

Titan King 101

Chapter 101 The Razorbeasts are coming

The arrival of the return tide completely ruined Orion's good mood!

The war horns of Moonshadow Valley blared, echoing through the valley, mobilizing all the bloodline warriors.

The elderly, women, and children of the various tribes took shelter in tents and caves, while outside the valley, Orion personally took command.

The Abyss Dragon had already been released by Orion and was now roaring, patrolling the area around the wall's foundation.

In the southern part of the Black Forest, starting from the morning, a large number of beasts had been fleeing northward in a panic. This mass migration caused the beasts native to the Black Forest to also flee north, further swelling the beast tide.

"Elder of Combat, a large group of Razorbeasts is heading straight for Moonshadow Valley!"

A nimble succubus warrior burst out of the dense forest, bringing bad news to Thundar.

"Let's retreat to Moonshadow Valley and report this to the chieftain!"

"Send the signal to recall the other two squads. The forest is getting too dangerous with all these beasts!"

As the beast tide approached, the forest where Thundar once hunted no longer belonged to the Stoneheart Horde, at least for now.

By the time Thundar returned to Moonshadow Valley a few hours later, the scene before him made his scalp tingle.

In the sky above, a swarm of flying beasts circled, refusing to leave.

They were Lionbats—creatures with the head of a lion and the body of a bat. These beasts lived in groups, and their sharp teeth and claws made them formidable.

They were the first wave of beasts to attack Moonshadow Valley. With wingspans of nearly 16 feet, the bloodline warriors of Moonshadow Valley were struggling to deal with them.

Thundar climbed over the wall's foundation and approached Orion.

"Chieftain, these beasts are..."

Orion, looking up at the roughly two hundred Lionbats in the sky, spoke coldly before Thundar could finish.

"Lionbats. They've been here for over half an hour, probably thinking of making a meal out of our people."

Orion's voice was calm but icy.

"Thundar, did you discover something?"

It was only then that Thundar remembered the reason for his return.

"Chieftain, a large group of Razorbeasts is fleeing toward Moonshadow Valley from the south. I don't know their exact numbers, but they'll be here in less than half a day!"

The news Thundar brought was like adding fuel to the fire.

Orion lowered his head in thought. He knew he couldn't allow the Lionbats in the sky to merge with the Razorbeasts on the ground.

If the two groups of beasts joined forces, they would be overwhelmed from both the sky and the ground. Not only would the wall's foundation be destroyed, but Moonshadow Valley itself would be in grave danger.

"Dace, Otho, go fetch more spears for me!"

Orion pulled out a few throwing spears from his Bagbird pouches and ordered his guards to bring more from the stockpile.

Then, he turned to Thundar.

"Take your squad to the west. The defenses there are weaker."

Thundar quickly led his team toward the western section of the wall's foundation.

Orion took a deep breath, unfastened the beast-hide cloak from his back, and grabbed a spear.

When dealing with flying beasts, spears were an extremely effective weapon.

Since he couldn't allow the Lionbats and Razorbeasts to merge, Orion decided to personally drive the Lionbats away.

The Lionbats were flying too high for most of the bloodline warriors to hit with their spears or crossbows, which was why the beasts were so brazenly lingering in the sky.

Even the presence of Orion and the Abyss Dragon didn't seem to intimidate them much.

Whoosh!

A spear suddenly shot into the sky, piercing the largest Lionbat and sending it crashing to the ground with a loud thud.

Boom!

The leader of the Lionbats hit the ground, creating a deep crater.

Orion glanced at the fallen Lionbat. It was an elite-level beast, a rank higher than the others.

With the leader dead, the sky was filled with low, confused roars from the remaining Lionbats. The scene quickly became chaotic.

The Lionbats seemed torn between flying down to attack and staying in the air, which made Orion excited.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Orion threw three more spears in quick succession, bringing down four more Lionbats—one spear even skewered two at once.

Whoosh!

At that moment, Prophet Onyx, stationed on the other side, also joined the fight. His strength was also immense.

A 2,000-pound boulder in Prophet Onyx's hands was like a pebble. When he hurled it, it whistled through the air with a sharp, cutting sound.

Boom!

Prophet Onyx's aim was true, and he struck several Lionbats in a row.

Though the Lionbats hit by the boulders didn't die instantly, they staggered and fell to the ground, where the bloodline warriors quickly finished them off.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

Orion's barrage of spears continued, bringing down another dozen Lionbats.

The constant deaths of their comrades finally instilled fear in the Lionbat swarm.

With a series of roars, the remaining Lionbats began to retreat northward.

"Phew..."

Orion exhaled, feeling a bit more relaxed.

"Chieftain!"

"Prophet!"

The departure of the Lionbats finally allowed the horde members to react.

They began praising their chieftain and prophet, their voices filled with admiration and reverence for Orion and Prophet Onyx's strength.

From a distance, Orion nodded at Onyx, acknowledging his contribution.

Orion hadn't acted earlier because he hadn't yet received word of the Razorbeasts' approach.

Before that, he had been thinking about hunting the Lionbats to provide extra food for the horde and stockpile meat for the winter.

But once Thundar brought news of the Razorbeasts, Orion had no choice but to drive the Lionbats away early.

It was a necessary decision.

Watching the prey fly away right before his eyes left Orion feeling a bit disappointed.

But that feeling quickly vanished, as a herd of Razorbeasts was about to arrive at Moonshadow Valley.

Razorbeasts were a type of boar-like creature with flaming tusks and a notoriously bad temper. They were a mutated species of wild boar.

Razorbeasts were large and meaty, and their tusks would ignite into flames when they charged, creating enough heat to set other beasts' fur on fire. These fire-elemental beasts were incredibly vicious.

"Dear Orion, your glory shines upon Moonshadow Valley and our Stoneheart Horde!"

With the flying beasts gone, Lilith gently draped Orion's beast-hide cloak back over his shoulders, her movements tender.

As Orion's wife, Lilith had left the chieftain's tent with Lysinthia to join the battle as soon as the war horns sounded.

Orion pulled Lilith into his arms, gazing into the distance.

"Lilith, the Razorbeasts are coming. Protect yourself. And Lysinthia too."

Chapter 102 Situation critical

About two hours later...

Snort... grunt...

In the distance, the ground trembled with the sound of countless beasts stampeding, accompanied by the low, sharp squeals of the Razorbeasts. The pressure in the air was palpable.

Roar...

The Abyss Dragon let out a deep, guttural roar, its voice tearing through the air and overpowering the Razorbeasts' cries. The beast horde in the distance momentarily fell into chaos.

From his vantage point atop a tower, Orion could see everything clearly. The Razorbeasts, sensing the Abyss Dragon's overwhelming presence, had begun to split off. The ones at the front of the horde were veering to the sides of Moonshadow Valley.

However, the Razorbeasts further back, unaware of the danger ahead, continued charging forward. By the time they sensed the Abyss Dragon's aura, it was too late—some were being pushed forward by the sheer force of the horde behind them.

Roar...

The Abyss Dragon, feeling its dominance challenged, swung its massive tail and charged toward the beast horde.

Orion raised his hand, signaling the order to hunt.

Woo woo woo...

The war horns blared once again, and the strongest bloodline warriors from the Giants, Buffalofolk, and Obsidian Golems surged forward into battle.

Many of the Razorbeasts were elite-level beasts, making them dangerous foes. But their flesh was also some of the finest meat available, which was why Orion had driven off the Lionbats earlier—he wanted to focus entirely on the Razorbeasts.

In Orion's eyes, this wave of Razorbeasts had already transformed into a massive stockpile of food.

Orion intended for his horde to secure enough meat from this beast tide to last them through the winter.

"Chieftain, Rendall sent me to inform you—there's a situation in the back of Moonshadow Valley!"

Just as Orion was overseeing the battle, ensuring his horde's morale, a succubus warrior approached him with troubling news.

The Lionbats had returned, launching a surprise attack! Explore more at [empire](#)

Orion's mind raced. After a moment of thought, he turned to his guard, Dace.

"Go fetch Delilah for me!"

"At once, Chieftain!"

Moments later, the succubus queen Delilah arrived at the tower, her expression slightly puzzled.

"Put aside what you're doing for now and take command here. I'm going to check on the situation in the back."

Before Delilah could respond, Orion had already gathered his men and was heading toward the rear of Moonshadow Valley.

In times of crisis, there were only four people in the Stoneheart Horde capable of leading the entire horde.

One was Rendall, but he was currently patrolling the rear mountains, ensuring no beasts climbed over the ridges.

Then there were Prophet Onyx and Thundar, but both elders had already charged into battle, eager to hunt more prey for the horde.

That left only Queen Delilah, who was in charge of logistics and supplies, but now Orion had tasked her with overseeing the defense.

Moonshadow Valley, Rear Mountains.

When Orion arrived, the dark shapes in the distant sky were already clearly visible.

"Chieftain, those damn bats didn't leave—they've come back!"

Orion squinted, staring at the returning Lionbats, his thoughts growing darker.

"Elder Rendall, I don't think this is as simple as we thought."

"I killed their leader earlier. They should've been thrown into disarray."

"But now they've regrouped and flown back. Don't you find that strange?"

Rendall's eyes widened as he considered the possibility.

"Chieftain, are you saying their real leader isn't dead?"

Orion didn't respond immediately. He stared at the Lionbats for a long time before speaking.

"Their leader is definitely dead. Otherwise, they wouldn't have fled so quickly before."

"The fact that they've returned to attack can only mean one thing—there's an Alpha-level beast hidden within the beast tide, and it's a flying type."

"These Lionbats were driven back by that Alpha-level flying beast!"

Rendall's face turned pale at the news.

An Alpha-level flying beast was not something they could afford to provoke.

As long as it stayed at a high altitude, there was nothing Orion or the horde could do to stop it.

"Chieftain Orion... what should we do now?"

Orion could hear the panic in Rendall's voice. The elder was clearly shaken.

"Don't panic. These Lionbats are no big deal. However many come, I'll kill them all!"

"And if there really is an Alpha-level flying beast, as long as it dares to lower its altitude, I'll kill it too!"

Orion's voice was full of confidence, though it might have sounded like bravado.

It wasn't that Orion was arrogant, but in front of so many of his people, he had to project strength and confidence.

Only by doing so could the bloodline warriors muster the courage and resolve to face the beast tide and any stronger foes that might come.

But deep down, Orion was already on high alert.

He was certain that the Alpha-level flying beast had sensed both him and the Abyss Dragon. So why was it still driving the beast tide toward Moonshadow Valley?

That was the question Orion couldn't figure out, and it was something he urgently needed to understand.

Some problems could only be solved by addressing the root cause.

"Beyn, Torba, in addition to the spears, prepare my trident!"

"Yes, Chieftain!"

As Orion pondered the situation, he kept his eyes on the approaching Lionbats, instructing his giant guards to prepare for battle.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Due to Orion's immense strength, even his casual spear throws were devastating.

The Lionbats had no way to defend themselves against Orion's spears.

After losing three of their comrades, the Lionbats grew wary of Orion and increased their altitude once again.

This created a strange and awe-inspiring scene over Moonshadow Valley.

A massive swarm of Lionbats circled high above the valley, refusing to leave, ready to strike at any moment.

Meanwhile, at the valley's entrance, the bloodline warriors of the Stoneheart Horde were locked in fierce combat with the Razorbeasts, the battle raging on.

Fortunately, the Abyss Dragon was holding the line, blocking the majority of the Razorbeasts' charge.

The horde members were smart, positioning themselves around the Abyss Dragon to intercept the Razorbeasts. The strategy was working well, and they were making significant gains.

"Chieftain, what do we do now? Those damn bats are just hovering up there, refusing to leave!"

Elder Rendall was furious and frustrated. He had no way to deal with these flying beasts.

Orion, holding his trident in one hand, looked up at the Lionbats, his expression grim.

Even though the Abyss Dragon was holding the front line, Orion was worried that there might be an Alpha-level beast hidden among the ground forces as well.

If that worst-case scenario came to pass, not only would the wall's foundation be at risk, but Moonshadow Valley itself could be in grave danger.

Orion glanced back at the battlefield outside Moonshadow Valley. Though chaotic, the situation was under control for now.

"I'll handle things here. Elder, take your men and head outside the valley to provide support. Be ready for anything."

Rendall nodded, realizing the wisdom in Orion's words.

Having so many warriors standing idle here was a waste of manpower.

"Understood!"

Without further delay, Rendall led his group out of Moonshadow Valley to reinforce the front lines.

"Orion, don't you think the appearance of this beast tide is strange? It seems like it's targeting our horde specifically."

Orion turned to look at Lilith, who had spoken. His expression grew more serious as her words sank in.

Chapter 103 Flying Alpha-level beast

Moments later, Orion spoke in a low voice.

"Lilith, are you suggesting that the Alpha-level flying beast driving the Lionbats was specifically sent by the southern lords?"

Lilith didn't respond with words, only smiled at Orion.

Orion had already voiced the thought himself, and it was almost certainly true.

"If that's the case, the second wave of Lionbats and the beast tide outside Moonshadow Valley make sense!"

"But aren't they worried about losing an Alpha-level beast in the north?"

Lilith stepped closer, wrapping her arms around Orion, her voice soft and teasing.

"My dear Orion, do you think a flying beast is that easy to kill?"

Her words were like a wake-up call.

Orion's eyes widened—he had forgotten the most basic fact.

The beast driving the tide was a flying creature. As long as it didn't fly too low, even if it encountered enemies in the air, it could easily change direction and escape.

Just then, a shadow flickered across the ground, catching Orion's eye as he looked down in thought.

He raised his head and saw a dark figure disappearing into the clouds.

"Alpha-level!"

Orion's senses were sharp, and he immediately detected the presence of a flying Alpha-level beast passing over Moonshadow Valley.

However, it was too far away for him to make out its exact form.

"So, it really is a flying beast..."

Orion fell silent, occasionally glancing up at the Lionbats.

It didn't take long for him to notice something alarming—the Lionbats were beginning to dive downward.

"Damn it, that flying beast must have forced them to attack!"

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh...

Without hesitation, Orion hurled several spears, instantly killing the first few Lionbats that dove toward them.

Two of Orion's guards stood on alert, while the other two handed him spears, keeping everyone busy.

At the same time, the surrounding horde members fired arrows and crossbow bolts, taking down any Lionbats that Orion missed.

Lilith and Lysinthia weren't idle either. Lysinthia summoned her Twilight Viper, which coiled nearby, hissing and roaring at the Lionbats in the sky.

Lilith, armed with a longbow, also joined in, shooting at the flying beasts.

The battle erupted in an instant, and Orion was the busiest of them all.

One spear after another flew from his hand with incredible speed and accuracy, rarely missing its mark.

In less than five minutes, the number of Lionbats in the sky had been cut in half.

The remaining Lionbats screeched and howled, hesitating to dive any further.

Moments later, the survivors scattered, fleeing in all directions.

"These beasts aren't completely stupid—they know to scatter and escape!"

Orion rubbed his right arm, watching the retreating Lionbats. He muttered to himself, relieved.
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With the Lionbats fleeing in all directions, even the Alpha-level flying beast would have a hard time rallying them again.

"Send some of the horde to clean up the battlefield. The rest should stay on guard—don't let your guard down!"

After giving his orders, Orion finally turned his attention back to the situation outside Moonshadow Valley.

Roar!

In the midst of the beast tide, the Abyss Dragon had gone berserk. Covered in a layer of bone armor, it was completely unfazed by the Razorbeasts' flaming tusks.

The Abyss Dragon's jaws and claws were like a reaper's scythe, cutting down Razorbeasts in droves, blood spraying everywhere.

After this prolonged slaughter, the area outside the wall's foundation had become a series of small lakes of blood—an incredibly gruesome sight.

"This is good. So much blood and so many sacrifices, and it's brought us a huge supply of food!"

As Orion watched the carnage outside Moonshadow Valley, he felt no pity. Instead, he was filled with a sense of excitement and satisfaction.

The battlefield in the rear mountains was quickly cleared by the horde. The Lionbat corpses were hauled into the caves, where the giants usually stored food.

"Stay on alert. Don't relax. Report to me immediately if anything happens!"

After giving his final instructions, Orion, along with Lilith, Lysinthia, and his guards, headed toward the front of Moonshadow Valley.

A short while later, Orion climbed the tower.

"Hi~"

Delilah greeted Orion but said nothing more. She and her sister Lilith didn't get along.

Fortunately, this was a battlefield, and with Orion present, the two sisters refrained from arguing.

"Go back to your duties. I'll call you if anything comes up."

"Yes, Chieftain!"

Delilah returned to her role overseeing logistics, while Orion scanned the battlefield, his eyes narrowing.

"Charge the eastern flank!"

Orion commanded the Abyss Dragon, having noticed that the Razorbeasts were particularly concentrated on the eastern side, putting a lot of pressure on the horde's defenders there.

With Orion back on the tower and the Abyss Dragon's power being fully utilized, the pressure on all three fronts began to ease.

After about two hours, the number of Razorbeasts outside Moonshadow Valley finally began to dwindle. The beast tide started to split, with the remaining beasts fleeing to either side of the valley.

This was largely thanks to the Abyss Dragon, which had been fighting and roaring outside the wall's foundation, preventing the beast horde from crashing into the newly built structure.

"Chieftain, we've won!"

"Over 20,000 Razorbeasts have been cleared from the battlefield. We've secured enough food to last through the winter!"

Thundar, covered in beast blood, approached the tower to deliver the good news to Orion.

Orion nodded and gave his next order.

"Send out some of the succubus warriors skilled in stealth to scout the next wave of the beast tide."

Thundar wiped the blood from his face and hurried off to carry out the command.

"Chieftain, did you deal with the Lionbats in the rear mountains?"

"Yeah, most of them are dead. The rest scattered and fled."

Elder Rendall's eyes lit up at the news. The fact that the Lionbats had scattered meant they wouldn't regroup for another attack.

"That's fantastic!"

Elder Rendall was overjoyed, slamming his spiked club into the ground repeatedly in celebration.

Before long, Prophet Onyx and Earthshaker arrived at the tower as well, reporting the casualties and gains from the battle.

Overall, there had been some minor losses, but the horde's gains were enormous.

Orion had his four guards set up a temporary tent and invited the key elders of Moonshadow Valley inside.

Once they were gathered, Orion shared his and Lilith's suspicions, as well as the sighting of the shadowy figure that had flown over the valley.

The first to speak was Prophet Onyx.

"Chieftain, if what you say is true, then the southern lords must have suffered significant losses in this Myriad Races Invasion!"

"Alpha-level flying beasts are rare, but the north isn't without them."

"To my knowledge, Lord Gareth has one under his command!"

Chapter 104 We'll follow your lead

Prophet Onyx's words brought back memories for Orion. At that time, a Storm Vulture, an Alpha-level beast, had descended upon Moonshadow Valley, delivering a summons from Lord Gareth.

"Prophet, are you talking about that Storm Vulture?"

A flicker of surprise crossed Prophet Onyx's face, but he quickly nodded in understanding.

"Yes, Chieftain!"

Orion nodded in return, then asked another question.

"Do you know the name of the messenger?"

Prophet Onyx thought for a moment, his tone uncertain.

"Chieftain, if you mean the Storm Vulture's rider, I believe his name is Arden."

Orion fell silent.

The one riding the Storm Vulture must have been its master, and that would be Arden.

Returning to the matter at hand, Prophet Onyx, seeing that Orion wasn't interested in further details about the Storm Vulture or Arden, shifted the conversation back to the flying beast they were currently dealing with.

"Chieftain, it's been nearly a century since the last return tide occurred."

"We don't know the specifics of the last Myriad Races Invasion, which means we're essentially blind and deaf to the outside world."

"Chieftain, if possible, you could seek advice from other chieftains in the region or even directly from Lord Gareth."

Orion shook his head. The nearest chieftain, Slagor, had already been thoroughly offended, so there was no chance of asking him for help.

To the west lay the desert, a harsh environment where they might die before even reaching another chieftain.

As for Lord Gareth, Orion had already seen during their last encounter that she wasn't someone who could be easily reasoned with.

After Orion's battle with Slagor, it hadn't taken long for Gareth to intercept him on the road.

Orion didn't believe for a second that Gareth had just happened to be passing by because her Abyss Dragon had sensed another of its kind.

"I'll lead the expedition myself next year. I'll personally open the path to the outside world."

Orion rejected Prophet Onyx's suggestion and brought the conversation back to the beast tide.

"I don't think this beast tide will end with just one or two waves. There will likely be several more."

"I'll keep an eye on the flying beast above Moonshadow Valley. You all focus on the ground forces."

"And make sure to rest and recover your strength. The next battle could start at any moment, and when it does, there won't be time to rest."

The impromptu meeting lasted less than half an hour before Orion sent the weary elders off to rest.

Prophet Onyx and the others had barely slept for one hour when the war horns of Moonshadow Valley blared once again.

One by one, the bloodline warriors were jolted awake, grabbing their weapons and rushing out of their tents.

"Mommy, Daddy's running out of the tent with his axe again!"

Inside a giant's tent, a curious three-year-old giant peered out through the tent flap, watching the world outside with wide eyes.

To the young giant, today's Moonshadow Valley felt very different from usual.

He had been confined to the tent all day, unable to go outside, and even his mother wasn't allowed to leave.

"Rolan, be good and stay in the tent. Mommy will make you some roasted meat!"

"Mommy, I want to practice with the trident and spear. I want to be a strong warrior like Chieftain!"

"Alright, Rolan can practice with the trident and spear. When you grow up, you'll become a bloodline warrior like Chieftain!"

"Okay, I'll listen to Mommy!"

Little Rolan grabbed a stick his mother had broken off for him and began swinging it around inside the tent.

This heartwarming and inspiring scene was something Chieftain Orion couldn't see.

Because outside Moonshadow Valley, in the distance, the ground was trembling once again.

"Chieftain, it's CutterSaur!"

The speaker was Thundar, his eyes still bleary from being abruptly awakened.

Orion gazed into the distance and asked a question.

"Did the scouts you sent out bring back any news?"

Thundar's face fell, his expression sorrowful.

"No, not a single one returned."

Orion fell silent. If none of the scouts had returned and another beast tide was approaching, there could only be one conclusion—they had all perished.

"I understand. Go and prepare."

After Thundar left to organize the defense, Orion turned to the succubus twins standing behind him—Queen Delilah and his wife, Lilith.

"What do you think?"

Delilah brushed a strand of windblown hair from her face, her brow furrowed as she looked into the distance.

"Chieftain, the scouts Elder Thundar sent out were all from our succubus tribe."

"Among them were two elders, and the rest had special skills for concealing themselves."

"If none of them returned, they were either wiped out or trapped outside."

Though Delilah was speaking about her own people, her tone was devoid of emotion.

"Chieftain, sacrifices are necessary for survival."

Sensing Orion's somber mood, Delilah offered a gentle reminder.

Orion exhaled slowly. Ever since he had taken on the role of chieftain, he found it increasingly difficult to remain indifferent to the loss of his people.

Perhaps this was the burden of leadership, Orion thought, trying to console himself.

"You should go as well. The logistics can't run without you."

"As you wish."

Delilah nodded and descended from the tower.

"My dear Orion, the beast tide is upon us. We'll follow your lead."

Lilith didn't say much, but her words were full of encouragement.

Orion nodded, his gaze fixed on the distant horizon, his mind sharp and alert.

The fact that none of the scouts had returned meant they had likely all been killed.

Whatever had exposed and overwhelmed them could only be an Alpha-level beast.

Which meant that behind this beast tide, there was a high likelihood that an Alpha-level beast was lurking.

"I just don't know if it's that flying beast..."

Orion muttered to himself, his eyes narrowing like a predator's.

By now, the sky was darkening, and dusk was approaching.

Orion couldn't help but curse under his breath—these bastards really knew how to pick the perfect time to attack.

"Dace, send the order!"

"Tell Elder of Stewardship Delilah to light bonfires throughout Moonshadow Valley and around the wall's foundation."

"I want the flames to illuminate every corner where our people are fighting!"

Dace acknowledged the command and hurried off to relay the message.

"Lysinthia, have the Twilight Viper burrow beneath the wall's foundation and lie in wait. Its job is to deal with any CutterSaur that get too close."

"Yes, Master!"

After giving Lysinthia her orders, Orion turned his attention back to the approaching beast tide. The battle was about to begin.

"You two should go as well. Work with the Twilight Viper to protect the wall's foundation and cover our people."

Orion reached into his Bagbird pouch and pulled out an elite-grade one-handed sword, handing it to Lysinthia.

"This weapon is yours now."

Lilith and Lysinthia joined the battle, while Orion remained on the tower, his gaze fixed on the darkness beyond.

In the distance, Orion could faintly sense a powerful presence.

Chapter 105 Tonight, the stars fall like rain

The CutterSaur were all elite-level beasts, incredibly difficult to deal with.

Each CutterSaur had two bone blades protruding from the sides of its mouth and two more from its ribs, making them resemble living saws. When they ran, these bone blades spun like deadly cutting machines, wreaking havoc with brutal efficiency.

Though only elite-level, their destructive power could rival that of hero-level beasts. Some beasts, during their evolution, awakened special abilities, and a rare few could even fight above their rank. This wasn't unheard of.

"Could the beast orchestrating all of this be an Alpha-level being?"

Orion stood on the high platform, gazing into the darkness, his eyes gleaming with thought.

It was dusk, but the light had already faded significantly. Only the giants and succubi of the Stoneheart Horde had night vision, while the Buffalofolk and Obsidian Golems would find their combat effectiveness diminished in the dark.

Roar!

With a deafening roar from the Abyss Dragon, the beast tide finally reached the valley. Some of the CutterSaurS veered off to the sides, trying to escape, but those that couldn't avoid the Abyss Dragon were forced into a direct confrontation.

Outside Moonshadow Valley, the giants roared, the buffalofolk bellowed, the succubi whispered incantations, and the obsidian golems charged forward.

Warhammers thundered, axes cleaved, spiked clubs smashed, spears thrust, and greatswords swung. Even the wands of the spellcasters danced in the chaos.

All of this blended into the cacophony of the beast tide's roars.

Orion stood on the platform, coldly observing the battle below.

It wasn't until a sharp eagle's cry pierced the night sky that Orion's expression changed.

Shriek...

The high-pitched screech echoed through the air, sharp and piercing, cutting through the noise of battle and reaching the ears of every bloodline warrior. Many of them instinctively looked up at the starry sky.

But they saw nothing.

Boom!

A bolt of lightning suddenly split the sky, illuminating the heavens for a brief moment. In that flash, a dark silhouette streaked across the sky, clearly visible.

The lightning struck down in an instant, crashing into the Abyss Dragon.

The bone armor covering the Abyss Dragon shattered in several places, and its exposed flesh was scorched and torn by the lightning.

Lightning was a natural counter to abyssal creatures.

The Abyss Dragon roared in pain, thrashing its tail and claws, clearing the surrounding CutterSaur in a fit of rage. It lifted its massive head, glaring furiously at the night sky.

Shriek...

Another eagle's cry echoed, this one filled with arrogance and dominance.

Whoosh!

A trident tore through the air, slicing through the storm clouds, shooting upward with deadly precision.

Boom!

A terrifying explosion, accompanied by a thunderous crack, erupted from the sky.

Orion had made his move!

The moment he saw the Alpha-level flying beast, Orion had drawn his Bone War Trident.

As soon as the flying beast unleashed its lightning attack, Orion had locked onto it.

Activating Titan's Rage, Orion's strength multiplied tenfold. The trident he threw was like a guided missile, unstoppable in its trajectory.

A pained screech echoed from the sky, and Orion's eyes gleamed with madness. His hands didn't stop moving.

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh!

Several more spears flew into the sky, but a flash of lightning flickered, and the Alpha-level flying beast vanished into the storm clouds. Orion's follow-up attacks missed their mark.

"Did it run?"

"No... the aura is still there. It must be hiding in the storm clouds!"

Orion's eyes widened as he scanned the sky.

But the storm clouds obscured the heavens, hiding the flying beast from view.

"Prepare yourselves!"

Far below, the Abyss Dragon received Orion's command. It raised its terrifying head, and an Abyssal Flame Bomb began to form in its mouth.

Two breaths later, the fully charged Abyssal Flame Bomb shot upward like a laser, aimed directly at the storm clouds.

At the same time, a shockwave radiated from the Abyss Dragon, sending all nearby creatures—friend and foe alike—flying.

Boom!

The Abyssal Flame Bomb exploded in the sky, sending a massive shockwave through the air, dispersing the storm clouds completely.

In the light of the explosion, Orion spotted the Alpha-level flying beast fleeing southward.

"Trying to run? Do you think you can escape?"

Orion gripped his Bloodthirsty Trident and began to sprint.

Whoosh!

Orion leaped into the air, soaring toward the sky.

As he reached the peak of his jump, the Abyss Dragon swung its massive tail upward, creating a platform for Orion to push off from.

Orion's body soared even higher, and just before he reached the apex of his ascent, he hurled the trident with all his might.

Zzzzz...

The trident, infused with Orion's bloodline power, ignited in flames, accompanied by a terrifying sonic boom. It shot through the sky like a meteor of destruction.

As Orion began to fall, a graceful figure swooped in, catching him mid-air and guiding him back toward Moonshadow Valley.

With Lilith's assistance, Orion's descent was slowed.

Orion wrapped his arms around Lilith, adjusting their posture, and the two landed safely on the ground.

Their seamless cooperation went unnoticed by the others.

All eyes were on the flaming trident streaking through the sky, tearing toward its target.

Orion looked up just as the trident exploded in a fiery burst in the sky.

Shriek

With the explosion came a final, dying screech from the Alpha-level flying beast.

The next moment, a flaming mass plummeted from the sky like a falling star.

"My dear Lilith, did you see that?"

"Tonight, the stars fall like rain."

A single, fatal strike!

Orion watched the flaming mass fall from the sky, then grabbed Lilith and leaped onto the Abyss Dragon's back, heading straight for the place where the flying beast had crashed.

On the battlefield, every warrior stood in stunned silence, mesmerized by the fiery rain falling from the sky.

As for the CutterSaur, the smarter ones had already fled to the sides, while the more foolish ones cowered on the ground, trembling in fear.

Boom, boom, boom...

The Abyss Dragon's footsteps were steady and powerful. Any CutterSaur that stood in its way was either crushed underfoot or had its throat torn out by the dragon's jaws.

Five minutes later, the Abyss Dragon broke through the beast tide, carrying Orion to the place where the Alpha-level flying beast had fallen.

"Grab it. Let's head back."

Orion looked at the charred remains of the Alpha-level flying beast. He unleashed his Alpha-level aura, driving away the nearby CutterSaur.

The Abyss Dragon clamped its jaws around the flying beast's corpse, dragging it back toward Moonshadow Valley like a king returning with its prize.

Chapter 106: Tempting future

The death of the Alpha-level flying beast seemed to signal a shift.

The CutterSaur beast tide, as if released from some unseen control, began to scatter, fleeing to either side of Moonshadow Valley. After Orion and the Abyss Dragon's devastating attacks, the CutterSaur no longer dared to approach the valley.

An hour later, the battle outside Moonshadow Valley had completely ceased.

The bloodline warriors of the Stoneheart Horde began the grim task of cleaning up the battlefield. They dissected the CutterSaur corpses, extracting meat and crystal cores.

Inside a temporary tent, Orion sat in the main seat, enjoying a massage from Lilith and Lysinthia.

Prophet Onyx, Thundar, Earthshaker, and Rendall had already taken their seats, waiting for Delilah to arrive.

Cleaning up the battlefield was part of Delilah's responsibilities as the Elder of Stewardship, so everyone was waiting for her.

Moments later, a guard announced her arrival, and Delilah entered the tent, lifting the flap as she stepped inside.

Orion gestured for her to take her seat, then straightened up himself. Lilith and Lysinthia stopped their massage and stood quietly behind him.

Without saying a word, Orion reached into his Bagbird pouch and pulled out a wooden box.

The box emitted a faint, exotic fragrance, made from a rare type of wood found in the Black Forest. Most importantly, this type of box was known to preserve the elemental energy of magical potions and crystal cores, preventing them from dissipating.

"Inside this box is the crystal core of the Alpha-level beast we killed. As you saw, it has an affinity for lightning."

"After Prophet Onyx's identification, we've confirmed that the beast was an Alpha-level Thunderhawk."

Orion's mood was visibly good, even better than when he had successfully killed the Thunderhawk.

This was because the Alpha-level Thunderhawk was very likely the mount of Thunderhawk Knight Reynard, the one responsible for killing Orion's sister, Clymene.

Both Orion and Elder Rendall wore smiles of satisfaction—smiles that spoke of long-awaited vengeance, at least in part.

No one spoke. All eyes were fixed on the wooden box in front of Orion.

Everyone understood that one of them would soon be the lucky recipient of this powerful item.

Orion scanned the room, then spoke in a firm, commanding tone that left no room for argument.

"My principle is simple: resources go to those who can use them best, and talents are put to their fullest potential."

"However, before we unified the Black Forest, during last winter's dark beast tides, I promised the Elder of Discipline that the next Alpha-level crystal core would go to him."

At these words, disappointment flashed across the faces of all the elders, except for Rendall.

Orion gently pushed the wooden box toward Rendall, who caught it in his trembling hands.

"Orion... I... I..."

Rendall, usually so straightforward and bold, was now trembling, his voice shaky, completely unlike his usual self. Your journey continues with empire

"Rendall, what's yours is yours. No one can take it from you."

Orion's voice was cold, with a hint of threat, making it clear that this decision was final.

Prophet Onyx sighed, the disappointment on his face fading as he accepted the reality.

Delilah remained silent, her own disappointment flickering briefly before disappearing. But in her mind, countless thoughts began to swirl.

"I'm one of Orion's women, right? And I'm also the Stewardship Elder!"

"If I didn't get it this time, will I get it next time?"

"And if I don't get it next time, what about the time after that?"

"When will I finally get an Alpha-level crystal core?"

"An Alpha-level core... it's so valuable..."

"Maybe... I should try harder to please Orion?"

"Next time we're lovemaking, maybe I should be more... proactive. I know some special techniques... I should use them on him..."

Delilah was smart, but sometimes, the smarter someone was, the more they overthought things.

Orion observed the emotions of the elders, reading their expressions in the brief moments of silence.

Once he saw that they had accepted the situation and their emotions had settled, he continued speaking.

"You must all understand something: this is an Alpha-level crystal core, not an Alpha-level dark source crystal. The energy it contains is not as pure as a dark source crystal."

"Elder of Discipline will need to combine it with magical potions and use special rituals to safely absorb the core."

"Whether or not he can advance to Alpha-level is still uncertain."

Orion's words were meant to temper the excitement that had clouded the elders' judgment, reminding them of the risks involved.

"And this is a lightning-element core. Its energy is extremely volatile and dangerous."

"Rendall, you need to think carefully."

Rendall nodded, saying nothing, but Orion could see the determination in his eyes.

Seeing this, Orion didn't press further and continued.

"As I said, resources go to those who can use them best."

"The next Alpha-level crystal core or Alpha-level dark source crystal will go to the Elder of Prophecy."

This statement once again dashed the hopes of Thundar, Earthshaker, and Delilah.

Prophet Onyx's eyes, which had dimmed with disappointment, now lit up with renewed hope. He looked at Orion in disbelief.

"The reason is simple: Prophet's strength surpasses all of yours."

"I'm confident that whether it's an Alpha-level crystal core or a dark source crystal, Prophet will be able to advance to Alpha-level with either."

"One last reminder: my principle is to use resources where they will be most effective."

Orion glanced at the disappointed Thundar, Earthshaker, and Delilah, then turned to Lilith and Lysinthia.

"The same goes for you two. If you want to advance, you'll have to work for it."

"All rare resources will be given to the horde members who show the most potential."

"Of course, the prerequisite is that they must have proven themselves in battle and be 100% loyal to the Stoneheart Horde."

Orion took a sip of water to soothe his throat before continuing to outline his plans.

"Also, Alpha-level resources will only be available to elders for now."

"After Prophet, the next elder who is closest to Alpha-level will be the next in line."

"And from now on, the order of receiving Alpha-level resources will follow this sequence."

Taking this opportunity, Orion formalized part of his reward system, which had been one of his plans.

He hadn't brought it up in previous council meetings because the reward system lacked credibility, and the rewards themselves weren't impressive enough.

Orion knew that emotional bonds between horde members were important for unity.

But he also understood that only shared interests could truly bind people together. Only when everyone's interests aligned would they work as one.

So, Orion dangled a tempting future in front of them.

"If the Elder of Discipline successfully advances to Alpha-level, I'm confident that together, we'll be able to hunt another Alpha-level dark creature during this year's dark beast tides."

"When that happens, Prophet will also advance to Alpha-level!"

"And what about after that?"

"Next year, we'll do it again. And the year after that..."

Orion's voice was filled with a seductive allure, drawing everyone in.

Inside the tent, the elders—Prophet Onyx, Thundar, Earthshaker, Delilah, Lilith, and Lysinthia—were all captivated by the future Orion was painting.

Chapter 107: Soul oath

After the elders recovered from their shock, Orion spoke again, his tone calm but filled with unwavering confidence.

"Everyone, keep pushing forward!"

"Alpha-level is not the end—not for me, at least."

"In my eyes, Lord Gareth isn't all that powerful."

"At the very least, if I were to face her, I wouldn't be completely helpless."

Compared to the grand vision Orion had painted earlier, these words were like a thunderclap in the quiet tent.

"Chieftain, you..."

Prophet Onyx stared at Orion, his eyes wide with disbelief.

Orion met Prophet Onyx's gaze with a cold, confident look, his self-assurance and ambition laid bare for all to see.

Under the weight of Orion's gaze, Prophet Onyx slowly lowered his head.

In that moment, Prophet Onyx understood the full extent of Orion's ambition.

It was a path of ascension, one that was both terrifying and awe-inspiring.

"Great Chieftain, I am willing to swear a soul oath to you. I pledge my eternal loyalty, never to abandon, never to betray."

Prophet Onyx rose from his seat, knelt on one knee, and performed a deep bow of submission.

At the same time, a mysterious mark appeared on his forehead.

The mark glowed blood-red, and moments later, a visible wisp of his soul floated out, entering Orion's forehead.

Orion recognized this as a soul contract—Prophet Onyx had just bound his soul and life to him.

But what surprised Orion was that this was only the beginning.

"Great Chieftain, I also wish to swear a soul oath to you!"

After a brief hesitation, Thundar stood up, walked over to Orion, and also swore a soul contract.

As Thundar completed the oath, another wisp of soul energy entered Orion's brow.

"Chieftain Orion, I guess this means I'm truly yours now! I'm willing to do anything for you, whether it's out there on the battlefield or in bed."

Orion glanced at Delilah, who was looking at him with a seductive smile, her eyes filled with desire.

Ignoring Delilah's suggestive gaze, Orion couldn't help but marvel at how his grand vision had turned several of his core elders into his true followers.

As long as these subordinates followed his orders, Orion was confident that the racial differences within the Stoneheart Horde would soon be a thing of the past.

As for Earthshaker, he was the most relaxed of the group, eating and drinking without a care.

Earthshaker had already signed a slave contract with Orion, so he wasn't concerned with these matters. He believed that as long as he proved his strength, Orion would help him grow stronger.

What had started as a council meeting had unexpectedly turned into a session of soul-binding oaths, thanks to Prophet Onyx's initiative.

Even Orion, deep down, couldn't help but feel a sense of surprise at how things had unfolded.

"Go and rest. The beast tide may have retreated, but there's no guarantee another wave won't come."

The elders nodded and began to leave the tent.

Elder Rendall hesitated, lingering behind.

"Go and train. I'll keep watch here."

Rendall gave Orion a deep look, nodded firmly, and left the tent.

Orion watched Rendall's retreating figure, knowing that the elder was likely debating whether to follow the other elders and swear a soul oath.

However, Orion's earlier response had clearly put Rendall at ease.

"If I have some reservations about the other elders, I have none when it comes to Rendall."

"If even you were to betray me, then the Stoneheart Horde would have no hope of rising."

Orion sat in his seat, gazing at the distant bonfires, lost in thought.

Born into the Giant Clan, Orion had come to see Moonshadow Valley as his home, and the giants here as his people.

Because of this, Orion was both patient and hopeful when it came to his horde.

If he couldn't rely on his own people, Orion felt that life would lose much of its meaning.

The night passed quietly.

By the next morning, the bloodline warriors of the Stoneheart Horde had rested well.

The warriors on guard duty were well-fed and full of energy.

Orion and Prophet Onyx walked along the wall's foundation, inspecting the damage. Orion's mood was neither good nor bad.

"Prophet, the eastern and western sections of the wall's foundation have taken some damage. Quite a bit of it needs to be rebuilt."

Orion frowned slightly as he surveyed the damage. Several sections of the wall's foundation had been completely destroyed and would need to be reconstructed.

"The beast tide was too dense when it split, so some damage to the foundation was inevitable."

"Chieftain, don't worry. If this is the extent of the damage, we can repair it in no time."

"What I'm worried about is another beast tide. If the foundation is hit again while it's still damaged, it could suffer even more severe destruction."

Prophet Onyx's words sent a chill through Orion's heart.

Even if the beast tide fleeing north had ended, the return tide would surely bring another wave of destruction.

Orion climbed the eastern ridge and looked back at the wall's foundation stretching across the horizon.

Suddenly, an idea came to him, and he asked Prophet Onyx a question.

"Prophet, what if we set up a line of wooden spikes in front of the wall's foundation? Would that help with defense and protection?"

Prophet Onyx's eyes lit up at the suggestion.

"Chieftain, that's a brilliant idea! It could reduce damage by at least 30%."

Hearing that his idea was feasible, Orion immediately turned to his guard, Dace.

"Go find Elder of Combat Thundar and bring him here."

Dace acknowledged the order and ran off.

A quarter of an hour later, Thundar arrived at the ridge, looking hurried.

"Chieftain, what are your orders?"

Orion explained his and Prophet Onyx's idea. After a moment of thought, Thundar agreed that it was a good plan.

"Chieftain, I'll take some of the horde and start cutting down trees from the nearby forest. We'll try to have the spikes set up around the wall's foundation before nightfall."

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"Good. Get to it."

Thundar didn't leave immediately, which made Orion curious.

"Chieftain, two of the scouts we sent out a few days ago have returned. The others... there's been no word."

This was good news, a small blessing amidst the misfortune.

Orion had assumed that all the succubus scouts had perished, but it seemed two had made it back.

"Go inform Elder of Stewardship Delilah. After all, they're her people."

"Yes, Chieftain!"

With that, Thundar hurried off toward Moonshadow Valley.

Standing on the eastern ridge, Orion's gaze drifted toward the distant horizon, his thoughts wandering.

After a long silence, Orion suddenly asked Prophet Onyx a seemingly unrelated question.

"Prophet, how familiar are you with the Trolls in the Barren Mountains to the east?"

Chapter 108 Weeping Banshees

Stoneheart Tribe→Stoneheart Horde

Orion's sudden question caught Prophet Onyx off guard. After a brief pause, Prophet Onyx responded with a hint of confusion.

"Chieftain, are you referring to the Trolls we encountered in the Barren Mountains last time?"

"Yes."

"Chieftain, are you thinking of subduing them?"

"That's right. Do you think it's possible?"

Prophet Onyx fell silent again, contemplating the possibility of bringing the Trolls under their control.

During their last encounter, Orion had been in a hurry to reach the Poison Dragon Swamp and didn't want any unexpected delays, so he hadn't engaged with the Trolls. But Orion remembered them well—those Trolls were strong.

Among them, there was one whose strength was comparable to Prophet Onyx's, and another who was at the peak of hero-level, very close to becoming Alpha-level.

If Orion could subdue these Trolls, the strength of his forces would increase significantly.

"Chieftain, the Troll chieftain is named Gronthar, and his strength is about equal to mine."

"He also has a brother named Brakthul, whose strength is not far behind."

"If you want to subdue them, I'm afraid you'll have to handle it personally."

Orion turned to Prophet Onyx, his expression inviting further explanation.

"Trolls, like us, respect strength. They've also seen the outside world and are fierce warriors."

At this point, Prophet Onyx's expression darkened, and his tone became more serious.

"But, the Trolls once had their own Alpha-level warrior."

"And from what I've heard, their previous Alpha-level warrior was one of Lord Gareth's most trusted fighters."

"I suspect the reason the Trolls haven't submitted to Slagor of the Poison Dragon Swamp is that they're waiting for one of their own to ascend to Alpha-level."

Orion nodded. Prophet Onyx's reasoning made sense.

Any tribe that had once produced an Alpha-level warrior would have some foundation and knowledge of how to cultivate another. Such tribes wouldn't easily submit to just any Alpha-level warrior—unless it was someone as powerful as Gareth, a Legendary-level figure.

"Forget it for now. When the time is right, you'll accompany me to visit them."

Prophet Onyx nodded. Ever since learning of Orion's grander ambitions, the fire that had been dormant in his heart for centuries had reignited.

That day in Moonshadow Valley was unusually calm and peaceful.

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No beast tide came, and the horde members were able to relax, their anxiety easing.

However, in the middle of the night, a haunting melody began to echo from the depths of the forest outside Moonshadow Valley. The song was eerie yet strangely beautiful, sending chills down the spines of those who heard it.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Upon hearing the song, Orion, Prophet Onyx, Thundar, and others quickly left their tents and gathered on the wall's foundation, peering into the distant forest.

Moments later, Delilah arrived with a large group of tribe members, her expression slightly uneasy.

"You know what's hiding in the forest?"

Orion's keen observation had already noticed that Lilith's face had been tense earlier. Now, seeing Delilah's similar expression, he knew something was amiss.

"Chieftain, this is the Lament of the Banshees. Hidden in the forest are Weeping Banshees."

Delilah's gaze was cold as she stared into the distant woods.

Orion was puzzled, but his wife Lilith stepped forward to explain.

"My dear Orion, the Weeping Banshees are actually a branch of our Succubus race, but they are traitors."

"A branch of the Succubi? Traitors?"

Lilith nodded, as if recalling the ancient history of her people.

"Like the Giants, the Succubi have a pure bloodline."

"However, after arriving on this continent, some of the Succubi were swayed by other gods and transformed into Weeping Banshees."

Delilah, her voice icy, continued the explanation.

"The irony is that after the gods used the Weeping Banshees in their wars, they abandoned them."

"They are a race forsaken by the gods, shunned by all other races, forced to live in hiding."

"I never expected that they would still have a foothold in the south."

After finishing her explanation, Delilah gave Orion an apologetic look.

"Honorable Chieftain, as the Queen of the Succubi, your servant and woman, I request permission to let us Succubi handle this matter ourselves."

Orion glanced at Delilah, recognizing the subtle manipulation in her request.

"Go ahead."

Orion agreed without hesitation.

"My dear Orion, it is the duty of royal Succubi to cleanse our bloodline of such filth."

Lilith stepped forward, drawing the dagger and whip that Orion had gifted her.

"Be careful."

Orion gazed at Lilith for a moment before nodding in agreement.

Lilith kissed him before joining Delilah.

It was a rare sight—two Succubus sisters, usually at odds, now united in a common cause.

"In the name of our ancestors, we shall purge the filth and slay the traitors!"

Delilah raised her staff high, and the Succubus bloodline warriors stepped forward, gathering around her.

Orion, along with the rest of the horde, watched them closely.

After a moment of thought, Orion activated his Berserk Aura, empowering the Succubus warriors with increased Constitution and other attributes.

At the same time, Delilah began to sing, and Lilith joined her, their voices weaving together into a mysterious and enchanting melody that drowned out the eerie song from the forest.

In the depths of the forest, the haunting song of the Weeping Banshees faltered, replaced by pained screams.

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh...

Delilah and Lilith spread their black wings and glided low to the ground, leading their warriors into the forest.

Some of the Buffalofolk and Giant warriors stepped forward, ready to offer support.

"Stop. Don't go."

"The battles between Succubi are filled with illusions. The forest is dangerous."

"This is their fight. We shouldn't interfere."

"Our job is to trust the Elder of Stewardship."

Orion's voice was calm, and the warriors heeded his command, returning to their posts and watching the distant forest from afar.

Within the forest, the Succubi's song rose and fell, while the Weeping Banshees' screams grew sharper and more desperate, but also fewer in number.

"Honorable Chieftain, I suggest we clear all the trees within a kilometer of the wall."

"Hmm... why?"

"It's too dangerous! The forest provides too much cover for enemies to hide."

Prophet Onyx's suggestion reminded Orion of the potential threat.

The idea of hidden enemies resonated with Orion.

"Thundar, did you hear that? This task is yours."

"Understood. I'll take the tribe out tomorrow morning to start cutting down the trees."

Thundar nodded in agreement. He also believed that the area outside the wall should be cleared of trees.

Ahhh...

A sharp scream echoed from the distance, filled with sorrow and pain.

Ahhh... ahhh... ahhh...

The screams rose and fell several times before finally falling silent.

Chapter 109 God-touched

In the depths of the forest, the Succubi's song clashed with the Banshees' screams, each trying to overpower the other.

Slash!

A Weeping Banshee's head flew into the air, her once-beautiful face now showing a mix of sorrow and relief.

Lilith, one of the Succubus twins, coldly glanced at the decapitated Banshee, showing no trace of pity.

The Banshees and Succubi shared similar forms, but the Banshees were entirely white—white skin, white hair, even white eyes.

Lilith didn't pause, continuing her swift advance deeper into the forest.

She could sense it—further ahead, hidden in the depths of the forest, was a powerful royal-blooded Weeping Banshee.

Delilah followed closely behind her sister, her chant never ceasing. Her voice was like a prayer, or perhaps a blessing.

Suddenly, a piercing wail echoed through the forest, causing both sisters to frown.

It was the [Scream of the Five Senses], a talent only awakened by royal-blooded Succubi. This ability could distort and strip away the senses of its victims, making them see, feel, taste, smell, and hear things that weren't real. It was a powerful illusion that could affect multiple targets at once.

Delilah glanced at Lilith, who was flying ahead, her chant uninterrupted.

Hehehe...

Suddenly, Lilith let out a series of bell-like giggles, her laughter filled with joy and sweetness.

This was Lilith's bloodline skill, Mind Confusion, another form of illusion.

This illusion caused the target's perception of reality to become disoriented, making it difficult to distinguish between directions or enemies.

The key difference was that Mind Confusion was a mental illusion, directly affecting the mind of the target.

Both the [Scream of the Five Senses] and [Mind Confusion] had similar effects, making it hard for enemies to tell friend from foe. Explore more stories at [empire](#)

As a result, the battle between the Succubi and Banshees quickly descended into chaos.

"In the name of our ancestors, I will purge you, traitors of the Abyssal Succubi!"

Whoosh!

Deep in the forest, Delilah stopped chanting and drew her strange black whip, flying to Lilith's side.

Not far from the twin sisters stood a Weeping Banshee, dressed in white long dress, her entire body as pale as snow.

"Pitiful traitor, forsaken by the gods, your filthy blood will vanish!"

Ahhh...

A scream echoed through the forest as the twin sisters launched their synchronized attack, their movements graceful and deadly.

When the forest finally fell silent, Delilah and Lilith emerged with their warriors, bathed in the cold light of the moon. The bloodstained Succubi looked eerily beautiful under the moonlight.

Orion frowned as he noticed something different about Lilith and Delilah.

The most obvious change was the mysterious symbol now etched on both of their foreheads.

Orion could also sense that Lilith's strength had increased—she had reached the peak of hero-level.

"God-touched!"

Prophet Onyx exclaimed in shock, his eyes filled with envy as he looked at Delilah and Lilith.

"Prophet, what does 'God-touched' mean?"

Orion asked, curious about the term.

"Chieftain, the God-touched are those blessed by the gods!"

"A divine blessing not only increases one's strength but also enhances their talents!"

Orion was still confused. He couldn't understand why killing a few Banshees had caused such a transformation in Delilah and Lilith.

"My dear Orion, I'm back!"

Lilith, as affectionate as ever, clung to Orion's arm, unwilling to let go.

Orion kissed Lilith briefly, then glanced at Delilah, but he didn't press them for details about what had happened in the forest.

Some things were better left unspoken.

With the Banshees eliminated by the Succubi, Moonshadow Valley returned to peace.

However, to be cautious, Orion insisted on keeping watch on the wall's foundation throughout the night.

At dawn, as Orion was eating, the Succubus scouts returned with good news.

There were no signs of the beast tide in the southern part of the Black Forest.

This indicated that the beast tide had passed.

Now, they only had to wait for the return tide. If they could successfully defend against it, the Stoneheart Horde would enter a period of rapid growth in strength.

With no immediate threat, Elder of Combat Thundar led a team to cut down the giant trees in the area surrounding Moonshadow Valley.

The previous beast tide had already knocked down many of the trees, making their work easier.

Elder of Prophecy Onyx was also busy, leading his people in transporting stone to repair the damaged sections of the wall's foundation.

Meanwhile, a ring of wooden spikes was gradually being erected outside the wall's foundation.

As Orion watched the bustling activity in Moonshadow Valley, his heart swelled with pride.

Three days later, the Succubus scouts brought back news—the return tide had begun.

"Chieftain, the time between the beast tide and the return tide is unusually short this time!"

Prophet Onyx's voice was filled with concern as he alerted Orion.

"Is there a problem, Prophet?"

Orion asked, knowing that Prophet Onyx had experienced several return tides and had valuable insights.

"Chieftain, in the past, the return tide usually occurred seven to fifteen days after the initial beast tide."

"This time, the return tide has started after only three days. Something must have happened that we're unaware of."

Orion's brow furrowed. He hated dealing with unknowns, especially when they were shrouded in mystery.

"Is there anything we can do?"

Prophet Onyx shook his head, his expression one of helplessness.

"Dace, send word to the elders. Tell them the beast tide is returning and to prepare for defense."

"Yes, Chieftain!"

With no better options, Orion could only order his people to remain vigilant and prepare for the return tide.

Half a day later, the beast tide arrived. Sensing Orion's powerful aura, the beasts fled south, avoiding Moonshadow Valley entirely.

"This is strange."

Orion stood on a tower, watching the fleeing beasts, noticing something unusual.

"The beasts seem panicked, and they're not interested in Moonshadow Valley at all."

"Look at those CutterSaur—they're not even glancing at the valley."

Orion pointed to the western side of Moonshadow Valley, where a group of CutterSaur was running, completely ignoring the valley.

"Chieftain, this might be a good thing!"

"No matter what's happening with the beast tide, as long as it doesn't affect Moonshadow Valley, it's not our concern."

Orion nodded, agreeing with Prophet Onyx's assessment.

However, the mystery that had been gnawing at Orion and Prophet Onyx was soon answered the next day.

Shriek

A sharp eagle's cry echoed across the sky, carrying the unmistakable aura of an Alpha-level beast.

Orion stood on the tower, looking up at the sky.

A Storm Vulture was flying in from the north, its aura radiating as if it were driving something before it.

The elders of Moonshadow Valley quickly gathered behind Orion, also looking up at the sky.

"Don't worry. It's a Storm Vulture—one of Lord Gareth's subordinates."

Orion's voice was calm, showing no sign of panic.

Chapter 110 Don't let my sister down

The appearance of the Storm Vulture made everything clear to Orion.

The beast tide had been driven north by the Thunderhawk, and now Lord Gareth had sent the Storm Vulture to push the tide back south. It was a clever strategy, no doubt.

However, something about the situation still felt off to Orion.

Lord Gareth's response to the beast tide seemed delayed. By all accounts, she should have been prepared for the tide before it even began. This reverse driving of the beasts should have been initiated days earlier.

"Chieftain, it seems Lord Gareth has intervened," Prophet Onyx remarked.

Orion didn't respond immediately. Instead, he kept his gaze fixed on the Storm Vulture.

For a brief moment, Orion felt the Storm Vulture's eyes on him, as if it were studying him. But the beast made no aggressive moves and continued herding the beast tide southward.

After a long pause, Orion turned to Elder of Combat.

"Thundar, take a team and hunt the beasts. This is a prime opportunity to gather more food for the winter. Don't let it slip by."

Thundar's eyes lit up at the command. He nodded eagerly and immediately began rallying the hunting teams for a large-scale hunt.

"You two can go as well, but be careful," Orion said, glancing at Lilith and Lysinthia, who were clearly eager to join the hunt. They needed to feed their Twilight Viper and Spider Queen, and hunting was the best way to provide for them.

Lilith cheered, planting a kiss on Orion's neck before grabbing Lysinthia and rushing to join the hunting party.

In moments, only Prophet Onyx remained by Orion's side.

"Prophet, with the beast tide resolved, it looks like we can move forward with our plans to finish the wall ahead of schedule."

Orion's mood was noticeably lighter. The appearance of the Storm Vulture had caused the beast tide to retreat early, sparing Moonshadow Valley from further damage. The wall's foundation had been preserved.

"Rest assured, Chieftain. I will ensure the wall is completed before winter arrives."

Orion watched as his people charged into the beast tide, hunting with fervor. He pointed to several corners of the wall's foundation.

"If we have enough time, let's build a few towers at these points."

"We can install large crossbows on them to help defend against flying beasts."

Prophet Onyx nodded, agreeing to the plan.

Thunderwood Forest, Thunderhawk City.

Crash!

"Damn it! Can someone tell me what the hell is going on?"

"Why have I lost my connection with LightningTalon?"

Reynard was an Alpha-level knight who commanded an Alpha-level flying beast, the Thunderhawk LightningTalon.

It was thanks to LightningTalon that Reynard had been able to defeat Clymene and kill the giant elders who had come to her aid.

Now, Reynard was furious—and terrified.

In his frustration, he smashed his bone goblet into pieces.

Moments later, a young woman with a seductive figure entered the castle hall, drawn by the sound of breaking glass.

The girl affectionately wrapped her arm around Reynard's and asked softly, "Brother, what's wrong?"

"Sister, I've lost my connection with LightningTalon!"

"I don't know if it's flown too far away, or if..."

Reynard trailed off, unwilling to voice the worst possibility. If LightningTalon had been killed, his strength would be severely diminished.

"Don't worry, brother. LightningTalon has probably just flown too far, which is why you've lost the connection."

"LightningTalon is driving the beast tide. As long as it doesn't fly too low, it won't be in any danger."

"And besides, the only threat near our territory is Lord Gareth's Storm Vulture. LightningTalon is faster than the Storm Vulture, so nothing will happen."

Reynard's sister, Rowena, tried to comfort him, and her words seemed to ease his anxiety.

She was right. In the sky, aside from the Storm Vulture, nothing could threaten LightningTalon.

And Reynard had already instructed LightningTalon to avoid flying too close to the north, to stay away from Lord Gareth's territory.

"By the way, how is your progress with the other Thunderhawk?"

Rowena sighed. "That Thunderhawk is stubborn. It still refuses to form a contract with me."

Reynard and Rowena were part of a rare race known as the Skybond. The Skybond had a natural affinity for communicating with Thunderhawks and a high chance of forming contracts with them, becoming powerful sky knights.

"Be patient. You need to show it your goodwill, but also demonstrate your strength and potential."

"When you communicate with the Thunderhawk, open your heart. Treat it like family, like a partner."

Reynard continued to share his experience with his sister, hoping that by doing so, he could calm his own restless heart.

Back in the Black Forest, the beast tide had fully retreated south.

Orion seized the opportunity, leading his people to hunt the fleeing beasts, securing a massive amount of food for the horde.

For the Stoneheart Horde, they now had more than enough food to last through the winter.

For Orion, he had collected a significant number of mid- and high-grade crystal cores.

The classification of crystal cores was simple: F- and E-grade cores were considered low-grade, D- and C-grade were mid-grade, and B-grade and above were high-grade.

Of course, S-grade and higher were considered rare treasures.

This beast tide had been a collective effort for the Stoneheart Horde. Although they had lost a few bloodline warriors, the horde was about to welcome a new generation of warriors.

"Chieftain, the Bloodline Awakening Pool is fully stocked with sacrifices and blood. The pool is filled to the brim!"

The report came from Elder of Combat Thundar, who had taken over the responsibility of managing the Bloodline Awakening Pool while Elder Rendall was in seclusion for training.

"Excellent. Prepare a list of all the giants who meet the conditions for awakening. Tomorrow, we will begin the Bloodline Awakening Ceremony!"

"This time, the awakening trial will be safer than before, so we are completely opening up the application process. Anyone who is at least ten years old, regardless of gender, can participate."

Thundar was visibly excited. This meant that the giant tribe would soon have a large number of new bloodline warriors.

Moreover, with the inclusion of women in the awakening, Thundar's own daughters would have the chance to awaken their bloodlines, which was a thrilling prospect.

Compared to previous bloodline awakening trials, the current Bloodline Awakening Pool is much gentler, but still carries risks.

Therefore, Orion did not mandate participation in the bloodline awakening; everything is voluntary. Thundar will respect those tribe members who dare to participate in the awakening, but those who cannot endure the trial will not receive sympathy.

In Thundar's eyes, those who failed were simply wastes, draining the tribe's resources.

In this world, filled with danger and opportunity, giants who couldn't become bloodline warriors had no claim to honor.

"Chieftain, should we include those of advanced age in the ceremony as well?"

Orion paused for a moment, then nodded.

"Include them. As long as they meet the conditions for awakening, give everyone a chance, whether they are elderly or women. But for safety's sake, everything should be voluntary; do not force anyone."

"Understood!"

Three days later, Orion stood outside a cave with a group of giants, anxiously waiting.

For the first time, Orion understood the anxiety his sister Clymene must have felt during such moments.

Waiting was always difficult, especially when it involved loved ones.

This time, nearly 500 giants had entered the Bloodline Awakening Pool to awaken their bloodlines.

Among them was a young giant named Fergus, whom Orion had a special interest in.

Fergus had lost his parents to dark beasts during a harsh winter, becoming an orphan.

Clymene had taken pity on Fergus and adopted him as her foster son.

Now, at just ten years old, Fergus was among those waiting to awaken their bloodline.

"Fergus, you better succeed. Don't let my sister down."

Orion silently prayed for Fergus, hoping he would successfully awaken his bloodline.

If Fergus became a bloodline warrior, Orion would personally train him, fulfilling a promise to Clymene and giving himself some peace of mind.

"Chieftain, this waiting is agonizing!"

"But every time I see one of our people pass the bloodline awakening trial, I feel a sense of pride."

Thundar, who had once been the chieftain of the Ironbone Tribe, was no stranger to this kind of waiting.

Many of Thundar's descendants were participating in this awakening, and he was just as nervous and anxious as Orion.

"Don't worry. I believe this time we'll have more bloodline warriors than ever before."

Thundar nodded in agreement.

"If only the Bloodline Awakening Pool could evolve again. Then most of our people would be able to awaken, and the process would be even safer."

Thundar sighed, voicing a thought that had also crossed Orion's mind.

But Orion knew that there were no other giant tribes in the surrounding area, so the Bloodline Awakening Pool in the cave wouldn't evolve anytime soon.

Just as Orion and Thundar were feeling a bit down, the horde suddenly erupted in cheers.

Orion and Thundar looked up to see the first group of giants emerging from the cave, greeted by the excited cries of their families.

Orion's eyes brightened with hope.

As time passed, Orion's smile grew wider. After half an hour, he spotted a familiar figure.

"Fergus, over here!" Explore more at empire

Orion stepped forward, wrapping an arm around Fergus's shoulders and giving him a firm pat on the back.

"Well done, Fergus. You didn't let my sister down!"

Fergus smiled shyly, clearly excited but also a bit embarrassed by the attention.

"Come on, let's head back to Moonshadow Valley. I'll help you set up your own tent."

Orion, still holding Fergus's shoulder, nodded to Thundar before leading Fergus down the mountain.

After spending an hour helping Fergus set up his tent, Orion made his way to Elder Volthun's tent.

The Alpha-level Thunderhawk they had killed hadn't dropped a Survivor's Chest, but Orion had taken the hooked beak of the Thunderhawk and brought it to Volthun.

"Chieftain, you're here!"

Volthun, in addition to being a shaman, was the horde's best blacksmith. He proudly handed Orion a finely crafted curved blade.

"Chieftain, look at my craftsmanship. This is my finest work!"

Orion took the blade and gave it a few test swings. It felt perfect in his hand.

"I can see that your skills have improved."

Volthun beamed with pride. He had been working on the Thunderhawk's beak and claws for some time, and his skills had indeed grown.

Just as Orion was about to leave Volthun's tent, a sudden surge of Alpha-level pressure erupted from within Moonshadow Valley, accompanied by a triumphant roar.

Orion's eyes lit up, and he quickly stepped outside, looking toward Elder Rendall's tent.

"Hahaha... I did it!"

Rendall burst out of his tent, electricity crackling around his body.

Orion could see it clearly—Rendall had awakened lightning abilities upon advancing to Alpha-level.

"Great Chieftain, I've succeeded!"

Rendall approached Orion, his excitement tempered by his respectful demeanor.

Orion smiled, fully understanding Rendall's intentions.

Though Rendall was straightforward and bold, he wasn't foolish.

By showing such respect to Orion, even after advancing to Alpha-level, Rendall was reinforcing Orion's authority and solidifying his position as chieftain.

Orion laughed and clapped Rendall on the back as they walked together.

"A few days ago, I had Lilith brew a batch of black rye beer. I've been saving it for this celebration!"

Rendall laughed heartily, allowing Orion to lead him.

Back in the chieftain's tent, Orion made a decision. Rendall's advancement was a major event for the horde, a cause for celebration.

"Send word to the horde: light the bonfires, and let there be unlimited food and drink. We'll celebrate for three days and nights!"

"Dace, gather the council members. Tell them that Elder Rendall has advanced to Alpha-level, and I'm inviting them to share in the black rye beer!"

Dace quickly ran off to deliver the message.

Within half an hour, all the council members, except for Earthshaker, who was out hunting, had gathered.

The hero-level elders looked at Rendall, who sat to Orion's left, with pride and admiration in their eyes.

Prophet Onyx, Thundar, and Delilah in particular gazed at Rendall as if they were looking at their own future.

Of the three, Prophet Onyx was the most excited. He knew that he was the next in line to advance to Alpha-level.

At this moment, Onyx no longer saw Orion's grand vision as a mere dream. It was a reality that could be achieved.

Rendall's advancement, coming so soon after the beast tide, felt like a divine blessing, a sign that the Stoneheart Horde was destined for greatness.