

The Lord 221

Chapter 221: Dark World

Only the five most powerful Legatees who had gathered China's Fate dared to use their Nation Armaments so easily. Apart from Xia, Shang, Zhou, Qin, and Han, other Legatees would have to think twice about using their Nation Armaments in the future.

Apart from China, the Roman Empire seemed to have also used its Nation Armament – it was a spear called the Spear of Destiny.

Egypt had also used their Nation Armament slightly before – their Nation Armament was called the Solar Crown.

These factions only dared to use their Nation Armaments slightly because they didn't have a massive amount of Fate. Because of how big China was, it contained a great amount of Fate, but most of it had gone to the five great Dynasties and their Legatees.

Out of China's five great Dynasties, only the Han Dynasty hadn't used its Nation Armament yet, so their gains were far lesser than the others. Apart from these factions, no other faction had used their Nation Armaments yet.

Zhao Fu didn't know much about different Nation Armaments. This was because the world had a long history, was very large, and had many different nations and empires.

Right now, it was still the early stages, so not many people dared to use their Nation Armaments. Zhao Fu knew that by the late stages, as the nations and empires became powerful, the Nation Armaments would also become incredibly powerful. When that time came, the Heaven Awaken World would become incredibly terrifying and brutal.

Over at Great Xia, Si Ji was quite satisfied with his gains this time. Last time, during the Ten Thousand Flower Festival, he had only gained the eighth-ranked Legendary grade equipment, while he had obtained the fifth-ranked profession this time. He had made quite an improvement.

However, he was apprehensive towards the unknown factions that had obtained the top four professions. Recently, Great Qin had become much quieter than before and hadn't done anything big; therefore, Great Qin wasn't as focused upon.

After hearing his subordinates' reports, it seemed that Great Qin hadn't obtained a single profession, but how could Si Ji believe this? He had already started viewing Great Qin as one of his most powerful rivals, and he wouldn't believe that Great Qin was so weak.

Whenever Si Ji thought about the top four professions, the possibility of Great Qin taking one of them always flashed in his mind. However, according to his spies in East Green, nothing big had happened there.

“ _Could it be that Great Qin’s not in East Green? What’s going on?_ ” Si Ji couldn’t understand what was going on, but he was still uneasy. He would never have expected that both the top-ranked and third-ranked professions had been taken by Zhao Fu.

Great Shang’s Legatee, Di Wutian, stood at a high place and uproariously and domineeringly laughed. He was quite happy with his results this time, and apart from the original ten or so seductive women, there were a few more seductive women standing behind him. It seemed that his harem had yet again increased.

Great Zhou’s Legatee, Ji Shenming, wasn’t very happy with his gains during the Ghost Festival, but he could only be satisfied with that. He held a banquet for those who had made great contributions, while Great Han’s Legatee, Liu Ye, could only sigh and feel disappointed – some unforeseen events had happened this time.

After looking through the Heaven Awaken World forum, Zhao Fu’s bodyguard arrived with some food. After quickly eating it, he once again went to the Heaven Awaken World.

After the Ghost Festival finished, there were two main things for Great Qin to do.

The first was to start gaining slaves. Great Qin had now unlocked 21 regions, seven of which were on the boundary with Vietnam. Moreover, many of those regions were heavily influenced by Zhao Fu’s Vietnamese residents, and Great Qin controlled them from the shadows.

In the future, Zhao Fu wanted Ly Qinqian to create a faction that gathered not only indigenous residents but also Vietnamese players. At the same time, Zhao Fu would start recruiting people on the Chinese side.

Because it was so chaotic in the boundary regions, there were great profits to be made there.

However, Zhao Fu’s aim wasn’t just the boundary regions – he would also be gaining a large number of slaves in exchange for selling Shattersteel Iron weapons!

Zhao Fu’s plot was somewhat insidious, but he didn’t care about the methods he used as long as he could fulfill his goals. However, he wasn’t one to be so shameless as to market his cruel plots as something that was grand and heroic.

Out of good, neutral, and evil, Zhao Fu would definitely be neutral, leaning towards evil!

Right now, population was incredibly important to any faction, so it was incredibly rare for a faction to give away people unless that faction was absolutely desperate.

What Zhao Fu wanted to do was to incite discord between various factions and make them fight amongst themselves, reducing them to a state where they had to offer their people. However, if he wanted to do such a thing, he would have to personally go and set up the right conditions in each of the regions. He also needed detailed intelligence to make plans in order for this to work.

Now that Zhao Fu wanted to rapidly gain slaves, he had to encourage warfare. If it was in the real world, he would be lambasted with criticism, which would include violating human rights and destroying peace.

However, Zhao Fu didn’t care about any of this – when the Heaven Awaken World devoured the real world in the future, an incredibly dark era would descend, and people would start dying permanently.

Once he died, he would stay dead, so he understood that he had to start making preparations now, no matter how cruel they were.

Justice? Peace? Benevolence? If there were any people who truly believed in such things and followed them, Zhao Fu would accept their criticism. However, when the time came, there would only be perhaps one in ten thousand people who would hold on to such beliefs – most people would be hypocrites and two-faced.

Moreover, if Zhao Fu wanted to buy slaves with equipment, he would need a massive amount of materials. He had a Bronze Concentrate Mine and could also purchase large amounts of material. High-grade materials were difficult to obtain, but ordinary materials could be bought quite easily.

Finally, if he wanted to carry out his plan, he would have to remain absolutely neutral in all circumstances and couldn't show that he was a threat. Otherwise, his plan wouldn't work out.

The second thing to do was to obtain a large number of Stage 1 corpses and high-grade corpses.

Great Qin would normally obtain some high-grade corpses when attacking other villages, so this wasn't too difficult. However, Zhao Fu couldn't have high requirements and had to settle for A grade corpses if he wanted many of them.

Zhao Fu needed high-grade Grade Orbs to help his soldiers cultivate faster and to increase their comprehension, and he needed Stage 1 corpses to quickly boost their cultivations in the short term.

Right now, out of Zhao Fu's 20,000 soldiers, there were roughly 5,000 of them who were at Stage 0-7 or Stage 0-8 – these were all soldiers who had followed Zhao Fu from the beginning. Most of them were A grade and had relatively high cultivations, and once Zhao Fu obtained a large number of Stage 1 corpses, he would instantly be able to gain 5,000 Stage 1 soldiers.

However, it was very difficult to get a large number of Stage 1 corpses, and only main cities had many of them. What's more, there were very few cities like Battle City; otherwise, with 20 corpses from each city, Zhao Fu wouldn't be so troubled by this.

Could he use some sort of method to make two main cities go to war and collect a large number of Stage 1 corpses? However, the City Lords weren't idiots, and they wouldn't be used so easily. If Zhao Fu failed, he would face the wrath of two main cities.

Chapter 222: Vietnamese Guard

At the same time, refining corpses required energy stones, and if Zhao Fu wanted to gain a large number of slaves, he would have to effectively spend a lot of money to obtain them. Because energy stones were so expensive, at a price of one for ten gold coins, 1,000 of them would cost 10,000 gold coins, which Zhao Fu simply couldn't afford.

Indeed, if Zhao Fu wanted to carry out all of his plans, he would go from being a mega tycoon to someone who desperately needed money. However, he could keep this under control by progressing with his plans slowly.

Zhao Fu could begin with the slave plan immediately, but regarding the Stage 1 corpses, he didn't have a plan and could only take it one step at a time.

Zhao Fu brought along Ly Qinqian and started to discuss his plans with her. While this happened, Great Qin reorganized its army and prepared for battle.

Right now, each team had Hundred Ghost Illusionists, Ghost Summoners, and Netherghost Archers. Ten Hundred Ghost Illusionists could work together to unleash the Dark Ghost World, a powerful illusion, which would help Great Qin take captives.

After Zhao Fu gave out the orders, Great Qin's various Departments all put the plan into motion, going to the various regions and establishing trading offices to obtain people.

All of the trading offices had to be as mysterious as possible, and they couldn't reveal a link to the Drizzle Merchant Alliance. Otherwise, if others saw such a rich Merchant Alliance buying so many people, they would become incredibly wary. No one would be stupid enough to trade with them and make them even more powerful.

The trading offices were in properties that Zhao Fu had bought before, which were on the luxurious streets of the various main cities. Now that Zhao Fu was a First-Ranked Baron, he could employ 30 Stage 1 city guards, so in each main city, he stationed ten of them at the Westfall Restaurant and 20 of them at the trading office.

Zhao Fu knew that once the trading office started operating, it would become a place of trouble, so he had to use power to deter any troublemakers in order to guarantee the safety of the trading office.

As soon as the trading offices appeared, they didn't hide their evil goal: they all had signs that said: "One good quality Normal grade weapon for a young man of any race, one good quality Blue grade weapon for ten young or adult males or females of any race, and one good quality Silver grade weapon for 100 young or adult males or females of any race."

A good quality Normal grade weapon cost 60 silver coins, which was 6,000 copper coins or \$60,000 in the real world. As such, this was a good deal for anyone.

As soon as this trading office was set up, it was surrounded by people with different attitudes. One person angrily yelled, "Are you even human? You're trying to buy and sell humans like livestock!"

Another person yelled, "I study law; this sort of conduct is unlawful, and you'll be going to prison for a long time!"

Others angrily yelled, "This is a violation of human rights and completely unethical! I hope you won't do this; otherwise, those with morals will strongly protest this sort of conduct!"

"That's right! You're going too far; you're actually trying to buy slaves? We're a cultured society now, so why are you doing such a thing?"

With a few people in the lead, a crowd of angry people quickly gathered, condemning and criticising the people at the trading office.

Zhao Fu, who wanted to see how the trading office would do, couldn't help but chuckle when he heard their words. To him, these people had been living in a 'cultured society' for too long and were simply idiots for clinging onto such values in light of the times to come.

Right now, none of them realized his or her own current state. There were strict rules in the main cities that they lived in, so they hadn't yet realized how dark this world was and how much darker it would become in the future.

After the Heaven Awaken World devoured the real world, the Heaven Awaken World would truly become a world in which the strong preyed on the weak. Main cities would lose everything that was restricting their actions, and all order and justice would fall away.

Most players, upon losing their 'support,' would be mercilessly slaughtered by main cities. When that time came, people would do whatever they wanted to do – kill, plunder, rape, and take revenge. Nothing would restrict them, and anything would be permitted.

However, who would come to their aid? If one was too weak, one would be killed by others, and that would be it. After dying, that person would stay dead.

When that time came, these people, who had been living in their 'cultured society,' would finally wake up and realize what sort of world this was. However, it would be too late then, and Zhao Fu wasn't going to save them.

However, no matter if he did good or evil, he required power.

When he heard their self-righteous words about valuing life and spreading love, Zhao Fu was somewhat disgusted by their hypocrisy and shallowness. He stepped out, releasing a powerful aura that weighed down on the ordinary players' bodies.

Everyone felt a pressure weigh down on them and felt quite shocked. The crowd fell silent, and no one dared to say anything.

"If you want to trade, then I welcome you! If you want to make trouble, then you can die!" Zhao Fu's cold voice and powerful aura caused everyone present to feel incredibly nervous, and those present didn't dare to say anything.

A woman with an ordinary appearance and pimples all over her face mustered up her courage and yelled somewhat nervously, "I... I'm not afraid of you. We need to value human rights and spread love, not war. We need to build a peaceful society in this world, and scum like you..."

Chi!

Zhao Fu didn't even bother to look at her as he casually waved his hand, causing a black sword light to flash out and chop off the woman's head.

Blood sprayed everywhere as the woman's head fell to the ground, and then her body soon followed.

"Ahhhhh!!!" None of the people around them had expected such a thing, and they all screamed in terror. Following this, Zhao Fu turned his cold gaze to them, and they immediately ran away in fright.

Even though he had killed someone in a main city, it wasn't a big deal. After all, these people had come to make trouble for him, and he was a First-Ranked Baron. Furthermore, that person was just an ordinary player, not an indigenous resident or a city guard.

There were many people who had criticized Zhao Fu, but there were also numerous people who were tempted. After all, this was equivalent to \$60,000 in the real world. It was very easy to obtain people in the Heaven Awaken World, as all one had to do was go to a remote village and bring someone back. It wasn't like in the real world where one would be heavily punished for such behavior.

In the face of such massive profits, many people agreed to the terms and asked for more specific details before starting to act.

When he saw this, Zhao Fu was able to rest at ease, and he then took Ly Qinqian to Cowtooth City.

Chapter 223: Great Qin Empire

Cowtooth City was a main city on the boundary between China's territory and Vietnam's territory, and it was the place that Zhao Fu had taken Ly Qinqian from. Now, he had brought her here to establish a faction.

"If you want to rule above countless people, you need to first act like a leader!" When Zhao Fu looked at Ly Qinqian and felt her feeble aura, he knew that she didn't have the characteristics of a leader. Even though he didn't need her to do any managing, he still needed her to be able to lead others in his stead, which was why he said that to her.

Ly Qinqian earnestly nodded, signaling that she understood.

When Zhao Fu had first told her that he wanted her to be a figurehead and a leader, she had thought that she wouldn't be able to do such a thing. However, she realized that this was a good opportunity – if she could do well, she would be able to enter the ranks of the upper-level figures of Great Qin and enjoy immense prestige and wealth in the future.

If she missed this opportunity, she would remain a little Village Chief and spend her life in mediocrity. As such, Ly Qinqian wanted to grab this opportunity. However, in front of Zhao Fu, she didn't dare to act too tough in front of Zhao Fu, as his aura was simply too powerful.

Seeing this, Zhao Fu took Ly Qinqian to one of the properties he had bought previously. This place had an area of 3,000 square meters and wasn't on one of the luxurious streets, so it hadn't been too expensive. It would be a good starting point for the headquarters.

Zhao Fu didn't establish a village as the headquarters because the faction had only just been established. He would only do this after it had somewhat grown.

Zhao Fu had already decided on the name for this faction: Vietnamese Guard!

The meaning was indeed to guard Vietnam – on the face of things, it would protect Vietnam from other nations and help Vietnam become powerful.

This was the Vietnamese Guard's lofty and noble goal. Zhao Fu couldn't help but laugh – after all, if a faction wanted to become powerful, it had to have a noble role that people would admire and respect. He needed people to admire and respect this faction, and he also had to make them believe that it really was protecting Vietnam.

Moreover, this would stimulate the patriotism of the Vietnamese people, making them eagerly join and sacrifice themselves for the cause. The Vietnamese Guard would slowly infiltrate all of Vietnam and become a top-tier faction within it.

Afterward, when the time came to carry out Zhao Fu's true plan, the Vietnamese Guard would cause chaos within, allowing Zhao Fu to take it down in one fell swoop and devour it.

No one would ever expect the patriotic and self-sacrificing Vietnamese Guard to actually be Zhao Fu's butcher's knife.

These were all things for the future, so Zhao Fu didn't dwell on them. Right now, their goal was to recruit people. Zhao Fu had already picked out some of the core members, and now, he just needed to recruit some ordinary Vietnamese people.

"Everyone, are you often bullied by the Chinese world in the real world and in the Heaven Awaken World?

"Have you not taken enough of their abuse? Yes, China is powerful, and it has been since ancient times. However, we don't need to fear them! If we join together, we can make it so that they won't be able to be so arrogant and domineering anymore!

"Right now, I'm creating the Vietnamese Guard, a group that will protect Vietnam from being bullied in the future. We will protect Vietnam's dignity and cause Vietnam to rise. I believe that Vietnam is the most powerful country in the world!"

Ly Qinqian stood out and shouted out the lines that had been prepared for her. She delivered it quite well, with each word filled with passion and love for her country.

These words drew countless Vietnamese peoples' gazes. After all, the boundaries were quite chaotic, and they often clashed with the Chinese side.

Ly Qinqian's rallying call evoked a passionate response from the crowd. Who wouldn't respond to such a patriotic call?

Large crowds had started to gather, and Ly Qinqian subtly looked at Zhao Fu, who nodded and signaled her to continue.

Ly Qinqian understood and continued to say, "Everyone, think about how we've always yielded to China throughout history and how much abuse we've taken from them. Even now, they're constantly threatening Vietnam's borders. We can't continue to remain silent like this! We need to stand up and join together! Join the Vietnamese Guard! We take excellent care of our members! Please come and take a look!"

These incredibly provocative words caused the Vietnamese people's blood to boil, and many girls were moved to tears while the men yelled, "I want to join!"

When they heard that the Vietnamese Guard had great pay and benefits, the Vietnamese people leaped at the opportunity to join, and the scene became incredibly lively, even starting to get out of control.

Ordinary members would receive wages of 1,000 copper coins per month, which was \$10,000 in the real world, and elite members could receive 3,000 copper coins per month, which was \$30,000 in the real world. Because of inflation, money in the real world wasn't worth too much, but this amount was still enough to attract many people.

This amount of money was nothing to Zhao Fu, and the benefits would definitely be greater than the costs, as these people would be able to do much in one month.

Right now, the Vietnamese Guard was clothed in a noble appearance and treated its members well, so no matter if one was a man or a woman, old or young, everyone clamored to join. Of course, Zhao Fu didn't just take anyone. Zhao Fu wasn't stupid. He wouldn't pay those who were useless or couldn't fight.

After sorting through the people, the Vietnamese Guard took in 1,500 members. Compared to a main city with more than 1 million people, this wasn't a very big figure.

However, they had only just established this faction, and its foundation wasn't solid yet. That was why they had only recruited this many people for now. After the faction's foundation was stable, they would slowly expand and develop, entering every nook and cranny of Vietnam. When that time came, Zhao Fu would open his evil mouth and devour all of Vietnam.

None of these people could expect that it was actually Great Qin controlling all of this. When they did realize this, it would already be too late. When he saw how confident, excited, and happy these Vietnamese people seemed, a trace of a cold smile appeared on Zhao Fu's face..

The plan that he had made from the very beginning was now being set into motion. Zhao Fu decided to slowly develop while making plans for the next stage.

As soon as the Vietnamese Guard appeared, it drew the attention of many factions. Many people were quite wary of this faction because of its sudden appearance and fame.

However, as the Vietnamese Guard expressed its goodwill to those factions, they became less guarded against them.

This was especially so for the Vietnamese military – they loved these sorts of patriotic factions. The Vietnamese Guard's goal was to protect Vietnam, not to become a king like other factions. This aligned with their goals as military men, so the Vietnamese military decided to help the Vietnamese Guard quickly grow.

If Zhao Fu knew about this, he would've laughed his head off!

Chapter 224: The Emperor Guards the Nation; The King Dies for His State

After taking care of the Vietnamese Guard, Zhao Fu returned to the Great Qin Town. Just as he was about to start discussing the next steps with Bai Qi and the others, Zhang Baishu came to find him to tell him that the Hundred Origin Pills were ready.

The Hundred Origin Grasses had been planted en masse, and with the Flower Spirits' help, they were finally ready to be harvested.

The Hundred Origin Pill was a Stage 2 medicinal pill that could increase cultivation speed by 400%. With this medicinal pill, Zhao Fu's soldiers' cultivation speeds would become even faster – at the very least, their cultivation speed wouldn't be inferior to those of the city guards of main cities. This made Zhao Fu feel quite happy, and he took the first bottle of Hundred Origin Pills from Zhang Baishu.

The Hundred Origin Pills were as big as soybeans and a dense green color. They didn't smell like medicinal pills but like grass, and they gave off a slight fragrance.

Zhao Fu swallowed one of them and felt a ball of spirit energy disperse throughout his body – the effects were quite good. Zhao Fu smiled and said amiably, "Baishu, continue refining these pills; try to make enough for everyone in the army."

Zhang Baishu was delighted that Zhao Fu was satisfied with the medicinal pills he had refined, and he immediately accepted his order and began to refine a large amount of Hundred Origin Pills.

Afterward, Zhao Fu, Bai Qi, and the others discussed their future plans and some other matters. After making some decisions on these matters, Zhao Fu went to talk to Ba Qing.

This was because they were in dire need of money to fund their conquest, and using equipment to trade for population required even more money. Furthermore, after the Ghost Festival, Great Qin was in great need of money.

"Ba Qing, do you have any ideas for the business side of things?" Zhao Fu sat on a chair as he looked at Ba Qing, who gave off a wise and kind aura.

Ba Qing slightly smiled as she lightly nodded and replied, "Your Majesty, I indeed have some ideas."

When he heard this, Zhao Fu motioned for Ba Qing to continue.

"Your Majesty, with chaotic battles happening everywhere, selling equipment and medicinal pills will undoubtedly result in the greatest profits. However, that will strengthen our enemies. Since we can't do such a thing, we have to look at traditional business methods.

"Most nations' economies focus on something, such as agriculture, livestock, or industrialism.

"First, each faction is able to sufficiently supply itself with crops, but very rarely are Outlander tribes self-sustaining. Each region is incredibly big, and our business partners don't necessarily have to be with main cities. There is value in trading with others as well.

"Second, there's livestock. The business potential of specializing in livestock isn't very high, as no faction lacks meat. However, we can still somewhat develop it as there are still profits to be gained.

"Given that Great Qin controls everything within 500 kilometers, I recommend that we draw out some land to raise and breed livestock – not only will it be enough for Great Qin's subjects, but we can also sell the excess.

“As for industrialism, it’s best not to focus on that for now. Instead, we should focus on actual businesses. Right now, Great Qin’s main sources of revenue are from restaurants and selling all sorts of items unique to the different regions.

“Now that a lot of time has passed, many people have become Barons, and they’ve started setting up shops in the main cities. Despite my management, the restaurants have been earning less and less, and now, most of them only earn half as much as before.

“However, this is already the best that we can do. The competition between restaurants is incredibly intense, and it’s only because of our fame from the beginning and some unique dishes that we’re still able to earn half of what we earned at the beginning. Right now, the profits of the restaurants have stabilized, so they won’t be decreasing anymore.

“As such, it will be incredibly difficult to increase the profitability of any of the existing restaurants, so the best thing for us to do is to open up more regions and set up more restaurants there.

“At the same time, the profits from the items unique to each of the regions have stabilized as well. They’re not as massively popular as they were in the beginning, but we can change this through how we operate.

“It’s best for us to sell these things in bulk and allow other people to retail them. That will save us effort while still earning us a lot of money through the massive number of sales. At the same time, we can also sell some ordinary items in bulk.

“Moreover, these unique items, such as East Green’s freshwater fish, Red Plum Plains’ Red Plums, and Hundred Bamboo’s Bamboo Rats, are all things that we can grow or breed ourselves, so we don’t have to buy them like before. We can establish our own cultivating grounds in each of the regions, which will greatly decrease our costs.

“It’s a pity that everyone can obtain normal vegetables, rice, oil, and salt, so we won’t be able to generate profits from such things.”

After listening to Ba Qing, Zhao Fu felt that there were many things that he had taken care of poorly before. To be able to identify so many areas in which they could improve, Ba Qing truly deserved her fame in this area.

The profitability of the restaurants caused Zhao Fu to sigh. After all, the restaurants were how Great Qin became rich before, but as other people’s statuses also increased, he had gradually lost his advantage.

Some of the things that Ba Qing had mentioned were feasible, while others weren’t. Something that was key was that the source of their profits wasn’t limited to just main cities, as there were hundreds of times more people living in the wilderness. They could generate massive profits from those people.

However, how could they trade with those people? The wilderness was incredibly large, and the various villages, towns, and cities were scattered all over the place. How could they trade with all of them? That was almost impossible.

Moreover, if the Great Qin Town’s position was exposed, Zhao Fu’s relationship with them would no longer just be that of a business relationship.

This world was one in which both good and evil existed. Some villages were led by friendly and easygoing people, and Zhao Fu would use softer approaches towards such people.

Right now, what Zhao Fu needed the most was population. No matter what he needed to do, he just needed to increase his population as much as possible. However, he wouldn't sacrifice his soldiers to do such a thing – after all, might was supreme in this world.

Indeed, Zhao Fu could only be someone who was neutral and leaned towards evil – after all, those who were completely good wouldn't last for very long in this world.

Apart from this, there were other areas in which they could develop. They could develop agriculture and livestock, establishing cultivation grounds in various regions and using them as a foundation to expand to.

However, this would require many people to carry out, and it required at least a few hundred soldiers in each region to guarantee the safety of each cultivation ground. He would be able to carry out this plan after exchanging equipment for people.

"I understand; I'll put these ideas into action." Zhao Fu was quite satisfied with Ba Qing's suggestions – these suggestions would be very useful to Great Qin's business area.

Ba Qing delightfully smiled and was happy that Zhao Fu had accepted her suggestions and would act upon them.

After this, Zhao Fu took out a map of the region that Great Qin controlled. This map had been drawn as Great Qin had conquered more and more places, and it was incredibly detailed and precise. Even though some areas looked quite big, it was only because the scale of the map was quite small. Zhao Fu wondered when he would be able to bring Great Qin back to its peak as the Great Qin Empire and control all of China.

Zhao Fu looked for a relatively flat area of land on the map and decided to go there to see if he wanted to develop livestock there.

At that moment, a soldier came to report that they had discovered a Town 700 kilometers away from Great Qin!

Chapter 225: Assassin Profession

"A Town?" Zhao Fu was delighted and surprised, and he ordered, "Tell me the details!"

The soldier immediately told him about how they found the town and the details regarding the town.

This time, it wasn't Great Qin that had discovered them. Instead, they were the ones who had entered Great Qin's territory. In order to guarantee Great Qin's safety, Zhao Fu had set up a few lines of defenses.

The first was the outer region of the territory that Great Qin controlled. There was a defensive line for alerts that didn't have too many people, but it was still tight. It was made up mostly of Ratfolk, and as

soon as someone entered Great Qin's territory, they would immediately report so that Great Qin could quickly make preparations.

This time, it was a team of soldiers who had entered Great Qin's territory and been discovered by the Ratfolk. However, this team of soldiers had only walked about in Great Qin's outer region and hadn't gone deep, so they didn't discover the existence of the Great Qin Town before returning to their own territory.

By then, they had already given themselves away. The Ratfolk Assassins who had followed them had discovered that they were actually from a Town, so they immediately came back to report.

After listening to the soldier's detailed report, Zhao Fu thought for a moment and decided to take a look for himself. Right now, most of the soldiers hadn't returned yet, but Zhao Fu didn't plan to summon them back – after all, it was much more difficult to conquer Towns than Villages.

Mountain Willow Town was an exception, as he had only been able to defeat Zhang Hong and take Mountain Willow Town so easily by relying on the Liu family's reputation. This time, it was highly unlikely that something similar would happen again.

Zhao Fu rode on Little Black and brought along Little Sha to find the Ratfolk responsible for finding the Town.

A few hours later, Zhao Fu stood on a hill and looked at the Town in the distance. The Town was situated on an area of very flat ground, and the surrounding area was incredibly fertile, which was planted with various crops.

The Town was slightly bigger than Mountain Willow Town, and it had roughly 30,000 residents with six-meter tall walls. There were serious-looking soldiers stationed on top of it, and all of them were holding weapons and looking around. There were many residents walking in and out of the Town – it seemed that this Town had developed quite well, and it looked quite prosperous.

This sort of Town would be quite difficult to attack, and if Zhao Fu launched a direct assault, he would suffer heavy losses.

Suddenly, Zhao Fu remembered that the Dark Ghost World skill that the Hundred Ghost Illusionists could unleash was an S+ grade skill, and it was a combination skill – the more people there were working together to cast it, the more powerful its effects would be.

If Zhao Fu had 1,000 Hundred Ghost Illusionists, he would be able to create a super illusion that could affect the entire Town, causing the people in the town to be lost within the illusion, allowing Zhao Fu to easily conquer this town.

However, it was a pity that Zhao Fu only had 300 Hundred Ghost Illusionists, so, at most, they could only create a Dark Ghost World that could cover six kilometers.

Zhao Fu thought for a while before deciding to retreat for now. After gathering his military and expanding it, he would once again consider how to take this Town. He stationed a few Assassins here for now to gain intelligence, and it would be best for them to capture someone and gain information about the Town through that person.

After returning to the Great Qin Town, Zhao Fu gave the order to recall all of the soldiers outside. However, it would take some time for the orders to get to them and for them to return, so he would have to wait for a while.

A new Void Beast had spawned, so Zhao Fu went to open up a region for now. After Zhao Fu opened the new region, the soldiers would most likely be back.

The Advanced Teleportation Channels made it much more convenient for Great Qin, and the new region that Zhao Fu wanted to open up this time was a place called Green Apricot. Zhao Fu had known of Green Apricot for a long time because one of the four people who had decided to resist Great Qin by allying together was there – Great Shun.

Great Shun was at the end of the Ming Dynasty, and Li Zicheng overthrew the Great Ming Dynasty and forced the then-Emperor to commit suicide before taking over the capital.

It was a pity that Li Zicheng wasn't the one to laugh in the end – soon after, Wu Sangui let in the Qing army, which destroyed Li Zicheng's army. After that, Great Shun's political control crumbled, and China was taken over by the Qing army.

However, nevertheless, as it had once been a Dynasty, Great Shun still had quite some Fate, and its Legacy was better than those of nations or states.

Since Zhao Fu had come here, he wouldn't let Great Shun have a good time. Since they had decided to stand against Great Qin, Zhao Fu would act first against them. Even though he wouldn't be able to destroy Great Shun, he would be able to restrict their development in all sorts of ways. The best thing to do was to weaken them, and after Great Qin grew powerful enough, Great Shun would be its first target. By doing this, Zhao Fu would also be helping Great Ming take revenge.

This was because the Great Ming Dynasty's hatred towards Great Shun had been passed down, and they had vowed to take Great Shun down. However, it wasn't convenient for them to act yet.

As for Zhao Fu, he was somewhat appreciative of Great Ming and had a better impression of them than the other Dynasties – they had no connections with Great Han or Great Tang and didn't humiliate China like the Song Dynasty or Qing Dynasty. Even though they had some muddleheaded Emperors, they were at least unyielding and courageous – they went by the philosophy that 'the Emperor guards the nation; the King dies for the state.'

However, Zhao Fu was only appreciative of it. That wouldn't change his plans, nor would he show mercy because of that. After all, in the end, Great Ming was just another powerful enemy.

Green Apricot was mostly filled with forests, and it had many Green Apricot Trees. They grew apricots that were green even after they ripened, and the apricots had a sour taste that was delicious to those who enjoyed eating sour things. It had four main cities, and the one that Great Shun was stationed in was called Apricot City. Great Shun mostly dominated that city, and no other faction dared to try to develop there, as families with empire legacies couldn't be defined as normal families.

After opening up a path to this region, Zhao Fu stationed some Assassins there to collect information on Great Shun so as to make plans to restrict Great Shun.

However, traces of the School of Vertical and Horizontal were also present, so Zhao Fu had to be wary of their schemes. Right now, all of the regions weren't connected, so it would be difficult for the School of Vertical and Horizontal to rally many different factions against Zhao Fu. As such, Zhao Fu had to take the initiative by acting against them, as once the regions were all connected, Great Qin would fall into a precarious position.

If he didn't start dealing with them now, they would restrict Great Qin as much as they could, allowing Xia, Shang, Zhou, and Han to reap the rewards and greatly develop.

The School of Vertical and Horizontal was giving Zhao Fu a headache, and when he thought to them, a cold glint flashed in his eyes.

Afterward, Zhao Fu returned to the Great Qin Town and found that all of the soldiers had also returned. Zhao Fu discussed with Bai Qi and the other leaders about the battle plan and decided to focus on upgrading Great Qin to a City as soon as possible.

Chapter 226: Illusion Barrier

A few hours later, Zhao Fu brought his many leaders and soldiers to a hill and looked at the Town in the distance. Because this Town was no longer a Village and had established its defenses, Zhao Fu couldn't rashly lead his troops in, or they would be exposed.

At this moment, a few Ratfolk Assassins wearing their black hoods lowered their heads as they half-kneeled and respectfully reported, "Your Majesty, we've taken a captive and have made him submit."

When he heard this, Zhao Fu turned his head and softly said, "Bring him over!"

"Roger!" the Ratfolk replied, following which they brought over a somewhat vulgar-looking middle-aged man. He had a lot of blood on him and looked quite terrified. After being escorted over, he knelt on the ground as he trembled.

When he saw the massive army after being caught, he knew that the Town was in grave danger. He knew that the Town would definitely lose, as he saw that all of the soldiers had powerful auras and Silver grade equipment.

There were at least 20,000 of these soldiers, while their Town only had roughly 30,000 residents in total, of which only 5,000 were soldiers. They were definitely going to lose, so the key thing now was how.

As such, he rationally chose to surrender because he wanted to preserve his life.

"What's your name?" a young but dignified voice suddenly said.

The middle-aged man obediently replied, "Sir, my name is He Jian."

Zhao Fu's gaze fell on the middle-aged man as he said, "Tell me everything you know, especially about your Town's soldiers, residents, and leaders. I want all of the details!"

"Okay... Okay... Okay..." He Jian stuttered as he quickly replied. He knew that this was his chance at life, so he started to tell them everything that he knew about the Town.

After listening to He Jian, Zhao Fu had a much greater understanding of the Town.

First, the Town was named Highstone Town, and the Mayor was named Xiang Shaotian, who was a Stage 2 expert. Highstone Town had around 30,000 people and roughly 5,000 soldiers. Most of their equipment was Normal grade iron equipment, and they normally had three exploration teams outside.

The purpose of these exploration teams was to search for resources and villages outside of their territory. Highstone Town had already devoured the surrounding villages, which was why it had developed faster than most Towns.

It was one of the exploration teams who had entered Great Qin's territory, and each of the teams had roughly 300 people. There were still two teams who would only return after noon the next day, so they had 600 fewer soldiers.

Next was the patrol defenses. There were obvious ones, concealed ones, and some soldiers monitoring the surroundings. Overall, their alert defenses were quite good, and the Mayor somewhat surprised Zhao Fu.

Zhao Fu then asked about the normal soldiers, such as their training and cultivation. He also found out that unless there was an emergency, they wouldn't defend all of the walls.

He Jian obediently told Zhao Fu everything that he wanted to know. After he heard that the barracks were in the western area of the town, Zhao Fu had an idea.

He ordered his people to take He Jian away and started to discuss with his Commanders and Generals, preparing to act at night.

Time quickly passed, and soon, it was midnight. It had started to drizzle, making it slightly chilly and causing clouds to block out the light from the moon and the stars. As such, it was quite dark, and the sound of rain covered a lot of noise.

This was the most opportune time to act!

Within a forest near Highstone Town, there were 30 soldiers stationed there as sentries. Some were on trees, others were hidden within the grass, and others were behind large rocks. They warily looked around and would notice any sounds or movements in the grass.

However, tonight was especially dark, and it was also drizzling, which made it easy for them to let their guard down and for them to miss things.

Listening to the patter of rain and looking around them in the darkness, they didn't notice anything out of the ordinary and continued to stand guard; however, they didn't know that death was creeping upon them.

Suddenly, just like a gust of wind, a hooded figure appeared behind one of the soldiers hiding in the grass. The soldier was given a big shock, and just as he was about to shout, his mouth was covered, and a cold blade slit his throat. Blood gushed out as his face remained terrified, completely taken unaware.

While this soldier was killed, seven others were also assassinated. Some of the veteran soldiers sensed that something was wrong, and just as they were about to shout out to warn the others, more enemies appeared.

Before they were able to shout, arrows pierced through their chests, killing them instantly.

In these sorts of circumstances, it was very easy for Assassins to deal with these sentry soldiers. After dealing with this group of hidden soldiers, Zhao Fu's forces dealt with the patrol soldiers who were out in the open. He then immediately ordered Wang Jian to take the 300 Hundred Ghost Illusionists to the western side of the Town.

After the patrol and sentry soldiers were taken care of, things became much easier for Zhao Fu's soldiers.

Under the cover of night, Wang Jian and the Hundred Ghost Illusionists stealthily went to the western side of the Town. The Hundred Ghost Illusionists raised their pagoda wood staffs, which was a type of ghost wood that suited their profession, and the staffs shined with a faint gray light. Soon, strange energy ripples began to spread out.

"Dark Ghost World!" At that moment, the 300 Hundred Ghost Illusionists all silently chanted within their minds as they cast the skill and stabbed their staffs into the ground.

A formless wave of energy immediately rushed out!

Traces of gray ghostly qi rose up from the ground and spread in all directions, and ghostly qi enveloped the western side of Highstone Town incredibly quickly. From outside, it seemed as if the western side of Highstone Town was enveloped by a gray fog that gave off an eerie aura. Those sleeping and even the soldiers standing guard on the walls didn't detect any of this; all they saw was some fog before everything in their surroundings disappeared. All that was left was pitch-black darkness, and they were all alone in that dark world.

Suddenly, a gray ghostly moon appeared in the sky, which was accompanied by terrifying howls of Ghosts as Ghosts climbed out of the ground and sprang at the soldiers.

The soldiers used their weapons to attack the Ghosts in terror, but they found that no matter how they attacked, they were unable to hit the Ghosts. As such, they could only run away in fear. However, no matter how desperately they ran, they couldn't escape from that place.

Tens of thousands of Ghosts continued to flood at the soldiers within this dark world, almost driving them mad. From the outside, others would see the soldiers dumbly standing there with looks of terror on their faces as their bodies trembled and cold sweat gathered upon them. It was as if they were going through a terrible nightmare.

Chapter 227: Hidden Evil

The western side of Highstone Town was completely under Great Qin's control, and Wang Jian immediately gave the signal to convey that they had succeeded. When he saw this, Zhao Fu carrying out his side of the plan.

Following this, Ghost Summoners went to the eastern town walls and pressed their hands against the ground. Ghostly qi immediately rose up, turning into muscular, two meter tall Devil Ghosts with black horns.

These Devil Ghosts stealthily went to the town walls, and because the town walls didn't have any talisman papers, the walls couldn't stop the Devil Ghosts. The Devil Ghosts' sharp claws stabbed into the town walls, and 300 Devil Ghosts quickly climbed up like lizards.

Before the soldiers realized anything, the Devil Ghosts leaped onto the town walls, giving all of the soldiers stationed there a big fright.

The Devil Ghosts savagely smiled as they rushed at the soldiers, and one of them sent a soldier flying with a swipe of its claws. The soldier was heavily wounded, and he fell to one side. His chest bled profusely and had five deep marks on it that completely tore through his armor.

The Devil Ghosts' strength was roughly at Stage 1, and there were only a few hundred soldiers on the town walls, most of whose cultivations were only at Stage 0-5 to Stage 0-6. As such, the 300 Devil Ghosts took down the soldiers incredibly easily and took over the town walls.

At that moment, the rest of Great Qin's forces started to charge!

20,000 soldiers flooded towards Highstone Town. The battle sounds from before had already caused a lot of noise, and it was impossible that 20,000 soldiers wouldn't be detected. The sleeping residents all woke up with a start, and everyone felt that something was wrong. The sound of battle started to come from the eastern side, causing Highstone Town to become chaotic.

However, it was already too late. Zhao Fu's forces had already taken the eastern town gates, and his soldiers had already reached the Town Hall.

"Bai Qi, Wei Liao! Both of you take some soldiers and defend the people coming from the north and south!"

By now, Zhao Fu had taken control of the western and eastern sides of Highstone Town, especially the western side. It was deathly silent over there, and all of the soldiers and residents there had been pulled into the Dark Ghost World. Now, only some soldiers left on the northern and southern sides were left.

The outcome had already been decided, and because Zhao Fu wanted to end this as soon as possible, he quickly gave orders as he led the remaining soldiers and rushed towards the Town Hall.

Within the Town Hall, a young man with fair skin suddenly woke up. He was quite shocked but reacted quickly and started giving out orders.

However, there was no response after giving out these orders. Soon, soldiers came to report that the western side of the town had been covered by a gray fog, and any soldiers who ventured into it wouldn't come back out.

This was because the Dark Ghost World wasn't just an illusion but also an illusion barrier. Not only did it trap those within it in an illusion, but anyone who entered would also be brought into the illusion.

"Mayor! Things are looking bad; there are many enemies here already!" a terrified soldier cried out as Xiang Shaotian's gaze became cold. He picked up the large halberd in his room and rushed out, witnessing the state of chaos in Highstone Town. At that moment, he saw Zhao Fu and looked furiously at him.

Zhao Fu was riding on Little Black expressionlessly, and he said to Xiang Shaotian, “You have no chance of winning; it’s best that you surrender now. I don’t want to commit a meaningless slaughter.”

Xiang Shaotian coldly harrumphed and rushed over with his halberd; how could he surrender?

When he saw this, Zhao Fu didn’t say anything. Instead, he nudged Little Black with his leg. Little Black understood and rushed towards Xiang Shaotian. Little Black, who had awakened its [Underworld Nightmare] bloodline and was many times faster than before, flew towards Xiang Shaotian like a bolt of lightning.

“Sky Demon Slash!” Zhao Fu lightly yelled as he drew the Sky Demon Sword. It erupted with a massive black light as it slashed towards Xiang Shaotian, frightening him. Facing this terrifying strike, he quickly used his halberd to block.

Bang!

Xiang Shaotian was sent sliding backward and only stopped after sliding back ten meters.

Even though Xiang Shaotian’s cultivation was slightly higher than Zhang Hong’s from Mountain Willow Town, Zhao Fu’s cultivation was no longer at Stage 0-9 like it had been back then. He had used a Stage 1 Blood God Pill and a Stage 2 Blood God Pill to raise his cultivation to Stage 1-4.

Back when he had been at Stage 0-9, he could already easily defeat Zhang Hong, so now, facing Xiang Shaotian, there was no need for him to even be nervous.

Zhao Fu’s massive strike had not only sent Xiang Shaotian sliding back, but it had also split the webbing between his thumb and forefinger on each hand, causing blood to leak out. Xiang Shaotian realized too late that he had vastly underestimated Zhao Fu.

At that moment, Zhao Fu once again charged at Xiang Shaotian, and Xiang Shaotian roared in response, gripping his halberd and sweeping it out. The halberd tore through the air and was filled with immense strength as it swept towards Zhao Fu.

Clang!

The sword and halberd clashed, resulting in a massive collision sound and a shockwave, causing the ground to crack.

Zhao Fu’s gaze became cold, and he once again erupted with strength, slamming his sword down towards Xiang Shaotian and forcing him back a few steps, before slashing down once again.

Xiang Shaotian quickly used both hands to block with his halberd again.

Bang!

Xiang Shaotian felt a massive wave of energy pass through his arms, causing his legs to weaken, and he half-knelt on the ground.

Zhao Fu suddenly raised his sword again, which gave off a sharp black light and a terrifying aura as he prepared to deal the final blow to Xiang Shaotian.

BOOM!!

Xiang Shaotian rolled to his left as Zhao Fu's attack left a two-meter deep gash in the ground. Xiang Shaotian grasped this opportunity and stabbed at Zhao Fu with his halberd.

However, Zhao Fu wasn't flustered at all, and he knocked the halberd away before stabbing his sword at Xiang Shaotian in response. Xiang Shaotian could only retreat and continuously defend without being able to retaliate at all.

Suddenly, a strike from Zhao Fu sent Xiang Shaotian flying backward, causing him to cough up a mouthful of blood. A savage expression appeared on his face as he roared, "You forced me to do this!"

Xiang Shaotian threw a green medicinal pill towards Zhao Fu, which Zhao Fu split in two with his sword.

Immediately, the green medicinal pill turned into a green fog that spread out, and Zhao Fu sensed danger from it, immediately casting his King's Domain to keep it away from him.

The green fog was extremely poisonous and corrosive. As the fog came into contact with his King's Domain, it produced sizzling sounds and seemed to be burning through it.

Zhao Fu was greatly shocked and immediately used all of his energy to reinforce the King's Domain until the green fog finally dissipated.

Xiang Shaotian looked completely dumbfounded when he saw that Zhao Fu was fine – that had been his trump card.

Zhao Fu looked around and found that everyone around them, both Xiang Shaotian's soldiers and his own, had collapsed on the ground and died with blood leaking out of every orifice on the face.

Zhao Fu became furious, and he jumped off Little Black's back.

Chapter 228: Variant

When Xiang Shaotian saw Zhao Fu walk towards him with an incredibly murderous air, he felt some fear in his heart. He retreated a few steps, but after realizing that even his trump card had failed, he definitely wouldn't be able to defeat Zhao Fu. As such, he rushed towards the side, deciding to run away.

Zhao Fu immediately acted, transforming into a black blur and rushing towards Xiang Shaotian. His sword brought with it a sharp sword qi as it slashed towards Xiang Shaotian.

Xiang Shaotian was given a big fright and could only try to use his halberd to block Zhao Fu's attack.

In response, Zhao Fu coldly harrumphed and sent all of his strength into his strike, sending Xiang Shaotian back a few steps. He lost his balance and leaned slightly backward.

The Sky Demon Sword gave off a massive sword light, and Zhao Fu grasped this opportunity to stab Xiang Shaotian's throat.

This strike gave off an extremely dangerous aura, causing Xiang Shaotian's hairs to stand on end, and he tilted his neck and head to the side with all his might.

“Arghh!” Xiang Shaotian screamed. Even though he had avoided having his throat pierced, he was still hit on his shoulder, and blood spurted out, dyeing his shoulder red.

Zhao Fu was completely determined to kill Xiang Shaotian, so he didn’t show any mercy. His sword, which had stabbed out, suddenly swept sideways, attempting to cut off Xiang Shaotian’s head.

Under the stimulation from the pain, Xiang Shaotian released all of his strength to sweep out with his halberd, knocking Zhao Fu’s sword askew. However, Zhao Fu borrowed this momentum to leap up and spin in the air before furiously slamming the sword down towards Xiang Shaotian.

Seeing this, Xiang Shaotian’s expression became savage as he lifted his halberd and tried to block.

Clang!

A massive collision sound rang out as the two parties clashed, resulting in a gale around them. The Sky Demon Sword was once again blocked by Xiang Shaotian, and this time, he gritted his teeth and pushed up with his halberd.

Zhao Fu’s sword was sent flying, causing Xiang Shaotian to feel immense glee. His hands gripped his halberd with all of his strength, and he raised his halberd and prepared to strike Zhao Fu down.

However, at that moment, Zhao Fu drew a blood-red sword from his waist at lightning speed, stabbing forward abruptly.

Chi!

The world seemed to freeze as the blood-red sword pierced through Xiang Shaotian’s chest. Xiang Shaotian’s knees weakened, and his gaze became dull as he finally died.

The Sky Demon Sword flipped in the air and fell down, stabbing into the ground. The Sky Demon was quite displeased when looking at the Slaughtering Ghost Sword in Zhao Fu’s hand. It was incredibly annoyed that Zhao Fu had thrown it in order to do such a thing.

As soon as Xiang Shaotian died, Highstone Town stopped resisting. This was because out of Highstone Town’s current fighting force, only some were actual soldiers, and most were residents. Now that their Lord had died, how could they continue resisting?

After concluding this battle and having the survivors submit, Zhao Fu went to the Town Hall and chose to conquer Highstone Town. He was quite surprised to find that it was actually Gold grade, which was quite good.

Zhao Fu was quite pleased as he walked out of the Town Hall and looked at the people who had submitted. He asked Bai Qi, “How were our losses this time?”

Bai Qi cupped his hands respectfully as he replied, “Your Majesty, 2,718 soldiers were injured, and 256 died.”

When he heard this, Zhao Fu sighed – this was the heaviest loss they had ever taken before. From the beginning, he had tried to minimize injuries and deaths as much as possible; after all, these soldiers served him. Zhao Fu truly didn’t want to see them die.

Zhao Fu knew that battles were incredibly cruel. He sighed before he ordered for the corpses of Great Qin's soldiers to be collected so that they could be given a proper burial when they returned.

Zhao Fu then gave the order for Dark Ghost World, which was on the western side of the Town, to be canceled, and Great Qin's soldiers bound up the soldiers, who were still paralyzed from terror. Afterward, buckets of cold water were poured on them, waking them up.

Upon waking up and finding out that Highstone Town had already been taking over, ugly expression appeared on the soldiers' faces. Most of the soldiers decided to surrender, but 100 or so of them would rather die than submit. They demanded to be released so that they could take revenge for Xiang Shaotian.

Zhao Fu didn't bother with those people and immediately ordered for them to be executed. Including them, Highstone Town lost 5,879 people during that fight, and there were 24,810 people remaining. Zhao Fu's side also obtained around 100,000 or so silver coins and a massive amount of crops and equipment.

Apart from the people, Zhao Fu didn't care for much else. He gave out the money as a reward, and because it was already quite late, Zhao Fu decided to rest here before taking down the two exploration teams the next day.

Finally, Zhao Fu looked at Xiang Shaotian's corpse and used Corpse Examination to find that it was SS grade. He first took Xiang Shaotian's spatial ring before putting his corpse into his King's Ring.

Apart from some food and equipment, Zhao Fu also found a good item that caused him to be quite pleased – it was a pill recipe.

[Hidden Evil – Recipe]: Required Ingredients: Blackharm Ash, Scorch Wood, and Hidden Evil Grass, Description: A strange recipe that, when added to a medicinal pill, will indicate the successful creation of the medicinal pill but will contain a type of colorless, odorless, tasteless poison. If consumed over a period of time without taking the antidote, one's body will grow feeble, resulting in death.

This was yet another tool for victimizing others. If Zhao Fu added this to medicinal pills and sold them, he would be able to kill many people. Zhao Fu suddenly felt incredibly worried about the markets – he would never be able to use consumables that weren't from Great Qin anymore. Who knew if others were doing the same thing.

Hidden Evil required Hidden Evil Grass to refine, and because Hidden Evil Grass was a Stage 2 grass and much rarer than Hundred Origin Grass, it would most likely be quite difficult to find. Even if he did find some, it would take a long time to grow before he could use it, so he had no idea when he would actually be able to start using this to plot against others.

As such, Zhao Fu could only put the Hidden Evil Recipe away for now. However, soon after, Zhao Fu was delighted to find that there was actually a lot of Hidden Evil Grass being grown at the southern side of the Town.

Zhao Fu immediately went over to take a look, and he found many rows of Hidden Evil Grass being grown there. They were around 10 centimeters or so tall and had sword-shaped leaves. They were also completely black, giving them an insidious look.

Zhao Fu had never expected to find Hidden Evil Grass in Highstone Town, nevertheless so much of it. If he hadn't done anything about this Town, it was likely that Xiang Shaotian would have become the overlord in this region, and his growth would have been unhindered.

It was a pity that Zhao Fu had found him, and he had presented Hidden Evil Recipe on a silver platter to Zhao Fu. He ordered his people to dig up all of the Hidden Evil Grass to be replanted in the Great Qin Town when they returned.

At noon the next day, the sun hung high in the sky as the two exploration teams returned to Highstone Town. However, they were received not by the friendly residents but by an army of ferocious Great Qin soldiers.

Facing the 20,000 soldiers, the 600 soldiers were scared stiff and immediately chose to surrender. After making these two teams submit, Zhao Fu chose to [Relocate] Highstone Town, and because it was already a Basic Town, it would remain as one. The Great Qin Town suddenly received 110,000 EXP.

This expedition had finally concluded, and Zhao Fu and his army returned to the Great Qin Town.

Chapter 229: Orc Blood Crystal

After returning to the Great Qin Town, the first thing Zhao Fu did was have the Hidden Evil Grass replanted before taking some and using them to refine Hidden Evil. As for what he did with them, he obviously added them to medicinal pills.

In actuality, Zhao Fu could even have his own soldiers take the medicinal pills with Hidden Evil because it raised the efficacy of medicinal pills. It was simply a matter of whether they received an antidote or not. With an antidote, Hidden Evil was actually incredibly beneficial.

Now, with Hidden Evil, Zhao Fu had something else to use in trades to secretly backstab others. Afterward, Zhao Fu went to an area 50 kilometers south of the Great Qin Town and re-established Highstone Town. He also brought most of its residents to the Great Qin Town.

Now, Zhao Fu had two Towns, and if he could obtain one more Town, he would be able to level up the Great Qin Town into a City once he had enough EXP. There was also the requirement of having three people at the status of Baron and making them Mayors, and Zhao Fu had long since diverted most of the Achievement Points to Bai Qi. He had obtained 500 Achievement Points after conquering Highstone Town, and with the King's Ring's bonuses, Bai Qi was already a Second-Ranked Baron.

Even though upgrading to a City only required a Third-Ranked Baron Status, it wasn't a waste for Bai Qi to reach Second-Ranked Baron because status was still important for upgrading further.

Now, Zhao Fu decided to divert most of his Achievement Points to Liu Subai to promote her to Third-Ranked Baron. At the same time, he appointed Bai Qi as the Mayor of Highstone Town. With the King's Ring, obtaining Achievement Points was incredibly easy to Zhao Fu.

Zhao Fu's next task was to collect the people from the various trading offices in the different regions. Zhao Fu was quite disappointed to find that for each region, they had only obtained around 200 or so people in a day.

However, this was to be expected. After all, everyone valued population because it wasn't something that could be easily increased. As such, he had to find a way to make it so that they had no choice but to sell their people.

Zhao Fu decided to try adding in medicinal pills in exchange for population, and he hoped that business would be better in the future.

However, gaining roughly 200 people from each region in a day was already quite good. Zhao Fu had opened 22 regions, and apart from Green Apricot, which had just been opened, there were 21 regions. This amounted to 4,200 people in a day.

Gaining 4,200 people in a day was already tens of times faster than gaining population through conquering Villages and Towns. This made Zhao Fu want to slightly shift the focus from conquering to trading, as this was much faster and more efficient.

Of course, exploring and conquering was still necessary – after all, by doing this, they would gain not only population but City Creation Stones, Achievement Points, and battle experience for the soldiers.

Soon, the first batch of Hidden Evil was refined and added into some Hundred Origin Pills. Zhao Fu then brought some equipment and those Hundred Origin Pills to the Orc City.

After the Ghost Festival had ended, Zhao Fu and Gunador had set a time for Zhao Fu to come again to trade items for people – that time had now come.

After arriving at the Orc City, Zhao Fu met up with Gunador, who took him to a plaza.

The plaza was quite big and crude, and there were Orc soldiers training at the side, making it quite noisy. The atmosphere there was quite fierce and violent, and there were people in cages at the other side.

Most of them were dressed in tattered clothes and had ashen complexions. They sat in the cages with looks of terror on their faces as their bodies trembled, not knowing what would happen to them. There were humans, Elves, and Kobolds.

There were roughly 1,200 people, and many of the women looked like they had been violated and had dull gazes. The women also had most of their skin showing.

Zhao Fu's expression didn't change, nor did he feel much, as this was what he had expected. He wasn't so naïve as to think that the Orcs would show mercy and kindness to their prisoners. Zhao Fu had long since realized the true nature of the Heaven Awaken World. Only by immersing his heart in darkness would he not be disturbed by the evils of this world.

Moreover, these people didn't have very high grades or great potential. People with low grades weren't very useful to large factions, as they didn't have much opportunity for growth. They could only be used for labor and might not even be able to become soldiers.

This was because nurturing people with low grades required much greater resources than for those with high grades. The Orcs were most likely worried that Zhao Fu would one day act against them, which was why they had given him these people. If he became too powerful one day, it would definitely be detrimental to the Orc City.

Because Zhao Fu had the Heaven and Earth Refining Formation, he didn't care too much about the grades, but he was displeased that the Orcs had tried to do this to him. To most large factions, these people would just be cannon fodder.

"Esteemed guest, are you satisfied with this?" Gunador wasn't quite sure what to expect. He knew that there were hidden dangers in giving these people to Zhao Fu because it was equivalent to strengthening a potential enemy. Normally, Orcs didn't like taking prisoners, but because he wanted equipment from Zhao Fu, he couldn't help but make an exception.

When he heard this, even though Zhao Fu was somewhat displeased, he still lightly laughed and replied in a pleasantly surprised tone, "Respected Vice-Lord, I had never thought that you'd gather so many people. I'm very please; apart from the equipment, I will also gift you 300 bottles of medicinal pills."

As Zhao Fu spoke, he took out a bottle of Hundred Origin Pills. The Orc City was a city-level existence, so they most likely had Stage 1 medicinal pills like the Little Spirit Pills. If Zhao Fu took out Little Spirit Pills, they wouldn't be as attractive, so Zhao Fu brought Hundred Origin Pills.

Gunador received the bottle, and upon inspecting it, a look of joy appeared on his face.

These medicinal pills' effects were incredibly good, and now that Zhao Fu was giving them both equipment and medicinal pills, Gunador felt a bit apologetic and replied, "How could we just accept these medicinal pills? Esteemed guest, how about I gift you 50 Giant Wolves?"

The Orcs' Giant Wolves were a variant type of normal wolves. They were incredibly big, powerful, and fast. In fact, they were much faster than even normal warhorses.

Zhao Fu's Black Forest Horses could rival the Giant Wolves in terms of speed, but they all had their own advantages and disadvantages. It was incredibly difficult to find these Giant Wolves in the wild, and it seemed that only the Orcs could breed them. That was why the Orc Wolf Cavalry was so famous.

Since the other side had gifted these Giant Wolves to him, Zhao Fu decided he might as well accept. After all, he was quite interested in these Giant Wolves. After completing the transaction, Zhao Fu first went back to the Great Qin Town by himself to bring some soldiers to help him escort these captives back.

After arriving at the Great Qin Town, the captives felt terrified. Zhao Fu gave the order for them to be taken out of their cages, and he reassured them that they were safe. He promised that he wouldn't harm them and that he would give them stable lives.

Zhao Fu's words caused the broken people to cry tears of joy. They all knelt on the ground and kowtowed to Zhao Fu, and after reassuring them, Zhao Fu asked Li Si to take them in before turning to look at the Giant Wolves.

Chapter 230: Rule the World

Zhao Fu hadn't Tamed the Giant Wolves yet, so they looked very antagonistic within their wooden cages. They bared their fang and roared, seeming incredibly vicious and making it so that no one dared to go near.

[Giant Wolf]: A type of mount unique to Orcs that is bred using an Orc Blood Crystal. They are far more ferocious than normal wolves.

“Orc Blood Crystal?” Zhao Fu decided to ask his Orc subordinates. After all, they would know much more about Giant Wolves than him.

“Bring Saar over!” Zhao Fu ordered. Soon after, a tall, muscular Orc came to Zhao Fu’s side and respectfully saluted him as he greeted him, “Your Majesty!”

Zhao Fu nodded and pointed towards the Giant Wolves as he asked, “Do you know of these Giant Wolves?”

Saar looked over and immediately replied, “This subordinate does know of them. They’re a type of wolf that only Orcs can breed and will only follow the orders of Orcs.”

When he heard this, Zhao Fu’s gaze became cold. “They will only follow the orders of Orcs? Won’t our Taming skill work on it?”

Saar nodded as he replied, “Yes, using Taming will make them submit temporarily, but in the end, they will always follow the orders of Orcs because they were bred using an Orc Blood Crystal.”

Zhao Fu frowned as he asked, “What’s an Orc Blood Crystal?”

“Orc Blood Crystals are the blood of 100,000 Orcs refined by Shamans into a blood crystal. This blood crystal is then fused with a Wolf Den, resulting in Giant Wolves.”

After listening to Saar, Zhao Fu coldly harrumphed. That old fellow, Gunador, wanted to backstab him, and if he didn’t have any Orcs and used these Giant Wolves, things would have been disastrous if he ever used them to fight against the Orc City.

Zhao Fu turned and said coldly, “Saar, see if you can fully subdue these Giant Wolves with the other Orcs; if you can’t, just kill them.”

It was a bit of a pity, but Zhao Fu didn’t want to sow any seeds that would lead to future trouble.

After taking care of these matters, Zhao Fu went to the Town Hall and sat at the main seat. He let out a breath and settled down his emotions as he called Wang Ergou in and asked him if he had taken care of Green Apricot’s intelligence.

Zhao Fu had placed Wang Ergou in charge of Green Apricot and the Eternal Night Department, which was present in all of the regions they had opened up. They were taken care of by the Legatees of the 12 equipment sets.

“Your Majesty, we’ve already obtained all of the information you wanted. Apart from Great Shun, there are also the Li, Zha, Wu, Xia, Dong, and Yue families in the other three main cities. Apart from Great Shun, they’re the six biggest factions in Green Apricot.

“They’re quite antagonistic towards Great Shun, and it seems that Great Shun has been helped by someone to grow incredibly quickly. Their relations with the government is quite good, and they have already upgraded to a Basic Town. They have around 30,000 residents, and there are also around 30,000 players who are part of Great Shun’s faction.

“Regarding Great Shun’s location, this subordinate spent a lot of money to obtain it – it’s about 20,000 kilometers north of Apricot City,” Wang Ergou explained.

Zhao Fu sank into his own thoughts. He wasn’t too surprised that Great Shun would become enemies with the other six families. After all, if those with a Legacy wanted to develop, they would have to destroy the other factions. It was only natural that they would be enemies.

Moreover, Great Shun had most likely grown so quickly because of help from the School of Vertical and Horizontal. This was because they had only achieved such growth after they had announced that they would resist Great Qin. Without any benefits, people wouldn’t resist Great Qin for nothing.

Furthermore, Great Shun had many players in its faction; a faction with 30,000 players was definitely a powerful faction. There were both advantages and disadvantages to having such a large faction. While they could obtain many supporters, making the faction more powerful, the players required payment and wouldn’t necessarily be loyal. If a faction gathered many players, it would either become incredibly successful because of the players or fall because of the players.

After all, Great Shun’s position had been exposed by one of the players in the faction. Zhao Fu didn’t care too much about the 30,000 players because as long as he could give them sufficient benefits, he could dismantle that faction easily.

Zhao Fu ordered his forces to officially move into Green Apricot and for Wang Ergou to deliver invitations to those six families.

A large Merchant Alliance, a restaurant, and a population trading office all suddenly appeared in Green Apricot, breaking the deadlock between Great Shun and the six families. Those things attracted the gazes of many factions, and they started to become wary, wondering what new faction this was.

The six families received Zhao Fu’s invitation and all had different attitudes. Some were curious, some were confused, and some were surprised; however, they all decided to accept the invitation because this large, mysterious faction, which had suddenly appeared in Green Apricot, made them feel quite alert.

Following this, the family leaders of the six families, four men and two women, together with their bodyguards, went to a luxurious restaurant. When they saw each other, they were all slightly surprised before realizing something.

An attendant led them to a grand and luxurious room, in which a banquet was already prepared. There was also a person in a black cloak waiting for them.

“Thank you for all giving me face and attending this banquet!” Zhao Fu cupped his fists as he courteously greeted the six people.

The six people had been to many events like this before, and they didn’t feel much. However, they still smiled and courteously greeted Zhao Fu back.

The seven of them sat around the table, idly chatting for a short while before getting to the main matter. Since Zhao Fu didn’t mention it, they didn’t ask because they all had their own thoughts and plans.

When he saw that they had eaten more than half the food, he decided to ask, “I wonder what you all think about Great Shun? I’m sure you’ve been oppressed by Great Shun in this region.”

When they heard this, the six people felt quite awkward, as Zhao Fu was completely right – no matter if it was in terms of their factions or Legacies, they couldn’t compete with Great Shun. They could only continuously give way to Great Shun and hide the displeasure in their hearts.

“I’m willing to provide some equipment, medicinal pills, and other items to help everyone resist Great Shun. That way, my own faction will be able to survive as well,” Zhao Fu directly said as he told them his goal.

The six others around the table sank into deep thought. They weren’t in a rush to make a decision, as this matter concerned their survival or demise.

A fierce-looking man suddenly harrumphed and said, “Alright, stop making pretenses. Helping us like this is because you have some enmity with Great Shun and want to use us to suppress Great Shun, right?”

The six of them could all tell that Zhao Fu didn’t have good intentions and wanted to use them as tools.

In response, Zhao Fu lightly laughed and replied, “I indeed have enmity with Great Shun, so I wanted to trouble you all to help me. Right now, everyone has two paths to take. One is to watch Great Shun slowly become more powerful and become annihilated by Great Shun in the future; the other is to resist Great Shun with my support and maybe even destroy Great Shun.”

This caused the six people to once again sink into their thoughts.