of income naturally comes from Morgan Town, now controlled by Janet.

Although Boer previously brought him hundreds of Free People from Morgan Town.

It still doesn't affect the fact that over three thousand Free People continue to live in Morgan Town.

To continue living in the town, they have to pay various taxes.

If they rent land from the Manor Lord for farming, they must pay land rent taxes.

As long as they live in the town, they must pay a poll tax.

If the Free People want to trade in the market, they must pay a certain percentage of a transaction tax.

Even if they engage in crafts like weaving, blacksmithing, pottery, etc., they must pay craft taxes to the Manor Lord.

The various taxes from the three thousand people in Morgan Town are also a huge source of income.

Just like Frank Manor now increases the proportion of transaction taxes and passage taxes on merchants.

And forcibly levies property taxes.

That would be a considerable amount of income!

Even.

Almost equal to an entire year's crop yield from Morgan Town!

This is why both Frank Manor and the other Three Great Estates want to control Morgan Town.

They all want to obtain the desirable tax revenue from Morgan Town.

Therefore.

He can fully utilize Frank Manor's interest in Morgan Town.

To attack Morgan Town!

Divert all the armed forces from Frank Manor.

While they prepare to support Morgan Town.

The two armies converge on the open plains for a direct confrontation!

With his current force of three hundred standard plate armor heavy cavalry and two hundred heavy infantry.

Plus three hundred and fifty light infantry and five hundred longbowmen.

As well as a large number of light infantry.

He doesn't need to fear Frank Manor at all!

Even in close combat, the casualties would be far less than a siege battle!

With similar physical conditions, the number of fully armored soldiers is enough to determine the outcome of a battle!

Thinking of this.

Lynn couldn't help but exhale a breath of warm air.

As the military power of the territory grows stronger.

He now has to consider not only the food supply for the townspeople but also the future development of the territory.

Within the territory's ability, to eliminate all threats incubating or emerging outside the territory.

Before they form a scale, nip them in the bud.

Otherwise, endless troubles would await him.

Even if this external campaign causes massive casualties among his soldiers and severely weakens the military power of his territory.

He still has to execute it.

Moreover.

Military orders are as solid as a mountain, unshakable.

The orders given to Rose and Wesley cannot be changed.

Otherwise, his authority as the Lord will be questioned!

Lynn's gaze once again turned to the Lord's Square.

On the square, dozens of children were playing around the bonfire, running and laughing.

They were carefree and innocent.

At this moment, they and the townspeople are unaware.

Their Lord will lead the soldiers to war at dawn tomorrow!

After withdrawing his gaze, Lynn returned to the reception hall.

The dishes on the dinner table and the leftover food had been cleaned up.

After freshening up, Lynn returned to the lord's bedroom, lay on the big bed, and fell into a comfortable sleep.

...

Meanwhile, on the other side.

Under the night sky, within Frank Manor.

Janet, wearing a cream-colored silk robe, sat leaning on the throne in the reception hall.

Perhaps because the silk robe was designed too low-cut.

The rounded and fair skin on Janet's chest was tantalizingly visible.

The rest was barely covered by the silk.

At this moment, Janet rested her chin on her right hand, supported by the throne's armrest.

Her eyes stared straight at the stone tiles on the floor, somewhat lost in thought.

She seemed to be contemplating something.

Letting the breeze blow in from the gate, rustling her robe without any concern.

The undulating curves went unnoticed by her.

Just as Janet was frowning in thought.

The sound of footsteps echoed outside the reception hall.

The steps were heavy, accompanied by the crisp sound of metal striking the ground.

And they were approaching.

Janet looked up.

She saw Joao, dressed in chain armor, stepping into the reception hall.

His two-meter-tall and burly frame, combined with the chain armor and iron helmet.

Made him appear like a steel beast.

As Joao walked closer and finally stopped before her.

Janet looked directly at Joao and asked, "Uncle Joao, have you negotiated with the weapon merchant from Kakasong City?"

Joao didn't waste any words and replied, "It has been negotiated and the trade is complete."

"A total of five hundred longswords and scimitars, two hundred wooden shields, and two hundred sets of chain armor have all been delivered to the castle."

"The recruited soldiers can now be armed."

Turning the conversation, Joao added, "However, to purchase this batch of armor and weapons, a huge sum of Gold Pounds was spent."

"Just the two hundred sets of chain armor cost nearly two thousand Gold Pounds."

"With the weapons and round shields, the total reached over two thousand three hundred."

Chapter 740: This Will Be a War of Liberation (5)

"Of course, part of it is because the weapon merchants are asking exorbitant prices..."

Janet frowned and said seriously, "Over two thousand three hundred, then so be it."

"We'll take the gold pounds from Morgan Town."

"If a month isn't enough, then two months."

"If two months isn't enough, then half a year!"

"There are so many merchants."

"I can't believe we can't recover such a small amount of gold pounds!"

Janet said coldly, "If they refuse to pay taxes, find any excuse to reduce them to peasants and confiscate their properties."

"Let them know who is in charge in Morgan Town now!"

Joao nodded in understanding.

Janet shifted the topic and asked, "Uncle Joao, besides the weaponry and armor, is there any progress on what I instructed you?"

Joao responded affirmatively, "There's progress, Janet."

"The Blade Wind Corps, with a thousand mercenaries at Wind Hill, is willing to accept Frank Manor's employment."

Joao spoke hesitantly, "But..."

Janet frowned slightly and asked, "But what?"

Joao sighed and explained, "The leader of the Blade Wind Corps said the journey is long and he needs a higher price!"

"He needs one thousand gold pounds!"

Hearing Joao's words, Janet, who was originally leaning back in her throne, suddenly stood up.

She stared directly at Joao and said sternly, "One thousand gold pounds?"

"Why don't they just rob it?"

"Have their brains been spoiled by the prostitutes in the brothel?"

"Do they have no idea about money?"

"Do they know how much grain one thousand gold pounds can buy?"

Joao remained silent.

Before informing Janet of this result,

he had already anticipated such a reaction.

It's not because Janet's temper had become increasingly explosive.

But because, during this period, Frank Manor had been continuously spending money!

Recruiting soldiers, buying weapons and armor, and now hiring the mercenary corps.

Even though, over these days,

he had enforced taxes on a few merchants in Morgan Town and collected head taxes from the free people of the town.

It was still not enough to cover the expenses.

Moreover,

the enforced taxation had already caused the townsmen and merchants of Morgan Town to grumble in discontent.

Joao even felt that,

if not for the armed forces of Frank Manor,

and if he hadn't hung a few free people on the gallows as a demonstration,

the townspeople would have surely risen in rebellion.

After shouting a few phrases to vent her anger, Janet began to calm herself.

Half a minute later,

Janet, slightly appeased, sat back on her throne.

But her chest still heaved rapidly.

Janet looked at Joao and said sternly, "Tell the leader of the Blade Wind Corps, I'll agree to the one thousand gold pounds."

"Have them come to Morgan Town as soon as possible, I need them to guard Morgan Town for me!"

Joao nodded in response, "Yes, Janet."

"I'll go arrange for people to bring them overnight."

Janet nodded and said no more.

Joao bowed slightly, then turned and headed towards the exit of the reception hall.

Watching Joao's gradually retreating figure, Janet's eyes narrowed slightly.

Her face was full of seriousness.

If she hadn't known the exact whereabouts of the gold pounds, Janet might have even suspected.

Whether Joao had embezzled the gold pounds spent within the manor.

Janet muttered to herself, giving herself some reassurance.

"It's nothing, it's nothing."

"As long as I can take over the territory behind the city wall and make it part of Frank Manor."

"A few thousand gold pounds, that's all just small stuff!"

"As long as I can take down Lynn, it's all worth it."

The value of the coal mine, salt mine, iron mine, and vast farmlands.

Plus an unknown amount of labor force.

The value of that territory was beyond her estimation...

Her initial thought was to eliminate all her uncles and replace Jonas as the Manor Lord of Frank Manor.

This way, no one would dare insult her or touch her again.

If given the chance, to obliterate all the Manor Lords in Morgan Town, too.

Janet wanted Frank Manor to become the largest Manor Lord in Morgan Town.

Despite some twists and unexpected turns,

it was Lynn's military support that achieved this goal.

But the end result—Frank Manor indeed controlled Morgan Town.

What surprised her, however.

Was that in Lynn's territory, there were three significant mines that could even make someone sacrifice everything!

Not just her.

Any Manor Lord or Lord, upon knowing, would undoubtedly send troops to seize them.

To capture and claim them.

Thinking of this,

Janet, originally full of anger,

grinned, her eyes filled with anticipation.

...

The next day, at dawn.

The sky had not yet lit up.

The dark night still enveloped the silent red brick town.

At this time, the townspeople were still in their dreams.

Several figures riding fast horses departed from the castle.

They galloped across the town, traversing vast farmlands, heading towards the distant, even darker forests.

Only a few townsmen accustomed to early rising

looked on in confusion as their Lord, accompanied by a few guards, left the town early.

In the forest,

behind Weng City,

one by one, the soldier platoons stood arranged on the lime road.