

# **The Lord's Empire**

## **#Chapter 21 - Read The Lord's Empire Chapter 21**

### **Chapter 21: Skeleton Captain**

Two days later, the stairs were completed. Because it was not very wide at the bottom, Zhao Fu only brought 10 Shieldbearers, 10 Infantry, 10 Archers, Bai Qi, and Old Logue. They were currently walking down the stairs towards the bottom.

By now, their equipment looked completely different. The Infantry were all using iron swords and sabers, while the shields that the Shieldbearers held had a thick layer of iron on the surface, increasing their defensive capabilities greatly. The arrowheads that the Archers now used were also iron, and everyone was wearing leather armor.

The Great Qin Village was currently unable to create plate armor – there were many different kinds of plate armor, and they all required blueprints. Also, the price of creating plate armor was roughly eight times more expensive than creating normal weapons.

Right now, Bai Qi was using a Blue grade sword – it was one of the weapons they had obtained last time from this place, and it had been made usable again after some simple repairs. The Blue grade armor he was wearing was from the Violent Fire Rabbit he had killed before.

Zhao Fu stayed at the back – he was not one to rush at the enemy, so he only wore Normal grade leather armor because it would be more suitable for Bai Qi to have the Blue grade leather armor.

Their group held torches, and the formation was as follows: Bai Qi and the Shieldbearers in the first row, Infantry in the second row, Archers in the third row, and then Zhao Fu and Old Logue, the Mages, in the fourth row.

As they slowly advanced, tongues of blue flames appeared in the heads of five Skeletons ahead. They raised their weapons and rushed at the group of humans. These five Skeletons were all Infantry and held either swords, sabers, or spears.

Bai Qi and the Shieldbearers created a defensive wall, blocking off the Skeleton soldiers. The Skeleton soldiers swung their weapons at the Shieldbearers, but they were blocked by the Shieldbearers' shields.

The Archers drew their bows and fired arrows at the Skeleton soldiers. Arrows weren't very effective against Skeletons because unless the arrows hit the Skeletons' heads, the arrows would not deal much damage. However, the arrows could obstruct the Skeleton soldiers, giving the Infantry opportunities to attack.

This time, Bai Qi and Old Logue didn't do much – the five Skeleton soldiers were split up by the Shieldbearers while the Archers made it difficult for them to attack, and the Infantry attacked the Skeleton soldiers, causing them to retreat. After the Skeleton soldiers lost their balance, the Infantry wildly attacked them without any worries.

After doing this three or four times, the Skeleton soldiers became a pile of bones. Because Skeletons were fuelled by spirit power, once their spirit power ran dry, they would naturally 'die'. The five Skeleton soldiers dropped three Refined Martial Souls and five weapons.

After advancing, they encountered six Skeleton Infantry and two Skeleton Archers.

The six Skeleton Infantry raised their weapons and rushed at Zhao Fu's group without any fear. The Skeleton Archers drew arrows from their quivers and drew their rusty bows.

Swish! Swish!

Two arrows tore through the air and drew an arc as they flew towards Zhao Fu's group of people.

The Shieldbearers quickly raised their shields, blocking the two arrows. However, by now, the six Skeleton Infantry were right in front of them. If the Skeleton Archers continuously shot arrows, they would disrupt Zhao Fu's soldiers' coordination. Moreover, if they weren't careful, they would be hit by the Skeleton Archers' arrows, causing injury or death.

Zhao Fu immediately called out, "Old Logue, attack!"

Old Logue obeyed and raised his wooden staff as two blood-colored fireballs flew at the Skeletons, blasting the six Skeleton Infantry backwards.

Zhao Fu once again commanded, "Archers, suppress those two Skeleton Archers!"

The Archers drew their bows, sending arrow after arrow towards the Skeleton Archers, who were about to attack again.

Following this, Zhao Fu ordered, "Bai Qi, rush over there and deal with those two Skeleton Archers."

Bai Qi ran around the six Skeleton Infantry that had been blasted backwards and charged towards the two Skeleton Archers.

By now, the six Skeleton Infantry were slowly getting back to their feet, and Zhao Fu quickly yelled, "Shieldbearers! Separate them and attack them like last time!"

Zhao Fu gave out a flurry of commands, and everyone quickly carried them out. The Shieldbearers and Infantry formed six small teams and separated the Skeleton Infantry while the 10 Archers fired at them whenever they found the opportunity to. Bai Qi rushed to the Skeleton Archers and swung down with his sword, which was covered in sword qi.

Just like that, they stabilized the situation and turned it in their favor.

Old Logue looked up and stared at Zhao Fu giving orders. Before, even when they were enemies, Old Logue felt quite fearful towards him because he felt that Zhao Fu was incredibly calm and rational when dealing with matters.

Zhao Fu had quickly analyzed the situation and rapidly given out orders in a coherent and calm manner, twisting this situation in their favor. Old Logue felt that it was only natural for his village to submit to Zhao Fu, and his Loyalty towards Zhao Fu increased.

Now that their allies and enemies were fighting at such close range, Zhao Fu and Old Logue could only stand by and watch.

Bai Qi was the first to succeed. He lopped off one of the Skeleton Archers' heads and slashed his sword the other way, sending the other Skeleton Archer crashing against a wall, after which it fell apart.

The Shieldbearers and Infantry also coordinated like they did last time, and they dealt with the Skeleton Infantry one by one.

This time, they obtained 10 weapons: eight were Blue grade and two were White grade, and the two White grade weapons were the Archers' short swords. There were also five Refined Martial Souls.

After resting for a short while, they continued ahead.

It was completely dark within the passage, and the dark made it feel as if there was no end. It was also deathly silent, making everyone feel quite wary.

At this moment, the sounds of the Skeletons coming to life could be heard. There were 12 Skeletons this time; 11 of them were Skeleton soldiers that held sabers, while the last one held a large saber and wore a suit of armor. The last Skeleton's displayed name was [Skeleton Captain].

The situation instantly became quite dangerous for Zhao Fu and his soldiers.

The Skeleton Captain drew its sword and roared as a formless soundwave rippled outwards, its voice incredibly ear-piercing.

Following this, the Skeleton Captain rushed over with the other Skeleton soldiers behind it, and they did not seem clumsy or disorderly at all. They followed behind the Skeleton Captain as if they were living soldiers, and they gave off an unstoppable aura as they charged towards Zhao Fu's soldiers.

"Is this the Skeleton Captain's effect?" Zhao Fu muttered before yelling, "Arrange the formation!"

The soldiers' expressions became grim as they started to move. The Shieldbearers formed a shield wall with the Infantry behind them, and the Archers prepared their arrows.

"Fire!"

The Archers obeyed, and arrows streaked through the air, reaching the Skeletons in an instant. The Skeleton Captain brandished its large saber, and a cold light glinted as five or six arrows were cut out of the air.

At this moment, Zhao Fu roared, "Logue!!"

Old Logue was fully prepared, and he raised his wooden staff, drawing out his full power. Two blood-colored fireballs appeared above his head, and they were twice the size of the ones before.

Old Logue waved his wooden staff, causing the two blood-colored fireballs to fly at the Skeletons.

The Skeleton Captain did not seem to fear the two fireballs at all. The Skeleton Captain tilted its saber as rays of grey light extended out from the saber, and it was about to slash at the two fireballs.

At this moment, Zhao Fu coldly harrumphed. He had long since drawn his Iron Wood bow, and the arrow knocked on it shined with a mystical yellow light as he released it.

Whoosh!

The arrow shot out like a bolt of lightning.

## **Chapter 22: General Armament**

The arrow heavily slammed into the Skeleton Captain's chest, and it was buried in its armor. The Skeleton Captain lost its balance, causing it to stumble back a few steps.

At this moment, the two large blood-colored fireballs slammed into him.

As two massive explosions sounded out, the fireballs exploded into fiery light, creating massive shockwaves and sending the Skeleton soldiers and Skeleton Captain flying.

Just as the Skeleton Captain started climbing up from the ground, a blood-colored fireball from Zhao Fu landed on its body.

Bang!!

An explosion rang out as the Skeleton Captain, who was trying to stand, was sent flying three or four meters.

By now, the other Skeleton soldiers were standing up. After losing the leadership of the Skeleton Captain, they instinctively rushed over.

“Archers, fire your arrows and suppress them!” Zhao Fu yelled.

The Archers continuously shot their arrows in order to stall for Old Logue. Soon, two blood-colored fireballs once again formed in the air and landed amidst the Skeleton soldiers, sending them flying.

Nearby, the Skeleton Captain slowly struggled to its feet when a normal Fireball landed on its body, blasting it back another three or four meters.

Seeing that they had successfully separated the Skeleton Captain from the Skeleton soldiers, Zhao Fu immediately said, “Bai Qi, I’ll leave the Skeleton Captain to you!”

Bai Qi nodded and ran towards the Skeleton Captain.

The remaining 11 Skeleton soldiers were held up by Zhao Fu and the others. Once three or four of them were gathered together, fireballs flew over, after which the Shieldbearers and Infantry wildly attacked the Skeleton soldiers while they were on the ground.

Soon, Zhao Fu was able to control the situation on his side. On Bai Qi’s side, because the Skeleton Captain had been weakened by Zhao Fu and Old Logue’s attacks, it was much weaker than before and was at a constant disadvantage. However, it was still quite powerful. The Skeleton Captain gripped its saber with both hands, attacking Bai Qi fiercely with each attack. Cold saber light continuously glinted as it continuously attacked Bai Qi.

Since his side was under control, Zhao Fu looked over at Bai Qi. Zhao Fu once again knocked an arrow on his bow and used Rock Crushing Arrow, causing strands of mystical yellow light to gather on the arrow.

The Skeleton Captain was currently spinning as its saber slashed towards Bai Qi’s waist.

At this moment, the arrow smashed into the Skeleton Captain's waist, stopping its spin. Bai Qi grasped this opportunity, his sword radiating an incredibly sharp sword qi as it pierced into the Skeleton Captain's head. The blue tongue of fire in the Skeleton Captain's head gradually dwindled before it disappeared.

The Skeleton Captain's body then collapsed, turning into a pile of bones. Bai Qi quickly turned around and came over to join the others, facing three Skeleton soldiers by himself.

Under Zhao Fu's commands, his soldiers attacked with their full strength, and with Old Logue's fireballs, the 11 Skeleton soldiers were quickly destroyed.

This battle lasted for half an hour, and everyone was completely exhausted. This was especially so for Zhao Fu and Old Logue, whose minds were extremely weary.

Following this, they started to collect the spoils from the battle. The 11 Skeleton soldiers dropped 11 Blue grade weapons and 8 Refined Martial Souls. After going over to the Skeleton Captain's bones, Zhao Fu saw his large saber first:

[Hundred Vanguard Sabre]: Grade: Silver, Stats: Strength +3, Constitution +3, Description: An exquisite Gold grade weapon that has become rusty due to the passage of time, becoming an ordinary Silver grade weapon.

Zhao Fu was quite happy to find a Silver grade weapon, and he looked at the Skeleton Captain's armor:

[Lapis Lazuli Armour]: Grade: Blue, Stats: Constitution +1, Description: A Gold grade armor that has become rusty after over 10,000 years, becoming a Blue grade armor.

After obtaining this armor, Zhao Fu gave it to Bai Qi for now. The Lapis Lazuli Armor's defensive capabilities were definitely higher than that of Bai Qi's current armor, so Bai Qi could wear it for now before going back to the village and repairing it.

As for the Blue grade armor that Bai Qi had taken off, Zhao Fu decided to put it on. Apart from those two pieces of equipment, the Skeleton Captain also dropped an orb that shined with a faint light. Within the orb, there seemed to be a soldier wearing armor and holding a large saber. Seeing this, Zhao Fu picked it up and looked at it.

[Soldier Soul]: Description: A powerful soul left behind by a soldier that can be fused into a City Heart to become a guardian spirit. It can also be fused into a weapon to strengthen it. (Note: 100 Soldier Souls can fuse to form a General Armament, and a Lord with 24 General Armaments can use 1000 Soldier Souls to fuse into a King Armament.)

Zhao Fu was pleasantly surprised and felt that the Soldier Soul was quite powerful. Because he didn't know what a General Armament or King Armament was, he could only put the orb away for now, curiosity bubbling within him.

After resting and recovering their strength and spirit for a while, they continued onwards.

They did not meet any more troublesome enemies, and after killing 12 Skeleton Infantry and 5 Skeleton Archers, they obtained 13 Refined Martial Souls.

Zhao Fu had thought that they would be able to continue advancing easily like this, but the situation quickly changed due to the appearance of Skeleton Shieldbearers.

Zhao Fu had only been able to get so far by relying on the fact that he had defensive soldiers, while his enemies did not. Now that the enemy also had defensive soldiers, the situation became quite grim for him.

This time, Zhao Fu encountered five Skeleton Infantry, three Skeleton Archers, and five Skeleton Shieldbearers.

This situation was much more difficult than when they had faced 10 or so pure-offensive Skeleton soldiers. Every time Zhao Fu's Archers shot arrows, they were blocked by the Skeleton Shieldbearers, and charging at them was not so easy either. Shieldbearers could only face off against Shieldbearers in a stalemate.

The only ones who could make a difference were Zhao Fu and Old Logue with their explosive attacks.

The Skeleton Soldiers were also in formation with the Skeleton Shieldbearers in front, the Skeleton Infantry hiding behind them, and the Skeleton Archers standing far behind them with arrows nocked on their bows.

Right now, Zhao Fu had no choice but to use his numbers advantage to go head-to-head with the Skeletons.

On Zhao Fu's side, the Shieldbearers were also at the front, the Infantry behind them, and the Archers with their bows drawn at the back.

The two sides clashed together. Zhao Fu's Archers' main role was to suppress the Skeleton Archers, as Zhao Fu's soldiers were all flesh and blood – when hit, they would be injured or die, unlike the Undead.

Right now, Zhao Fu could only vigilantly monitor the situation. He wanted to use Fireballs to attack the Skeleton Archers, but Magic-type attacks did not have a very long range, so he could only wait for an opportune moment.

However, the situation was always in Zhao Fu's favor. There were always two of Zhao Fu's Shieldbearers facing off against one Skeleton Shieldbearer, trying to knock them out of the way.

However, despite becoming Undead, the Skeleton Shieldbearers seemed to know that Shieldbearers could only remain effective by staying together. As such, no matter how Zhao Fu's Shieldbearers shoved at them, the Skeleton Shieldbearers still remained tightly bunched up together.

The situation remained completely deadlocked, so Zhao Fu had no choice but to send Bai Qi.

## **Chapter 23: Attacking a Village**

Bai Qi's figure blurred as he sidestepped around the left of the Skeleton Shieldbearers. He unleashed a Qi Slash with his full strength, his sword erupting with light as a 3-meter long arc of light slashed out from it.

BOOM!!

Bai Qi's attack caused 3 Skeleton Shieldbearers and the Skeleton Infantry behind them to be sent flying, completely destroying their defense.

Zhao Fu hurriedly roared, "Hurry! Separate them!"

The Shieldbearers and Infantry immediately obeyed, splitting into two teams and separating the Skeletons that had fallen and the Skeletons that hadn't.

Now that the Skeletons' defense had been broken, they immediately fell into chaos. Zhao Fu's soldiers started to attack, but because of how close his own people and the Skeletons were, Zhao Fu could not use any Fireballs and could only shoot Rock Crushing Arrows.

While a Skeleton Shieldbearer was distracted, Zhao Fu shot an arrow at it, piercing into its head.

A 'crack' sounded out as the blue tongue of fire within the Skeleton Shieldbearer's head was extinguished. Its body collapsed as its bones and the shield it was holding fell to the ground.

It was actually quite difficult to hit a Skeleton's head because arrows were quite easy to dodge. Zhao Fu had only succeeded this time because the Skeleton Shieldbearer had been distracted.

However, he did not have time to celebrate when a scream sounded out.

“Arghhh!”

After being hit by a few arrows, a Skeleton Archer went all-out, rapidly shooting arrows, one of which had pierced into one of the Infantryman’s arm.

“Damnit!” Zhao Fu inwardly cursed as he yelled out, “Archers, suppress those Skeleton Archers! Bai Qi, be careful.”

Bai Qi nodded and rushed towards the Skeleton Archers while they were being restrained by Zhao Fu’s Archers.

Zhao Fu took the injured Infantryman out of the battle. Luckily, Zhao Fu had used the Refined Martial Soul from before, giving him a skill that he immediately became proficient at. As such, he had a good grasp of archery. Even though the arrows he shot out did not instantly kill any Skeletons like before, they temporarily stopped the Skeleton soldiers’ attacks, creating some opportunities for his soldiers.

The Skeleton soldiers seemed to detect that the battle was becoming more and more unfavorable towards them, and they started to ferociously attack with wild abandon. In the end, Zhao Fu’s side finally killed all of the Skeletons at the price of 3 of his people getting injured. Bai Qi also successfully dispatched the Skeleton Archers, obtaining a Soldier Soul from one of the Skeleton Archers.

This time, the 13 Skeleton soldiers had dropped 9 Refined Martial Souls, 13 Blue grade weapons, and 3 White grade weapons.

Altogether, they had obtained 1 Silver grade weapon, 55 Blue grade weapons, 10 White grade weapons, 38 Refined Martial Souls, and 2 Soldier Souls on this expedition. They were worth roughly 405 gold coins, which was 4,050,000 copper coins.

Zhao Fu didn’t know how much Soldier Souls were worth because he had never seen them on forums before. They seemed to be quite rare, and it was difficult for Zhao Fu to put a price on them, so he did not count their value into the total he had calculated.

The gains they had received today both surprised and delighted Zhao Fu. However, when he looked at the four injured soldiers, he inwardly sighed. They would have to stop here and go back to rest and strategize. If they continued on, they would keep sustaining injuries or even suffer deaths.

Zhao Fu walked over to the soldier who had the worst injury, the Infantryman who had been shot in the arm by an arrow, and asked in concern, “Are you alright?”

The Infantryman quickly nodded, showing that he was fine.

Seeing this, Zhao Fu said, "I'll help you remove the arrow."

The Infantryman said in a somewhat panicked manner, "Your Majesty, I'll just go to Apothecary Zhang. How could I trouble Your Majesty?"

"Alright, don't worry about it." Zhao Fu bitterly smiled. Since these soldiers respected him so much, he felt quite guilty when he saw them get injured.

Zhao Fu tore the Infantryman's sleeve and cut the arrow shaft before pulling the arrow out in an instant. Blood started to pour out from the wound, and Zhao Fu quickly used Blood Healing. This was the first time he had used it, so he was not sure what the effects would be.

As Zhao Fu placed his hand near the wound, a blood-colored light shined from his hand. The Infantryman's bleeding stopped, and the flesh mended itself at a rate that could be seen by the naked eye.

Even though Blood Healing did not completely heal the wound, it was already half healed.

The Infantryman was almost moved to the point of tears. He had never thought that the incredibly distinguished Majesty, who would become the ruler of Great Qin, would personally tend to his wound. Everyone who saw this felt even more loyal towards Zhao Fu.

Following this, Zhao Fu brought everyone back to the surface. He told the injured soldiers to get medical treatment and then delivered the weapons to Blacksmith Wang Dawu to be repaired.

Zhao Fu and Bai Qi went to a room to discuss their experiences of the battles today. They discussed the shortcomings of their tactics as well as the weaknesses of their enemies and came up with new battle tactics.

After a while, someone came and reported that a bandit village had been discovered 10 kilometers south of the Great Qin Village. Hearing this, Zhao Fu and Bai Qi concluded their discussion and started assembling their soldiers.

"Your Majesty! I want to go too."

Liu Mei was quite excited when she heard that there was a fight going to happen – evidently, she wasn't one for peace and ran over to find Zhao Fu.

Zhao Fu looked at her and asked, "Can you completely obey my orders?"

Liu Mei quickly nodded, expressing that she would follow all of his commands.

Seeing this, Zhao Fu reminded her, “If you don’t follow orders on the battlefield and make trouble, I’ll definitely kill you!”

Liu Mei knew that Zhao Fu was someone who would stand by his words. However, she felt slightly displeased – after all, she was quite a beauty, so how could this fellow keep threatening to kill her.

“Forget it, I won’t bicker with him. I’ve been so bored in the Great Qin Village over the past few days, so I have to go with them to attack this bandit village,” Liu Mei thought to herself. She once again nodded, showing that she understood.

Zhao Fu did not say much after that. With Liu Mei’s skills, she would be a great help to them on the battlefield.

Soon, the soldiers had been gathered and they set off. After traveling for a little more than an hour, they arrived at the bandit village.

This bandit village was next to a small creek, and it was not very big. Its defenses were also quite poor, and there were around 150 people in the village. What surprised Zhao Fu was that 30 or so of them were wearing plate armor. Since they had so many pieces of plate armor, they most likely had blueprints for plate armor, which made him feel ecstatic.

Now, Zhao Fu had around 300 soldiers in his forces: 200 were soldiers from the Great Qin Village, 60 Goblins, and 40 Gnome Crossbowmen.

With 300 soldiers, Zhao Fu would definitely win if he directly attacked the bandit village, since the bandit village only had 150 people. However, Zhao Fu’s forces would still suffer injuries and casualties, and that wasn’t Zhao Fu’s style.

As such, he had to seriously look for any weaknesses or use a method similar to what he had used against the Wolf Village. Even though it was quite shameless, it was quite effective.

As Zhao Fu observed the village, he found that there was no cultivated land within the bandit village, which made sense – the bandits obtained all of their food by raiding other villages or hunting beasts. This village seemed to be the latter, so the situation was not as complicated anymore.

## **Chapter 24: Intermediate Village**

In order to get food, this bandit village most likely did what the Outlander villages did: split into groups to hunt. As expected, four groups of around 10 people each soon departed from the village in different directions.

When Zhao Fu saw this, he also split his forces into four groups. He led one team and followed after them. He hid in the tall grass as he looked at the bandits swaggering along while holding their sabers. He called Bai Qi over and told him his tactic.

Bai Qi looked quite awkward, saying, “Your Majesty, unfortunately... I don’t think I can do it.”

Hearing this, Zhao Fu turned to look at Liu Mei beside him.

“What do you want?” Liu Mei immediately asked. When Liu Mei saw Zhao Fu looking at her, she couldn’t help but tremble and have a bad feeling about it.

After Zhao Fu gave Liu Mei a simple explanation, she looked quite cheerful. She brought along Bai Qi and three other people and openly walked towards the group of bandits.

“Oi! Stop right there!” Liu Mei called out in a loud voice as she and the other four walked up to the bandits.

Hearing this voice, the bandits turned around and saw a beauty in a red dress with four other people. Seeing that the other side only had five people, while their side had 10 people, they did not need to feel scared at all. One of the bandits lewdly smiled as he said, “What does this big beauty want from us? Do you want to play with these big brothers?”

Liu Mei enchantingly smiled, and in the next second, she brandished her whip and cracked it towards the 10 men. Bai Qi and the others also rushed up, and the battle finished in an instant. Bai Qi killed four people alone, the other three people killed one person each, and Liu Mei left three people alive.

At this moment, Liu Mei lightly waved her whip and charmingly smiled as she said, “What were you saying just then?”

The three bandits immediately knelt to the ground and begged, “Female hero! We’re in the wrong, so please spare us.”

“Arghhh!”

Just as the bandit finished speaking, her whip lashed his body, and Liu Mei said with displeasure, “Who’s a female hero? I’m your granny!”

The bandits immediately nodded and said, “Yes, granny, granny...”

“That’s more like it! Who are you all?” Liu Mei asked while smiling.

The three bandits quickly started speaking and said, "We're from the Ferocious Tiger Village, and our leader is Wang Meng. There are also 200 or so brothers inside the village."

The three bandits mentioned the Ferocious Tiger Village, their leader, and their numbers in order to scare Liu Mei into releasing them.

However, her whip once again lashed their bodies, causing them to cry out in pain. Bloody streaks appeared on the three men's bodies as Liu Mei coldly harrumphed and said, "So what about the Ferocious Tiger Village? That man, Wang Meng, sounds like quite a useless fellow!"

The three bandits quickly nodded and agreed.

Pa! Pa! Pa! Her whip once again landed on the three men's bodies. Liu Mei coldly harrumphed in displeasure as she said, "What did you say? I couldn't hear you."

The three bandits cried out in pain and quickly said in a loud voice, "Wang Meng's a coward, and he's completely useless."

"Hahahaha!" Liu Mei laughed, her large breasts rippling as she once again whipped the 3 bandits, and said, "I still couldn't hear you!"

The three bandits could only endure it and continue cursing Wang Meng.

However, Liu Mei continued to laugh while whipping the three bandits.

Zhao Fu, who was hiding by the side, found that Liu Mei might have some secret interests and hobbies. However, she was still complying with his orders, so he didn't say anything.

"Alright! You can piss off back to your village. Tell Wang Meng to come here and lick the bottom of this granny's shoes, or I'll cripple him." Liu Mei said happily. After whipping these bandits for a long time, she felt quite cheerful.

When the three bloodied and bruised bandits heard that this female demon was going to spare them, they felt overjoyed. They quickly crawled away, and after they returned, they added their own words. They told Wang Meng that the woman wanted to skin Wang Meng, make him mate with a sow, and told him to crawl over there and lick the bottom of her shoes.

Hearing this, Wang Meng was completely infuriated and his face became red. After being told that there were only 5 of them, he roared, "Brothers, come with me!"

Following this, Wang Meng took 50 or so bandits, nearly half of the village's forces, to where Liu Mei had appeared.

Soon, Wang Meng came to a sparse area and found Liu Mei, yelling, “So you’re that bitch! You wanted your elder to lick your shoes? Today, your elder and his brothers will all take turns screwing you!”

Liu Mei did not get angry, and she instead calmly smiled – after all, there was not much point in saying anything to someone who was about to die.

“Release the arrows!!”

As the order sounded out, arrows rained down on Wang Meng’s 50 or so bandits. They were completely unprepared, and many of them were instantly killed.

Zhao Fu’s soldiers had long since killed the other 3 teams that had left the Ferocious Tiger Village and joined up with the others. Wang Meng’s 50 or so bandits were facing 40 Gnome Crossbowmen and 60 Archers, and they had been completely unprepared. Without any shelter, how could they survive?

After a few rounds of attacks, Wang Meng and the 50 or so bandits all died.

At this moment, Zhao Fu and his soldiers, who had been hiding in the grass, appeared. He ordered them to clear the battlefield and went over to Wang Meng’s corpse. After searching it, he found a small bag with tens of silver coins and Wang Meng’s Blue grade large saber.

Following this, they headed to the Ferocious Tiger Village. Liu Mei smiled as she followed behind Zhao Fu, and Zhao Fu turned around and looked at her, saying softly, “You did well this time!”

Zhao Fu had wanted Bai Qi to provoke and curse at the bandits as badly as possible. However, Bai Qi was a General – how could he say such things? As such, Zhao Fu asked Liu Mei, a former bandit, to do this, and she had done it excellently.

Liu Mei lightly harrumphed and said in a pleased manner, “But of course, this granny’s not weak at all!”

Zhao Fu laughed when he heard this, but he did not say anything. They arrived at the Ferocious Tiger Village, which now only had 40 or so people, and it no longer posed a threat to them.

Zhao Fu motioned at Bai Qi, who walked up and loudly called out, “You all must have been notified that your leader and the others have died. If you surrender now, I promise that we won’t kill you all.”

Seeing that there were 300 or so enemies outside, after thinking about it for a while, the bandits decided not to fight to the death, and they instead obediently surrendered.

Zhao Fu found the Blacksmith who knew how to forge plate armor – it was a dark-skinned fellow called Deng Li.

Following this, Zhao Fu went to the Village Hall and conquered it, awarding him 50 Achievement Points. Because this village was quite far away from the Great Qin Village, Zhao Fu chose to [Relocate] it, granting the Great Qin Village 280 EXP.

At this moment, a system announcement sounded out:

“Congratulations! The Great Qin Village has levelled up into an Intermediate Village!”

## **Chapter 25: Den**

Zhao Fu was happy that the Great Qin Village had finally leveled up. After returning to the Great Qin Village, he brought Deng Li and 36 pieces of plate armor to Wang Dawu and asked him to do some repairs on the plate armor.

Right now, the Smithy and Tailor Shop greatly lacked people. The weapons they had obtained from the bottom of the crack had still not been repaired, and now, there was also plate armor that needed to be repaired. As such, Zhao Fu had to add some more people to help them.

Afterwards, Zhao Fu re-established the Ferocious Tiger Village west of the Great Qin Village and sent a few people to manage it. Finally, he went to the Great Qin Village's Village Hall and looked at its new stats:

Village Name: Great Qin Village (Legendary)

Level: Intermediate (24/30,000)

Village Area: 5 square kilometers.

Village Territory: 250 square kilometres.

Residents: 465/6000

Military: 216/2400

Popular Support: 80

Village Special Stats: Territory Crop Output +40%, Territory Crop Growing Time -40%, Population Limit +20%, Residents' stats can randomly +2, Soldiers' stats +2%, Population Attraction +30%, chances of attracting higher grade population +30%

Subsidiary Village Limit: 8

Subordinate Villages: Logue Village, Jean Village, Dorun Village, Li Family Village, Wild Wolf Village, Ferocious Tiger Village

In terms of stats, Zhao Fu was not too surprised that the village's stats had increased by 10%. However, he was shocked to see that he could now have 8 Subsidiary Villages.

However, the population of the village was always a problem: he only had 465 residents, while the limit was 6000. Apart from the Great Qin Village, even the other villages had not been filled up. This was especially so for the Wild Wolf Village and the Ferocious Tiger Village – altogether, Zhao Fu had sent less than 20 people to those villages.

Before, the Li Family Village had been quite populated, but Zhao Fu took two-thirds of the population with him to the Great Qin Village, so the Li Family Village was also lacking people.

This made Zhao Fu sigh. However, he couldn't expect to fill all of them in just a few days or even weeks: the development of villages took months, if not years, and they would only gradually become powerful over time. Right now, with all of the villages combined and the Great Qin Village's special stats, he could summon 40 villagers every day.

As for the bottom of the large crack, Zhao Fu did not plan on exploring it for the time being. He decided that he would create two special teams to explore the bottom of the crack in the future.

Right now, Zhao Fu wanted to create a Mage group. Magic skills were quite rare, but they were incredibly powerful. As such, Zhao Fu planned to take some soldiers to kill magic beasts. He also wanted to tame some large beasts, such as cows, pigs, and horses. Because of their lack of horses, Zhao Fu had not been able to create a Cavalry team.

They could not do without Cavalry, the most powerful type of soldier in an era where cold weapons reigned supreme. Moreover, with horses, they wouldn't have to run to places themselves.

Zhao Fu spent some money to obtain the Taming skill without changing professions and brought Bai Qi, Old Logue, 10 Spear and Shield soldiers, 10 Sabermen, and 10 Archers with him. Finally, after much pleading from Liu Mei, Zhao Fu could only agree to take her as well.

The Great Qin Village was in the outer region of the Forest of Horrors, and the further one went into the forest, the more magic beasts there would be. As such, Zhao Fu took his soldiers and headed west.

On their journey, the trees became larger and larger, and they seemed to pierce through the clouds. The lighting became quite dim, and the trees' appearances were all quite strange. They would occasionally see some wild rabbits run past and make some noise.

Zhao Fu did not pay these things much mind, and he led his people onwards. Soon, he found a sow and 8 piglets looking for food.

Wild boars were animals that lived by themselves when they became mature, and unlike other animals that were usually caught in large numbers, they were quite hard to catch. If they could find a Den, that would be ideal.

Dens were like villages for animals, and they were places where wild animals would spawn. However, there were very few Dens, and they were protected by at least hundreds of wild beasts up to even tens of thousands.

They were now quite far away from the Great Qin Village, so it was impossible for them to go back just to bring the sow and piglets back, so they ended up sparing them.

Onwards!

Zhao Fu suddenly stopped as he discovered 10 or so Azure Oxen beside a small creek. Their fur was a light azure color, and they had 2 horns that gave off a metallic luster.

If they could capture these Azure Oxen, they could use them to plow the land as well as deliver iron ore, saving them a lot of manpower. As such, Zhao Fu immediately turned his attention to the herd of Azure Oxen.

However, these large wild beasts were not easy to catch. If Zhao Fu and his people rushed up to the Azure Oxen and caused them to go wild and charge at Zhao Fu and his people, things could go badly. His 10 Shieldbearers definitely wouldn't be able to stop these 10 or so Azure Oxen.

Moreover, he couldn't rely on Archers either. It would be fine to shoot a few arrows at them, but if the arrows hit their vitals, the Azure Oxen would immediately run away. How could someone chase after an ox that had been stimulated by pain? Moreover, if the other oxen became scared and rushed off, they would not be able to do anything about it either.

Perhaps the Archers could aim at the Azure Oxen's legs, making it so that they couldn't run. However, there was a chance of permanently crippling the Azure Oxen. Using crippled Azure Oxen to plow the land or to deliver iron ore wouldn't be very efficient.

As such, using traps was their best course of action. Zhao Fu turned and told his idea to Bai Qi and the others, and they all nodded in agreement and started to set traps north of the Azure Oxen.

Zhao Fu split the soldiers into three teams, and Zhao Fu, Bai Qi, and Liu Mei took leadership of one team each. Because Old Logue was fairly old and was a Goblin, he couldn't run very fast, so he would stay where he was and use his fireballs to make sure that the Azure Oxen ran into the traps.

Following this, they set their plan into action. Zhao Fu, Bai Qi, and Liu Mei's teams came from the east, south, and west, moving towards the Azure Oxen. As they drew closer, the Azure Oxen sensed danger, stopped eating grass, and started to look around them.

At this moment, the three teams rushed at them but did not attack. They only loudly shouted or hit their swords and sabers against their shields, making it seem like they had a massive force. This caused the Azure Oxen to run away in fear.

The most cheerful of them all was Liu Mei, and she laughed loudly as she brandished her whip. As the soldiers clamored and rushed at the Azure Oxen from the east, south, and west, the oxen could only run north.

The three teams gradually joined together and chased after the Azure Oxen. If the Azure Oxen strayed off the path leading to the traps, Zhao Fu's Archers used their arrows to herd them in the right direction.

Soon, the Azure Oxen rushed into the traps and their legs were tightly bound.

Bang, bang, bang, bang...

The Azure Oxen crashed to the ground, causing muffled sounds and dust to fill the air. The Azure Oxen quickly got up and tried to run, but they could not get rid of the ropes around their legs.

These ropes were two finger widths thick, and they were wrapped around trees that were at least 1 meter thick. As such, no matter how much the Azure Oxen struggled, they could not break free.

When they had used up all of their strength, Zhao Fu's people went up to them and started to use Taming, easily netting them 16 Azure Oxen.